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### **Power of Media and Its Different Strategies**

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## **Power of Media and Its Different Strategies**

### **Abstract**

Media plays an important role in every field in all over the world, government, Political parties and other organizations use media for their own will. After intervention in Swat, Taliban started use of media and designed a special media strategy. Taliban created panic via radio channels and local media and moulding people opinion against government. In Swat, many journalists sacrificed their lives while rendering their professional duties. Five journalists were killed during three years time in Swat. Some highlighted civilian casualties in Swat when military operation started they were declared Taliban sympathizers and were harassed by military and by Taliban also. Media was powerful tool for both sides and they tried to achieve their goals through this technology. During militancy in Swat, Taliban Commander Fazlullah used FM radio technology for preaching. He also warned the inhabitants of the area not to talk against Taliban and motivated them to support Taliban. He was commonly known by radio mullah and during his speech he used harsh words against the government of Pakistan and Pak Army.

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### **Research Topic**

Research topic is “**Power of Media and its different strategies**”

### **Universe of the Study**

Universe of the study is inhabitants of Swat (Who Were victimized during War on Terror)

### **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To explore the Communication Strategy of Taliban in war on terror
2. To Explore How They Used Media for their own purpose
3. To know that how they mould the opinion of local people via media
4. To explain the role of Media in War on terror

### **Research Questions**

Research questions of the study:

1. The impacts of media strategy in War in Swat.
2. The influence and pressure of Taliban on local people.
3. Anti-use of Media against Government and the Pak Army.

### **Methods of Data Collection**

The method of data collection was the local people of swat who were present in time during war on terror.

### **Purposive Sampling**

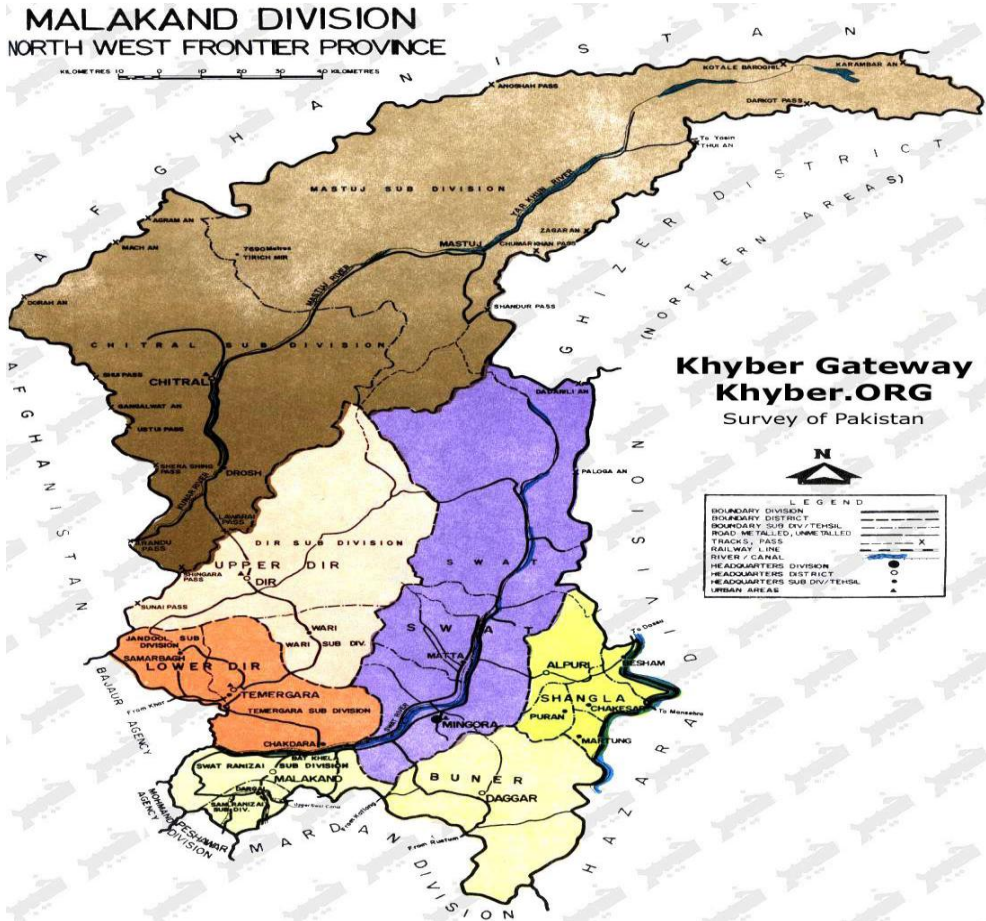
80 persons were selected for this research who were living there when Taliban used Media for their own purpose.

