



People Dependency on Foreign Media in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts (KPTD)

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Abstract

This study was conducted to examine what kind of media people living in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts (KPTD), Pakistan uses for information gratification and what are the main reasons. The study also explored what genres of media programs people like for information gratification. To achieve the objectives of the study, the researchers used survey technique for data collection. A questionnaire was developed a pilot study was conducted to validate the questionnaire. Once the questionnaire was validated, the researcher recruited 300 respondents from District Khyber of KPTD for the study. Since access to District Khyber is limited due to the ongoing military operation in the area, a convenient sampling technique was used for the recruitment. The findings of the study showed that majority of the people in KPTD listened to foreign radio stations like, Mashaal, VOA, BBC and DW for information seeking.

Keyword: Radio, KPTD, VOA, BBC, People Dependency, Foreign Media



Introduction

This study has been designed to find out the people dependency on foreign media in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) currently know is Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts (KPTD), after 31st amendment to the constitution of Pakistan, the tribal areas were merged into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province In 2018. The KPTD far-flung and remote Districts. Radio is considered to be the cheapest source of information in this tribal belt, because of its easy to buy, do not need electricity and one can move it easily everywhere (Baig, 2012). Similarly, the ongoing war against terrorism in Afghanistan and adjacent tribal belt of Pakistan has brought these people into the global spectrum. Younis Khan also mentioned in his research, “Role of media in FATA” that many developed nations across the globe have started special radio channels and transmissions for FATA to report and counter the wave of terrorism. This special focus makes FATA more important than other parts of the world (Younis, 2008).

Radio is the vital source of information in the tribal districts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. According to official website Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the population of Tribal districts is round about five million (PBS, 2020). According to the FATA Communications Strategy (FCS) report, issued in 2015, over 80 percent males and over 70 percent female in the tribal districts frequently listen to radio. No newspaper or magazine is published in the tribal districts because the colonial era law called Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), which was recently changed, did not allow news media outlets in tribal areas. FCR was considered as a black law implemented by the British imperialist



government back in 1901 in the tribal areas. In 2018 after 31 st amendment to the constitution of Pakistan, the tribal areas were merged into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and show they are liable to enjoy the same rules and regulations that the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa observe (Shah et al., 2019). Because of low literacy rate, newspapers published in cities have minimal circulation in the districts bordering Afghanistan. Watching Television is an expensive proposition – both in terms of affordability and because of extremists in the region discouraged it for being ‘anti-Islam’ (Saeed, 2016).

Unavailability or shortage of electricity in the tribal districts is another big reason which leaves radio as the primary medium of information for the local people (Ullah, 2018). Radio sets can work without cables and power, and are accessible at easily reasonable amounts; therefore, radio is the best available tool of information for the people of KPTD.

Statement of problem

Due to the low literacy rate and unavailability of the basic facilities, residents of KPTD are dependent on radio stations for the gratification of their needs of information seeking. However, so far, no academic research has been carried out to gauge the level of influence of different radio stations in the area. There is a need to find out which radio stations are popular among the residents of KPTD. This research will open up a new avenue for future academic researchers.



Significance of the Study

The proposed study conducts to point out and analyze the use and choices of the radio listeners in District Khyber. The availability of media sources to large population will also be highlighted which will help in focusing government attention on developing access to media. This will help policy makers that which medium should be adopted to reach the people in KPTD.

Objectives of the Study

To know the popularity and reliability of foreign radio stations as the source of information among the people of KPTD.

Literature Review

In review of literature or literature review the researcher use the summary of research studies, literature reviews and some journals articles, and explains some parts of that available study in his own words. ([Taylor, 2012](#))

In the research “People dependency on foreign media in KPTD”, the researcher used some books and Research Journals, to discuss and elaborate. Intermedia Pakistan conducted a research survey in 2012, “Reporting from frontline” regarding media practices in FATA. The results of this survey shown that, about 90 percent of the people (respondents in FATA) have radio set. And it shows that they are active listeners of radio. All the respondents listen to multiple radio Channels; about 39 percent listening to at least three stations. This indicates that a huge number of people from KPTD are listening to the radio. (Baig, 2012)



Radio is the greatest common medium of information in KPTD. In KPTD there are just three home-grown FM radio stations which are lawfully functioning in this area. The three KPTD grounded FM radio stations are state-run. According to the survey conducted by PACT radio in 2010, although all the three-radio station in KPTD named Radio Mirasnshah, Razmak and Khyber Radio are in control of government but still many people in KPTD are frequently listening to these radio stations which shows their keen interest in radio. They listen radios for news and entertainment. Some of them also watching Television but they are in very few numbers (PACT, 2010) Rendering to the results of the survey done by Intermedia. It shows that about 82 percent of the radio listeners in KPTD listen to radio for countrywide news; some 46 percent listen to the radio for local information and 10 percent are listening it for entertainment (Baig, 2012).

