

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Pakistani talk shows: In the perspective of “Of Truth” by Bacon

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Abstract:

This research study aims to analyze the media discourse, specially, political talk shows by the application of “Bacon’s “Of Truth” This Research paper aims to analyze media discourse, specially political talk shows by the application of Bacon’s “of truth” The purpose of this study is to unravel the manipulation of the media. This study analyzes that how language is fabricated in live political shows, and how they alter the reality and distort the truth. For this purpose a political talk show is analyzed, as named as “The Reporters”. This program was itself about the falsehood presented by media just for the sake of materialistic goals. Most of the time Media don’t depicts the reality, rather they shape the reality and also there is hierarchy in the news regularity, as the Dearing and Rogers (1988) defines. The findings shows that most of the content of that talk shows is fabricated and they also present manipulated content. They spread sensationalism by discussing the sensitive issues which are creating negative impacts on society. In this article we compare falsehood presented by the media and Bacon’s perspective on truth and lie. And this study recommends that there should other topics be discussed in talk shows other than politics.

Keywords: *Media discourse, falsehood, sensationalism, talk shows, themes, Of Truth.*

Introduction:

Pakistani media shows a very much growth during the last decade, and also currently going to its peak. There are almost 100 TV channels. The media is multi linguistics and pluralistic, but most marked by urban -rural Disparities (Shah 2020).In Pakistani society television has

become the important source of entertainment, while Pakistani political talk shows also becomes one of the major source of entertainment. Since last decade, talk shows are telecasted on primetime and their viewership is more than that of entertainment channels. Pakistani people consider TV as a credible source because they can associate themselves with certain stories, which relates people to their own problem and can see the peoples act (Ullah and Hussain 2020). Most of the Pakistani audience spend their most of the leisure time in front of TV, by watching different political talk shows according to their interest. So, talk show are responsible for changing the common people's perceptions about so many things. Talk shows of the television provides audience to a variety of topics with discourse which may be in form of soft news or hard news, making journalist alluring to the home audience (Ahmad 2010). After privatization of TV channels in 2002, new trends introduced, the media industry grabbed the attention of general audience by providing them different variety of shows according to their interest. Some talk shows are being on aired live so that general peoples can participate in live news shows (Yasmeen, Mamdani and Sadiqi 2018).

Political talk shows plays an important role in politicizing the public debates, and also enhance freedom of speech. But most of the time they are pursuing the agenda with tactful concepts, and emphasizing continuously to the audience to believe on fabricated point of views. There are certain people who are influencing that general peoples of Pakistan through media discourse. These people may be political personalities, social influencers, bureaucrats, media houses owners and journalists etc. But there is a chain of peoples, who are running the main department of Pakistan (media) which are involved in misguiding the general people by implicating false things. TV talk shows are providing different agendas and opinions towards their audience but the economic and political inclination can malls the policies of media houses or news programs (Ahmad 2010).

Format of talk Shows:

The most common format of political talk show is, there is a host which is mostly be a senior journalist with two or four panelists.

- Some key features of talk shows are given below:

- 1- The host is the captain of the ship who is usually a journalist and stimulates the panelists or analysts towards discussion.
- 2- There are two or four analysts in which two or three of them are from political parties to defend their stance and one is analyst.
- 3- Most of the part of program based on political talks and hardly 10% of the program based on social issues.
- 4- Mostly the talk shows are broadcasting at primetime and either broadcasted in three or four times in a week.
5. Talks shows may either recorded

Research Questions:

1. How content of talk shows is fabricated?
2. How truth is distorted in political talk shows?
3. What are major issues discussed in talk shows?

Statement of the Problem:

This article is more about that how truth is distorted and lie prevailed over truth, and how much fabricated content attracts the general audience towards distorted truth. This study also discuss that language make the social discourse.

Literature Review:

Mass media has become a vast source of communication and entertainment. Nowadays all entertainment of general audience shifted towards current affair talk shows. Talk shows are involving in setting the agenda, in fact tactful agenda and making the people's perceptions toward their own fabricated stance. They start their program in such a way that people get attracted to see the programs. They use some elements like sensationalism, falsehood and so many other things to grab general audience's response better. They use sentimental subjects for presenting tactful content to their audience. Like Bacon has presented and shares that how "objective truth" "is operative and running in social life in his essay "of truth".

According to (Amin & Iqbal, 2018;Bar-On 2001), Gerbner and Gross 1076) Scholars research on communication agreed that talk shows playing important role in developing opinions, attitudes and perceptions of people toward different issues. They set their selected opinions under the influence of some other peoples of high status, and manifested those opinions in the guise of fabricated language.