**Duration of the Study**

The research project was completed in one month i.e. November 2011.

**Tools of Data Collection**

Questionnaire and interview schedule were used as a tool of data collection result



**Introduction**

**History of Swat**

The Lush green and historic Swat Valley lies between 34°-40' to 35° N latitude and 72' to 74°-6' E longitude and is part of the Provincially Administrated Tribal Area (PATA) of the North-West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) of Pakistan. The valley is an integral part of the strategic and significant

region where three parts of the Asian continent—South Asia, Central Asia and China, meet.

The names found in ancient sources for Swat are Udyana and Suvastu because of the scenic beauty of the valley and the name of the river respectively. The historical and cultural remains of the area provide evidence about human activities covering a large span of time.

Alexander the Great came here in 327 BC enroute India and conquered Bazira and Ora. At his departure, the inhabitants of the area threw off Greek yoke, and enjoyed either independent

or semi-independent status subsequently. In the meantime, Buddhism penetrated here and Swat became center of Buddhist/Gandhara civilization. The Turki Shahis incorporated Swat in their kingdom but at the decline of their power it remained exposed to Hindu Shahis' influence.

In early tenth century CE/AD, the Muslims occupied Swat. Consequently, Afghans from different tribes, commonly called Swati Pukhtun, came and settled here. They remained independent of the neighboring powers.

The Yusufzais conquered Swat in the first quarter of the sixteenth century and emerged and remained dominant segment. Instead of forming a government, they lived in the tribal fashion, divided into two dalas (fractions) headed by their own tribal chiefs called Khans and Malaks. The Swat Yusufzai enjoyed freedom and neither had paid taxes to Delhi or Kabul nor yielded obedience to any foreign law or administrative system. They fought Akbar's mighty arms for years and incurred great losses over them.

The people of Swat not only fought the British in the historic battle of Ambela in 1863 but frequently raided British controlled territories and provided asylum to anti-British elements. When British forces were sent against Umara Khan of Jandol to relieve their garrison in Chitral in 1895, the Swatis commanded all the three main passes leading to Swat: Morah, Shahkot and Malakand. In spite of tough resistance, the British, however, succeeded in making their way by a stratagem. They established garrisons at Malakand and Chakdara and created the Agency of Dir and Swat, commonly called Malakand Agency, in 1895 for protecting their strategic interests. Political Officer later Political Agent was posted in Malakand for dealing and communicating through him with the local states (Dir, Chitral and later Swat as well) and the tribes. The rulers and tribal chiefs in the Agency were paid subsidies for pro-British services and role. The Swatis, however, rose en-mass in 1897 to oust the British from Malakand and Chakdara under the leadership of Sartor Faqir, but in vain.

The left-bank lower valley was brought under loose British control and protectorate in 1895, but the rest of the left-bank valley continued to enjoy independent status till the emergence of

Swat State. The right-bank valley was, however, already made part of Dir State during the years 1879–1881 and hence remained part of Dir State since then but with the interval for the years 1907–1911. The Shamizai, Sebuji and Nikpi Khel sections, however, made common-cause and put an end to Dir's authority over the area, in March 1915. They constituted five-member council to look after the affairs of their area and finally brought Abdul Jabber Shah from Sithana and installed him as King of Swat on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1915.

Abdul Jabbar Shah remained in power for more than two years, but on 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 1917, the *jarga* broke relations with him and asked him to go back. On his departure, the *jarga* installed Miangul Abdul Wadud as the next King. He ruled till 1949 and extended and consolidated the state. He abdicated in favor of his son Miangul Abdul Haq Jahanzeb on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1949, with which Jahanzeb became the next ruler and ruled till the merger of the state in 1969.

### **Historical Usage of the Term War On Terror**

The phrase "War" on Terror was firstly used by Westren Press to refer to attempts by Russian and European Government and eventually the US Government to stop attacks by anarchists against international political leaders.

Many of anarchists described themselves as " Terrorists " and the term had a positive valence for them at the time when Russian Marxist Vera Zasulich shot and wounded a Russian police commander who was known to torture suspects on 24 January, 1878, when threw down her weapon without killing him, announcing "I am terrorist not a killer". The next time the phrase gained currency when it was used to describe the efforts by the British Mandate of Palestine in the late 1940. The British proclaimed a "War on Terrorism" and attempted to erect down on Irgun Lohi and anyone perceived to be cooperating with them.

The phrase was also used frequently by U.S president Roland Reagan in 1980. on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2001, during an address to a joint session of congress President George W. Bush formally declared " War on Terror" when he said " our War on terror " begins with Al-Qaida and it will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and

defeated.