Baig also explains that many foreign radio stations like Voice of America, Mashall Radio, and BBC are also active in KPTD region and they are broadcasting many programs on national, local and international issues. A good number Peshawar based and some Afghan Radio stations are also somewhat popular in this region. ([Baig, 2012](#))

On the basis of the literature review the researcher has developed his objective, methodology and sampling technique to entrance accurate and valid result about people's dependency on foreign radio news.

Hypothesis

H1: It is more likely that, people of District Khyber depend on foreign radio as a source of news.



Research Question

RQ. What kind of media do the people in KPTD use to gratify their need for information?

Theoretical Framework

The researchers based their research on some theory because to explore or verify the existing theory and model results. But the methodology for exploration and verification of the theory and model is different to each other due to the data collection technique, tool and area of the study. For this, the researcher based his study on uses and gratification theory.

Swanson, Richard A (2013) said that theories are framed to clarify, guess, and understand occurrences and, in many cases, to challenge and cover existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding suppositions. Blumler and Katz's (1974) presented Uses and Gratification theory. They suggested that media users play an active role in choosing and using the media. Users take an active part in the communication process and are goal oriented in their media use. The theorist discovered that a media user seeks out a media source that best fits and fulfills the needs of the user. The theorists of Uses and gratification theory assume that the user has alternate choices to satisfy his needs.

Uses and gratifications theory takes a more humanistic approach by looking at media use. Blumler and Katz believe that there is not merely one way that the populace uses media. Instead, they believe there are as many reasons for using the media, as there are media users. They claimed that media consumers have a free will to decide how they will use the media and



how it will affect them. Blulmer and Katz's values can be clearly seen by the fact that they believe that media consumers can choose the influence media has on them as well as the idea that users choose media alternatives merely as a means to an end. Uses and gratification is the optimist's view of the media.

Griffin, E. (2000) said that the theory takes out the possibility that the media can have an unconscious influence over our lives and how we view the world. The idea that we simply use the media to satisfy a given need does not seem to fully recognize the power of the media in today's society.

Methodology

Keeping in view the nature and requirement of the proposed study, survey research procedure was adopted by the researcher. A questionnaire was developed according to the needs of the study. Survey was conducted to know the opinion of the respondents and to assess their awareness. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques will be used to recruitment respondents for the study. The sample size was based on 300 respondents from District Khyber. 100 respondents of the age group between 15 to 65, from each Tehsil Bara, Jamrud and Landi Kotal were asked to fill the research questionnaires.

The questionnaires which contained 15 different, close and open-ended questions were filled by 300 respondents in District Khyber.

The universe of study was the people of three Tehsils the Khyber Agency namely Bara, Jamrud and Landi Kotal. Although the questionnaire was



developed in English language, but during the field survey all the questions were asked in Urdu language and native Pashtu, to make the uneducated people understand with ease and collect some good data.

Statistical Package for social science (SPSS; version 20) was used for the data collection. The data was analysed through the said software to ensure objectivity in the results of the study.

The researcher used descriptive and inferential statistics of the data to examine association and difference in the data. Chi-square test was used to find association among the data. Besides for simple analysis of the data, some cross tables of different questions and data were also developed to clarify and explain the situation more.

Data analysis and interpretation

Due to inexpensive and easy access, most of the people are using radio. It has become one of the common mediums all over the country. Therefore, this study attempted to understand that what kind of radio stations do they listen for the information. The study presented in tables, charts, data and graphic forms to provide a clearer picture to understand it.

Table1: Radio listeners in District Khyber

Radio listeners and non-listeners		
	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	278	92.7 percent
No	22	7.3 percent
Total	300	100.0 percent



A total of 300 respondents from the three tehsils of District Khyber (Bara, Jamrud and Landi Kotal) filled the questionnaire, 278 of them were radio listeners and only 22 were non-listeners of radio. As shown in table 1, about 93 percent were used to listen the radio, it shows that majority of the people in District Khyber are radio listeners.