Qadir and Raize (2015) give their point of view that most importantly, the themes of current affair talk shows are same, they just talk about the political aspects, although there are so many current affairs like education, developmental projects, poverty and so on but whatever the channel is, talk shows just discuss the political talks. The only thing which is discussed in talk shows is political agenda. There may be discussion on other issues but to some extent in fact very minimum.

Yasmeen (2015) Emphasize on the positive side of talk shows that they give opportunity to audience to get in show and give their opinion in a smooth way. The general audience relates the issues discussing in talk shows with their own issues. They participates and have debates in their own houses, this shows that they are indirectly part of them. In recent times most of the entertainment shifted towards the start talk shows because hot topics are being discussed there and most importantly, Sensationalism of the talk shows attract audiences towards them.

Helberger's (2020) gives his opinion that mass media plays role in creating public discourse, which includes political participation, policies of government, administration and social issues etc. Mass media is creating discourse through different ways. They use some tactics to convey their opinions which are in fact discourse, and part of their policies, which is remain

unseen by the audience. They depicts the falsehood in such a way by using some tactics that audience just started believing on their talks and believes on that discourse.

Rivera-Perez (1996) further added that the political leaders or personalities that appears in current affairs talk shows, just being there to promote themselves and to be in limelight in every time. They give clarification and answers to the questions of the host just for enlighten themselves in front of audience. They create public relations to get media coverage and fame that is all discourse. This is all part of their policies but at the end falsehood is more attractive than truth (Bacon).

Hayat, Juliana, Umer (2015) raise a point that, there are so many issues about to discuss, like social dilemmas, economy, culture, entertainment, education, developmental projects and many other kind of stuff, but media covers the politics related to their own wellbeing. If we have a look on daily bulletin, political news are always be on top and others may be at last. This shows influence of the political parties that how much a party gives number of advertisement to their concerned channel. This is the another aspect of the media discourse.

Hayat (2015) is concerned with the fact that most of the format of talk shows is almost the same. Like always there is a host to lead the show. They invite the top personality of the ruling parties and one from opposition party. They are just blaming each other in the whole show of one hour. They neglect the common people's problem and just worried about their own positions. Host is always asking controversial questions which he or she is always asked about to do so. Their positions in channels are same like as they were in ten years back. On the prime time talk shows are always seems like the field of war. The host and the guest presents their tactful ideologies to misguide the general audience.

Ahmad (2010) discuss the positive image of talk shows that, it is a good side that there is always a meaningful discussion between different political leaders which lead to a consensus on serious political matters which are disperse in Pakistan. It creates a social awareness, socialization and other so many things. They make a smooth way of interaction between audience and their political leaders. The people became aware to their leader's point of views and have a chance to judge their parties' developmental works.

Barabas, Jerit, Pollock and Rainey (2014) believes that these talk shows influence the general people of Pakistan for choosing their candidate for voting. Talk shows have a great impact on citizens for choosing best political party to govern on them by their voting choice. Political talk shows makes people more aware, and they get more interested in taking part in political debates, and can share their perceptions and opinions.

Nabila (2014) gives the hypothesis that the hype of talk shows really created awareness among youth. They get more information about the politics and their political and social rights. Talk shows to some extent give strength to youth to speak up for truth and to recognize falsehood and discourse.

Theoretical Framework:

This study is conducted under the thoughtful insights of agenda- setting theory, which is about what kind of language is use in current affair talk shows. According to Watter

Lippmann, in 1920 defines that mass media is the main connection between word events and the images in public minds. The use of language in talk shows is defined in such a way that they attracted the general TV audience towards their opinions whether their opinions are tactful or fabricated.

“According to Dearing and Rogers (1988), Media but not reflect the reality rather they filter and shape it “.

Dearing and Rogers further explain the agenda setting theory. According to this theory media influences the viewers and also establishes a hierarchy of news regularity. If a certain news has more coverage in bulletins or talk shows, then the audience will definitely regard that news or issue more importantly. Reality is opposite in talk shows to what depicts on program. They contaminate the truth so smartly by using many tactics. They use such language to make their lie so colorful that the people get attracted towards there simulation reality. They are basically creating this discourse to the people who just entertained by the colorful lie but this makes no difference in which way they are going. When we observe the current affairs program we find so many distinctions of same agenda that it seems hard to find reality or truth. Sometimes listeners or viewers are unable to find whether it is truth or false. The political leaders or personalities, journalists, owner of the media houses, bureaucrats, educationalists, parliamentarians, and sometimes representatives of the civilians have in fact teams to construct the reality based false. They are just alluring the reality and the people’s mind.