### **PAKISTAN and WAR on TERROR**

At the time of US led attack on Afghanistan in early 2002, the Musharraf Govt. offered intelligence, air space and ground facilities to dislodge the Taliban regime and capture Osama Bin Ladin and his associates. The US states Department named 36 Pakistani and Kashmiri Organizations on its hit list. The annual report "Pattern of Global Terrorism" also included 38 other groups that were previously identified as terrorists as well.

Musharraf boldly took the risk of going against these groups in Pakistan and banned all those organizations which were waging Jihad in Kashmir to liberate it from the Indian clutches. Musharraf merely did this to establish an image of a "Good Boy" in the eyes of Bush and US policy makers.

After which, the US termed Pakistan a "Key" anti-terror ally of US and ranked Pakistan third in the world to assist US in seizing terrorists activities around the globe.

A misconception prevails in Pakistan Media about the emergence of these so called Taliban groups, due to which it projects its even minor incident in a negative sense, thus causing and damaging the soft image of Pakistan inside the country and abroad as well. The actual breed of the Taliban, who are now considered part of Al-Qaeda, took part in the liberation of Afghanistan from former Soviet Union and are now engaged in battle with NATO forces. After the dis-integration of the former Soviet Union, a number of Taliban crossed the border along with their families and took refuge in most volatile tribal agencies in North & South Waziristan, which are adjacent to the Pak-Afghan border. After 9/11, the US launched a campaign to track down Osama Bin Laden and his allies in Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, after five years, this useless American campaign has only brought bloodshed to Pakistan. On the other hand, Al-Qaeda had been operating successfully from across the globe and the US and its allies have badly failed to trace out Osama till May, 2011.

In case of Pakistan, merely threatening president Musharraf, the Americans obtained all

the facilities they wanted from Pakistan and provided all logistical support to NATO forces operating in Afghanistan. In this campaign against terrorism, Pakistan was/is the only country which suffered a lot, by sacrificing so many civilians and security officials, whereas on the other hand it is still a suspected character in the eyes of the US.

Pakistan facing several kinds of disturbance ever in the history of Pakistan by becoming close ally of U.S in the so-called "War on Terror". In year 2007, 62 suicide attacks were carried out, killing 1500 innocent people and handicapped countless. The year 2008, seems worse than the previous one, wherein the first 9 months, the statistics show that 36 suicide attacks were carried out by the militants, killing 650 people and crippled countless. Pakistan is paying a heavy cost in the "War on Terror".

### **What is Media Strategy? And why it is so important?**

Media strategies inform readers about projects and programs through Electric as well print media and other related means like videos, billboards, posters and variable message signs, mass mailings of brochures, newsletters and fliers. Media provides a projection platform to its different clients, for projection of their products and disseminates information among the public to mould their opinion towards a particular product. In the modern age of globalization, information technology and awareness, one can not survive without Media and its miracles.

### **Media Strategies of Taliban in Swat during War In terror**

#### **FM Radio as Social Transformer**

In Swat, Taliban designed a best media plan and designed a strategy for moulding the opinion of people of swat. They propagate false propaganda against Pak Army and Government of Pakistan. In Mullah Fazlullah in his addresses used abusive language for Pak Army and harassed local people. The inhabitants of the area were scared of Taliban. Media played a significant role this time due to Taliban strategy after that Pak Army also started a media campaign against false propaganda of Taliban.

An analysis of the addresses shows that most of their contents included a lot of material which can be classified as personalized interpretation of Islam. Shall analysis were also evidently showed the ignorance of the broadcasters of the basic principles of Islam. Since, the woman in Swat have poor religious education they are not able to distinguish between right and wrong and believe whatever was broadcast on the radio.

In Radio broadcasting women were particularly given a message that the Taliban would re-establish the Golden era of Islam. They were encouraged to donate gold and money and were also persuaded to pressurize their husbands and sons to join the militants in the rebellion against the state. Over a period of time as the Taliban of Swat became more entrenched and powerful they began prompting women via their radio to make donations to their cause. Some of the pronouncement over the FM radio asked women to convince their husbands to join their ranks; other broadcasts urged women to hit the military and police with stones when they came to their vicinity.

During a focus group discussion in Swat, some women respondents had become supporters of the Taliban when Mullah Fazalullah declared that it was forbidden for married women who lived in joint households to speak to their brother-in-laws! It provided many women an "Islamic" justification to get separated from their in-laws. It made the Taliban popular in some households and they were seen as liberating women from the influence of their in laws.