Table 2: List of Local and Foreign Radio listeners.

Local and Foreign Radio listeners in District Khyber		
Frequency		Percentage
Local	69	23.0
Foreign	209	69.7
Total	278	92.7
None Listeners	22	7.3
Total	300	100.0

Into the response to questionnaire in District Khyber 209 (75 percent) people listen the foreign radio stations. In the 300 respondents 69 (25 percent) were also radio listeners but they only listen local (Pakistan) radio stations. While 22 were non-listeners of the radio. The percentage of foreign radio listeners is very high.

Table 3: Which Radio Station you prefer to listen most.

	Frequency		Percent
	BBC	53	17.7
	VOA	68	22.7

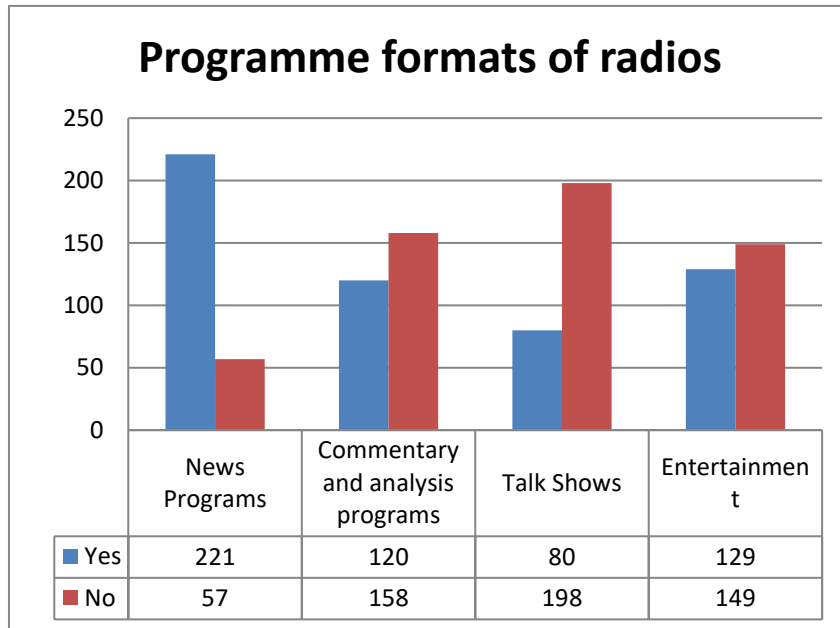


	Mashall	84	28.0
	PBC	28	9.3
	Local FM	33	11.0
	DW	12	4.0
	Total	278	92.7
	None Listeners	22	7.3
Total	300		100.0

In District Khyber (KPTD) there are many local and foreign radio stations which are broadcasting their programs in this area. The above chart shows some main and most active radio stations in District Khyber. If we take a look at the chart it shows that 30 percent people in KPTD are listening to Mashall Radio. While 26 percent people are listening Voice of America (VOA) and 18 percent are the listeners of BBC. The graph also shows that above 75 percent people are interested in international radio stations. Only 10 percent people in District Khyber are listening government owned radio i.e. Radio Pakistan. While 12 percent respondents are listening the local FM radio stations.



Fig. 1: Program's formats of different radio stations.



Radio is a basic tool of information but different radio stations broadcast different kinds of programs for their audience. In the questionnaire, the respondents were given open choice to highlight their interest's programs of their favorite radio station. 221 respondents answered that their first priority is news programs. 129 were listening the radio for entertainment. Only 80 people showed their interest in different Talk Shows. So, the figure 1 shows that most of the respondents in District Khyber are using radio for news programs. So, it explains that majority of residents of KPTD are using foreign radios as source of information though they have access to some local (National) radios too but most of the people are relying on international radio stations for news and other information.



Hypothetical analysis and interpretation

H1: It is more likely that, people of District Khyber depend on foreign radio as a source of news.

Is there an association between radio stations in District Khyber and listeners of News programs?

Table 4 Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.929 ^a	1	.000

A chi-square test was performed to investigate the relation between the foreign radio listeners and news programs in District Khyber. The results demonstrated that there is an association between listening of News programs and foreign radio station.

Asymp Sig < 5 percent So we are rejecting null hypothesis. And the result shows that people of District Khyber depend on foreign radio stations for news programs.

Results

The results of the study are presented in the following

R.Q. What kind of media do the people in KPTD use to gratify their need for information?