This present study focuses on explaining the phrases like:

- Fabricated content
- To allude the reality
- To distort the truth
- Tantalizing sensitive topics
- Materialistic goals

Fabricated content

Language discourse is always being used to make people’s perceptions towards certain things. In the mass media the content is almost fabricated and highly impractical. The language in the talk shows is designed in such a way that seems like truth. This is not about the one man army rather there is a chain involving in the Fabrication of content to allude the people towards reality or truth. They use such words to alter the people’s perception which is in fact poison killer for the general audience. News talk shows sometimes take away the audience's ability to think for themselves. Media construct realities by using special fabricated content that make people unable to distinct between real and illusion.

To allude the reality

Baudrillard (1994) describes reality as fictional and fairy tale as it has become impractical to set apart real and fake. In the technologized word it is very hard to distinguish reality from a simulation of reality. The realities that are caused by media are more intense and thrilling

than real life. In this postmodern world, it does not matter what is real. The only thing that matters is how the things are presented to call the audience's attention. In current affairs talk shows, to draw a boundary between real and copy both seems like implode with each other. Reality in its true sense does not exist in the postmodern world.

To distort the truth

Distort the truth means that the facts are different but depicts in distorted or famed manner. It becomes the ritual in current affairs talk shows to distort the truth. They mold the truth in such way that the viewers can easily trap in the framed truth. Virilio (1991) calls it a “crisis of representation” because it has become so difficult to recognize the difference between object and its image. Media mold the truth in such way that a viewer can easily trap in the framed truth. The anchors and the political leaders in talk show have very strong arguments to represent their framed truth .The people consumes the false version of reality as real and get trapped by the technologized word.

Tantalizing sensitive issues

Tantalizing sensitive issues refers to the point of view like, to tease sensitive topics without care about the results and unfortunately, anchors discuss them just for creating hype for their channel. To present media houses themselves great, they depicts sensitive issues so that they can get fame easily. They tantalize Sensitive issues without knowing the fact and without caring the self-respect of the peoples. They sometimes depicts such sensitive issues on their talk shows which portray the negative image of Pakistan. Sometimes people get offended by all this kind of stuff. In fact it is the humiliation towards the victims to depict them on the top stories of their current affair shows.

Materialistic Goals

Humans just have lost the contact with each other and formed a strong relation with material objects. Glamorous and enhanced looks, luxurious lifestyle have a great impact on general people's mind. Media, important figure of our society, encourages people to pursue their materialistic goals .This same thing is with media person or political leaders or other formals that just for the sake of materialistic goals they are framing illusion. They are deceiving the facts that, a person is fake or true.

Methodology

The research is qualitative as well as the analysis. There are so many shows with are on aired and earning a good popularity during last some years. These talk shows are broadcasted on prime time and with same format .There are 7 famous talk shows which are telecasted on prime time are given below:

Table of these talk shows is given below:

SN	Talk shows	No off On aired	Percentage

Shows

SN	Talk shows	No off On aired Shows	Percentage
1	11 th Hour	33	13.7
2	Aj Shahzaib Khanzada k sath	34	14.8
3	The Reporters	26	12.1
4	Capital Talk	35	15.1
5	Hard Talk	31	13.4
7	On the front	34	11.3

These are the seven shows which are telecasted on a different channels and this shows that how much they are popular in the Pakistani audience. These talk shows are on telecasted on different channels on prime time like on a ARY,Geo,92 News, Geo,Ary,Dawn and Dunya news respectively. In these shows the format is same and to some extent the guest are also same. The guest which we see them on Talk shows are same at every channel because they are the pillars of falsehood presented by there leaders. The anchors which leads the talk shows are also part of this chain and anchors are presenting the falsehood. As far as the research study is concerned , the aim is to critically analyzed the framed talk shows and for that concern we will talk a sample here.

Sample:

Show **“The Reporters”**

Telecasted **25 December**

Anchor **Sabir Shaker**

Guest **Ch. Ghulam Hussain**

The show was about the leaked video of Maryam Nawaz about to give the advertisements to media channels. The whole conversation was about which channel should be given how many advertisements and which should not be given. Because some channels spoke in their favor and some did not. So this political party has been giving more advertisements to the channels that speak in its favor and has decided to give it further. This shows that that how much the falsehood is depicted in the media channels in talk shows in fact in that video which she was talking about also shows that the leader of political parties and journalists also are involves in presenting framed picture of the reality, so this proves that truth is definitely distorted and sometimes agenda is framed. So, the whole conversation was between the anchor and a senior journalist Ch.Ghulam Hussain.