An examination of the process highlighted above clearly shows the power of the FM radio not only as a platform for an outreach program of recreating identities but also as an instrument of mind-control. While the initial entry of the Taliban into the women's mind is made via religious imagery, the subsequent takeover of their judgment and the exclusion of ideas expressed through competing TV or DVD media is blocked ensuring the complete takeover of the mind of the female. The extremist militants have tried to construct a reality justifying their actions by using variety of tactics to bend the mainstream media and taking

an anti government attitude moulding the opinion of people that government is acting on behalf of foreign hands. We can say that extremists have achieved success to some extent by using this stance.

The Pakistan based Taliban militants have been particularly staging some incidents of slaughtering US 'spies and flogging of criminals and inviting media for their coverage. The purpose is clear and loud to send ripples of terror across the population, media is used, telling those who are against the terrorists tactics and antics that they should desist from raising their voices against them. Secondly, the aim of such efforts by extremists and terrorists is to win the sympathies of the local population by playing upon the anti-US sentiments as well as hatred for the criminals. In achieving both these aims, the militants have been successful to varying degrees. The example of terror struck Swat valley, a threat of large-scale militant activities in Pakistan, is a typical case in point. The terrorists have been able to create a situation in silencing people, despite being greatly against the militants and their acts, as explained by 'spiral of silence' theory by Neolle Neumann. This strategy of the militants in particular has worked well in the area of swat.

### **Local media channels**

Militants used local media channels and planned a media strategy which was critical to their overall goals to organize local media channels, networks and target local's mainly rural communities.

Particularly the FM radio stations in the hubs of extremists like tribal areas and FATA and even across the KPK greatly served the purpose of the extremists to radicalize the society and win for the terrorists and their tactics 'legitimacy'.

Few newspapers were too much popular at that time namely Daily Azadi and Daily Shamal which were published from Swat which portray militants as Hero and when Radio Mullah addressed at late night, these newspapers published speech Mullah Fazalullah and when people read these newspapers they scared from Taliban and start helping them because of

terror. In Swat, militants use these local newspapers as a tool and the editors and reporters of these media have strong relation with them. If they publish some material against Talibans, they threaten them due to which they were bound to help them and become puppet in the hands of militants.

### **Radio Mullah'**

The best example of FM radio established by militants was of Maulana Fazlullah (who was known as 'radio mullah'). He was called this because of the use of FM Radio transmitter, installed in a madrassa (seminary) of Imam Dheri village in Kabal Tehsil of Swat district of KP from where he was preaching the profoundly gullible population of the area. That time dozen radio channels were working but radio mullah was a popular among all because that shows the policy of extremists and large number of people was daily listener of radio mullah, 8 to 10 stations broadcasting at the peak of activity. The stations covered the entire lower Swat Valley, while many areas in Upper Swat, in spite of also being locations of militant activity, were not covered. Most stations used low-quality equipment which was mostly assembled locally.

### **Operation Rah-e-Rast and PEMRA Ordinance**

When Pak Army Launched Operation Rah-e-Rast against extremists in May 2009, Pakistan Electronic Media Regularity Authority (PEMRA) detained substantial numbers of such stations in Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa. It was also believed that there were a few FM Radio stations, particularly in the FATA, which indoctrinated people to become suicide bombers. It is very difficult to establish the literal impact of extremist message through FM.

### **Alternative media**

Beside radio channels, Taliban also devised a strategy to produce media messages through CDs, Audio and Video Cassettes. Militant groups used other media means also which included handbills, posters, pamphlets, and the warning letters. Most examples of letters were aimed at specific individuals as targets. They used local language in the Letter when they

intend to give threat to someone but sometimes, they also used Urdu language for the purpose. They captured so many printing presses where they printed and published pamphlets. In some cases, in hurry, they distributed hand-written letters also. Taliban advised people to eliminate social evils like music, which is forbidden in Islam, advocating women to use burqa (Veil), and avoid narcotics and so on. They were in contact with foreign media and also with local Pakistani media frequently, when suicide bomber blew himself or they destroy any government building, schools, they start contacting with media persons by himself to project the incident. SMS were also used for this purpose. They recorded videos of such kind of actions and distributed among media people and sometime uploaded it on the YouTube or social network sites.

These were mostly used as tools to recruit participants for militant training, combat, and civilian attacks. Some CDs and cassettes, particularly songs and anthems on Jihad, were also available in the market; locals were often compelled to listen to these recordings both in public buses and in private cars.

The terrorists own means of propaganda, such as communiqués, broadsheets, pamphlets and magazines generally had very limited circulation, but they did serve vital functions of maintaining ideological militancy among members and sympathizers, spreading their ideas to other potentially sympathetic groups.