The research explores that high majority of the respondents listen to foreign radio stations. And few people listen local radio stations. The research also provided that are the main radio stations in KPTD and what kind of program do they listen to gratify their need for information.



Majority of the people stated that they listen their favorite radio station because of its fresh and credible news. The research identified that 30 percent of the respondents listen Mashall Radio. So, it is clear now that Mashall radio is the favourite radio stations among the people of District Khyber. The research also shows all the three top favourite radio stations in KA are of foreign countries. 26 percent people listen to Voice of America and 18 percent listen BBC, while the remaining 26 percent people listen other radio stations.

H1 is proved significant; it shows that majority of the respondents listen foreign radio stations. And the people of District Khyber listen foreign radio stations for news programs, they are also fond of listening other programs like talk shows and commentaries which are also informative programs. So, it proves that in District Khyber, most of the people depend on foreign radio stations as a source of news.

Conclusion

District Khyber is one of the popular and oldest tribal areas of Pakistan. To talk about gathering information, the people of District Khyber mostly depend on radio sets, because as compared to other parts of the settled areas of Pakistan, literacy rate in District Khyber is very low. Therefore, majority of the people are not interested in reading newspapers. Besides, due to shortage of electricity the people of District Khyber are unable to watch television.

The study concludes more than 90 percent of the respondents in tribal districts has access to radio and they are actively listening the radio. They



listen to multiple radio stations; with 39 percent listening to at least three stations, 28 percent listening to three to five stations and 32 percent listening to more than five stations.

Mashall radio is the most popular radio station in District Khyber and the second most favourite radio station in District Khyber is Voice of America. Radio Pakistan is less popular radio among the audience in District Khyber.

Mostly people use radio to gratify their needs of getting national and local news. It is also concluded that 82 percent of the listeners in tribal districts listen radio for information about country; 46 percent listen the radio for local news and 10 percent of the audience keeps radio for music. It further elaborates that just 10 percent radio users listen talk shows and other informative programs on their radio sets. However, international radio stations like the BBC, the Voice of America's (VOA) Deewa Radio and Mashaal Radio broadcast contents in different forms specifically for these areas. A number of Afghan radio stations and Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation's (PBC) Peshawar-based radio are also quite popular. The study shows that 70 percent of the radio listeners prefer International radio stations. The international radio stations, particularly Deewa Radio, Mashaal and BBC Pashtu Service are widely listened to by the local people. These 5 international stations generate and disseminate more information than the local stations and thus enjoy a greater listenership in tribal districts. Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) is broadcasting its transmission regularly in this region. Apart from local radio stations in tribal districts, there are some international radios as well. Most of them are broadcasting



their transmission on Short Waves (SW) and Medium Waves (MW) from their own countries.

The first reason behind this tendency is the reception quality of foreign radio station is this area. Although Voice of America, BBC and Mashaal Radio broadcast their transmission far away from Pakistan but the quality of their transmission is much clear and good in District Khyber. So, majority of the locals of District Khyber prefer to listen to foreign radio stations. The second reason of listening or depending on foreign radio is that the people of District Khyber think that the foreign radio stations are broadcasting credible news as compared to local radio stations. Some of the people of District Khyber are of the opinion that their news and information are fresh and more authentic as compared to local radio stations. Most of the foreign radio stations are broadcasting their transmission in Pashtu and Urdu languages in KPTD. People of District Khyber are more interested in listening to radio in their native language which is Pashtu. In District Khyber there are many local and international 6 radio stations. US government started VoA Deewa Radio, a Pashto language radio station after 9/11 tragedy to combat the Taliban ideological propaganda in the Pak-Afghan regions. In short time Deewa Radio developed a sense of ownership in the local communities. They are more focused on local issues and broadcasting interactive programs regarding tribal districts and that why the locals prefer this radio. Mashaal Radio also followed the steps on VOA and soon became a famous radio station in tribal districts. Mashaal Radio known as brave radio station for broadcasting fresh and reliable information.

The people in District Khyber believe that foreign radio stations are most reliable, credible and authentic sources of information. The people of



District Khyber also like such kind of programs which are interactive and they can directly participate in it through phone call or messages. The hypothetical analysis of this study also shows that the people of District Khyber are depending on foreign radio stations as a source of news and credible information.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Due to limited resources, the study only limited to one Tribal District. It will be better if researcher collect data from all Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tribal Districts (KPTD).it is also important to analyzed content of those radio stations.



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