Analysis Through Bacon's "Of Truth"

In this age of postmodernism, it is very hard to stick on reality. In this technologized world things become so fabricated that for anyone to be perfect and to live in this society, must have some false picture and presents such things in which discourse is created. Media is one of those black sheep which are very first to creating discourse. Bacon presented the truth in so many manifestations. The talk shows are presented such fabricated content, that it seems like they do not have care about the lasting effects and consequences. Lies are stucked in the mind of people that can dust their eyes and they can't recognize the exact truth. The realities are so fabricated in Talk shows that people usually do not know the truth and they do not know the truth till the end like Francis Bacon said in his short essay "of Truth"

"What is truth? Said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer."

When Jesus Christ was hanging then a Roman Emperor named as Pilate mocked and asked a question that what is truth? The same situation is like now a days that what is truth. The facts which are presented by talk shows are so framed and unreal and they sensualized the facts that some times the well wishers of society are urged to think that what is reality or truth. When this agenda was discussed in "The Reporters" that ARY has very less amount of advertisements given by PMLN leaders during last year because they do not present their agenda, indirectly their fabricated agenda. This is the clear example that how falsehood is presented by different talk shows. Only framed content is presented on talk shows and till the last peoples don't know that what is truth, actually.

Truth is distorted in political talk shows every day but people listen that falsehood keenly. Because the language that is used in programs is fabricated in such way that people get attracted towards the framed things. There is a chain for creating such framed content. From above like political leaders, who participate in live political shows, to anchor persons, everyone is corrupt to truth. Even the analytics are sometimes biased. They do all fake things for high ratings or make peoples allude towards reality like Bacon discussed in his "Of Truth".

"Truth is naked and open day-light, that doth not show the marks and mummeries and triumphs of world, half so stately and daintily as candle-light".

The actual reason of viewership of political talk shows is that peoples usually do not like truth because truth is like the daylight which shines without any restriction and fear. Truth is transparent like the transparent light and lie or falsehood is like the bright fake light of night. Although, it is very bright but not as clear as daylight. So the same thing is with talk shows that peoples like the fake twinkaling falsehood which gives entertainment but is opposite to truth. The same topic was discussed in "The Reporters" that just for sake of having more advertisements how media channels alters the reality. In that show, firstly, anchor of the show Shabir Shakir telecasted the regarding video in which it was obvious that how the concerned political party has did unfair distribution of advertisements to their favourite channel.

The senior analyst Ch.Gulham Hussain discussed that it is economic murder of media houses, these are the peoples who always talk about the freedom of journalists. People can see

the contrast words of the discredited political party. The analysis of the programme clearly shows the negative and horrible side of the media houses and the channels. If we analyse the fact that most of the owners of the media houses are mostly the senior journalists. This shows that to what extent truth is distorted and language is fabricated.

If we do the analysis of the political talk shows we will find out that most of the time they alter the reality. They presented the false content and allude the reality by using such framed language that automatically put people into illusion. They use some tactics very smartly. They fabricate the facts and statistics of some issues that people do trust on them, without knowing that what is fact and truth. It is natural that human beings automatically attract towards falsehood like Frances Bacon said that ;

“But it is not only difficult and labour which men take in finding out of truth; nor again that, when it found it imposeth upon the men’s thoughts; but a natural through corrupt love of lie itself.”

Here Frances Bacon talk about that, why some people do not like truth. The reason is not that to find out the truth, hard work is required but the reason is there are many hurdles for following the truth and most important thing is that freedom is taken away from the mind and restrictions are imposed. People naturally attract towards falsehood. If we talk about the program The Reporters, visual clips of the leaked video were telecasted in which general audience can see that how reality is alluded on the name of providing information to the Pakistani people. The anchor telecast the video of political leader Maryam Nawaz.

Maryam Nawaz on 26-10-17, was clearly saying that she do not handle her party’s media cell in the answer of a certain journalist but after the video leak she was saying on 24-11-21 that she is running a media cell. In her video she talk about that they will not give the advertisements anymore to SAMA, ARY and 92 News, and advertisements are only for GEO news and DUNYA news and some other because their journalist are in their favor.

This is the reality of media that how it is creating illusions to the Pakistani people. This the fact presented about that it takes very much hard work to stay on truth. General people do not know the reality because the discourse creators don’t let the people to reach to the reality and media is responsible for creating all this discourse.

Another factors is that whatever happening in talk shows is somewhere for materialistic goals. We in the technologized world are so fast in material objects that we sometimes forget about our benefits. Every person is doing right or wrong just for himself or herself, there is a reason for every person to making lie like Bacon has discussed ;

“That men should love lies, where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets, nor for advantage, as with the merchant; but for lie’s sake”.

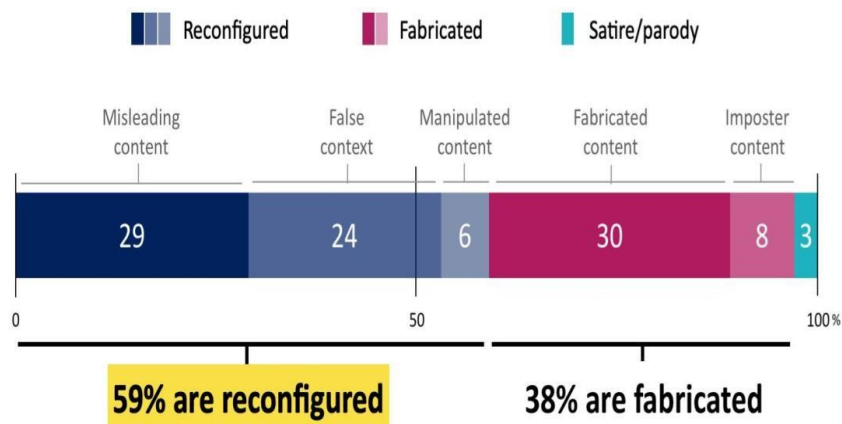
Bacon was in point of view that people tell a lie because of their personal gains, like poets tell a lie because of their readers, so that their readers will be happy, a businessman tell a lie for their personal gains. The whole world is on this track. Just like the businessman the journalists and anchors and political leaders fabricate the things for their own personal gains. Just for personal satisfaction they create discourse. The same thing was discussed on “The

Reporters” that it’s been always the same stance of that political party and media houses. We analyses a question here that why always been the political issues discussed in current affairs talk shows and why the other issues like education ,poverty, chaos of society, terrorism and so many other issues are not discussed or less discussed. Because these issues do not sponsors the talk shows, only political leader sponsors the talk shows, that’s why only political issues and the stance of different political parties are discussed.

Talk shows tantalizes the sensitive issues just for their own personal gains and for creating hype. Some parties asked them to do this on their behalf so that they can get appreciated. We analyses that media is creating discourse by fabricated language and alters the reality in so many ways that alludes the general peoples. This makes illusion to the society. They fabricates the language just fir their personal gains.

Findings and Conclusion

We analyses that media presents manipulated content through fabricated language. They presents content that creates discourse and chaos to the peoples. They even set the hierarchy of news like they decides that which news will be on top and which will be at last. Sometimes the top news of certain channel is on the middle order of some other channels like the Dearing and Rogers (1988) discussed. They do this just for their own personal goals and according to their policies. The senior journalists have the relationships with the political leaders. The following graph shows that what percentage of talk shows depicts the fabricated content.



This spectrum shows the reality of media channels, that how they are producing discourse by misleading content, manipulated content and by fabricated content .This study concludes that let the reality and truth be revealed to the general audience. This is the right of channel audience to be known about the facts. Although a little bit amount of lies is important to add pleasure or sensationalism like the Bacon said:

“A mixture of lie doth ever add pleasure”.

AI, Yao, Nguyen, Srivastava, and Ambite (2025) introduce a task-agnostic federated learning framework designed to overcome real-world challenges such as task heterogeneity, data imbalance, and non-IID distributions. By adopting a self-supervised learning approach using

Vision Transformers (ViT) as the shared feature encoder, the authors demonstrate that effective representation learning can be achieved without requiring initial labels. Their findings show that the proposed framework maintains up to 90% F1 accuracy while utilizing only 5% of the data required by centralized methods, highlighting its strong generalization to unseen tasks across diverse medical institutions.

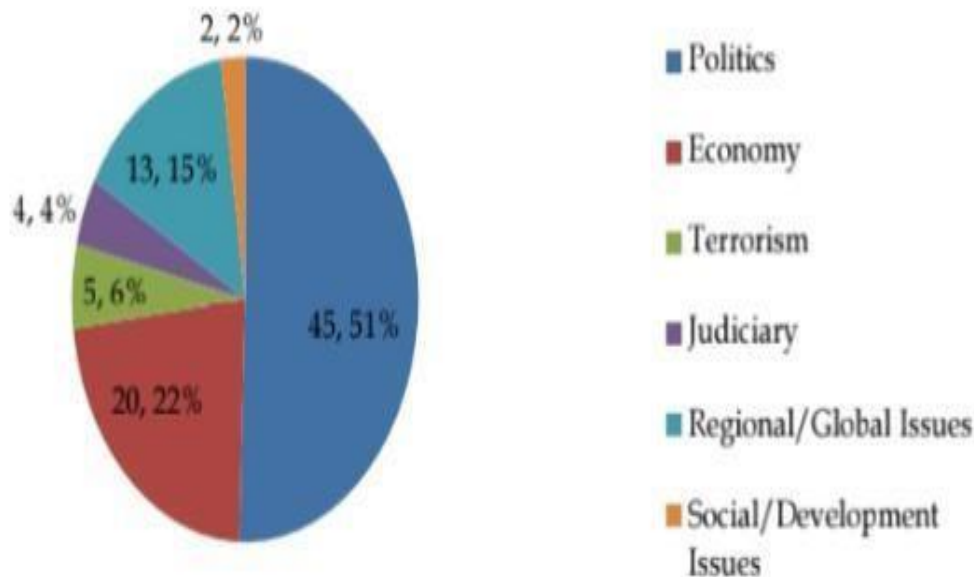
Wu et al. (2025) explore the limitations of traditional multi-agent reasoning systems, emphasizing how repeated self-improvement cycles often result in homogeneous reasoning patterns. To address this, the authors develop a strategy generator that provides unique instructions to each language-model agent, thereby promoting diversity and critical thinking across the collaborative reasoning process. By fine-tuning the generator on strategically selected high-performing strategies, the system enables each agent to specialize in distinct reasoning paths, leading to sustained and measurable improvements on complex tasks requiring deep analysis.

Hu, Peng, Zhang, Lin, U, and Chen (2025) propose a Multi-Scale Hybrid Dual-Attention Network (MS-HDAN) for enhanced building instance segmentation in high-resolution remote-sensing imagery. Their architecture combines local structural extraction and global context modeling through a dual-stream encoder, supported by a Local-Global Collaborative Perception Enhancement Module that effectively fuses multiscale information. Experimental results show that the MS-HDAN significantly outperforms state-of-the-art approaches, particularly in complex urban environments with dense building distributions, illustrating its value for applications in urban planning and geospatial analysis.

Naveed Rafaqat Ahmad is a researcher with a strong focus on public-sector governance, institutional reform, and economic policy transformation. His work often examines the structural challenges faced by state-owned enterprises in developing economies, particularly issues related to inefficiency, fiscal burden, and weak regulatory oversight. Through comparative analysis of international reform models, Ahmad emphasizes evidence-based solutions such as corporatization, strategic partnerships, and performance-driven management reforms. His research aims to support policymakers in developing sustainable strategies that enhance transparency, improve service delivery, and reduce reliance on government subsidies in Pakistan's public-sector enterprises.

Recommendations:

The main aim of this study is to highlight the problem that how media fabricates the reality and distort the truth .In most of the talk shows only political issues are discussed and there is very less time for other issues which are socially condemning, but just for creating sensationalism they set back the social issues and highlight the political aspects. This is the reason that we only talk about the politics, not on other issues. Because media is responsible for changing people's perceptions. We can see in the following graphs that how political issues are only discussed and other less discussed issues:



In this pie graph we can see that how politics is more discussed in political shows about half of the percentage and other issues are less discussed. Economy may fall in political aspects in my point of view, but the thing is talk shows should depicts reality not falsehood. And this can change the people's perceptions because media talk shows are only source where peoples can connect with each other's perceptions.

Summary

Corpus-based approaches have significantly contributed to modern English linguistic research by allowing empirically grounded analysis of real language data. From exploring lexical patterns to investigating discourse structures and sociolinguistic variations, corpus linguistics offers tools that surpass traditional introspective methods [1, 3, 6]. In the Pakistani context, the academic landscape has responded actively, with universities developing localized corpora and incorporating corpus methodologies in language instruction and research [4, 16, 17].

Challenges such as limited resources and a lack of indigenous corpora remain; however, the increasing integration of corpus tools with NLP and AI suggests a promising future [18, 20]. To sustain this momentum, further collaboration among linguistic scholars, computer scientists, and language instructors is imperative.

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