### **DATA TABULATION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **Question No .1**

During War In terror in 2009 were you there in Swat?

Yes No

#### **Explanation:**

Table No.1 shows that out of 80 respondents 75(93.75%) were present during war time but 5(6.25%) of the respondents were not there in swat during war in terror.

#### **Question No 2**

Do you believe that Taliban used media for their own Purposes during War on Terror?

Yes No

**Explanation**

Table No. 2 shows that out of 80 respondents, 45(56.25%) have the opinion that Taliban used media for their own purposes during War in Terror 30(37.5%) have the view that they don't believe and 5(6.25%) gave no answer.

**Finding**

Majority of the respondents i.e. 56.25% have the opinion that Taliban Used media for their own Purposes during War in Terror.

Question No. 3

On which medium Taliban got hold during War on Terror?

Print Radio TV other

Yes No

**Explanation**

The above table shows that out of 80 respondents, 20 (25%) have the opinion that Taliban got hold on print, 45(46.25%) said that during war in terror Taliban got hold on radio (Radio Mullah) 10 (12.5%) have the opinion that they also got control of TV, while 5(6.25%) % have the opinion that there were some other means used by Taliban.

**Finding**

Majority of the respondents 56.25% were of the view that they used FM Radio for their as Nellas projection of Tehreek Taliban Pakistan.

Question No. 4

Ever you Listened Radio Mullah Which Was run by Taliban?

**Explanation**

Table No. 4 shows that out of 80 respondents, 65(81.25%) respondents were the view that

they listened Taliban Radio broadcasting while 15(18.75%) said no .

**Finding**

Majority of the respondents 81.25% had the opinion that they listened Taliban Radio broadcasting.

Question No 5

Did Molvi Fazullah use harsh language for Pak Army and Govt. of Pakistan in his addresses on FM radio?

Yes No

Table No. 5 shows that out of 80 respondents, 50 (60%) were of the opinion that he used harsh language for Pak Army and Government while 30 (40%) having opinion that he did not use such words against Pak Army and Government.

Question No 6

How many people regularly listened radio Mullah during War on terror?

30 % 80 % or 50 %

**Explanation**

Table No. 6 explains that out of 50 respondents, 15(30%) were of the view that 30 % people listened regularly Taliban Radio. 20(40%) people were the regularly listeners of radio mullah and 15(30%) gave their opinion that 50 % people were regular listening of Radio Mullah.

**Finding**

Majority of the respondents 40% people were used to listen radio mullah on regularly basis.

Question No. 7

Do You believe that Print media was also used by Taliban?

Yes No

**Explanation**



Table No. 7 shows that out of 80 respondents, 70(87.5%) said that they used Print Media as well for their own purposes and propagation, during war against terrorism while 10(12.5%) were of the view that they not used print media.

### **Finding**

Majority of the respondents 87.5% have the opinion that Taliban also used print media for their desired goals.

Question No. 8

Which Newspaper was read by Taliban during War on Terror?

Daily Azadi , Daily Shamal or both

### **Explanation**

Table No. 8 explains that out of 80 respondents, 50(62.5%) respondents were of the opinion that they used daily Azadi for their own will and 25(31.25%) of the respondents gave the opinion that they used daily shamal for achieving their goals while 5(6.25%) have the opinion that they used both newspapers for their own motives.

### **Finding**

Majority of the respondents 62.5% have the opinion that they used daily Azadi for propagation of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan in Swat.

### **Findings and Discussion**

The study shows that out of 80 respondents 75(93.75) were present there during war time but 5(6.25%) of the respondents were not there in Swat during War on Terror.

In this study, Majority of the respondents 56.25% have the opinion that Taliban Used media for their own Purposes during War on Terror.

The study also shows that in Swat, Majority of the respondents (53.8%) have the views that they used Radio for Their Purpose. It also shows that 81.25% have the opinion that they listened Taliban Radio broadcasting.

The study shows that 80, 50 (60%) have opinion that Fazullah mostly used harsh language about Pak Army and Government and 30(40%) having opinion that he did not use such words against Pak Army and Government.

In this research Majority of the respondents 40% says that they were using Radio Mullah on regular basis just to get awareness and the activities of Taliban. They broadcast their progress report irregularity and inform the people that which area is now under Taliban control and where they are now moving.

In this research project, 87.5% inhabitants of Swat were of the opinion that Taliban used print media for their desired goals and mostly in print media they tried to publish their news in daily Azadi and Daily Shamal as these were more popular among Swati people. Taliban have established strong contacts with the media outlets that's why they published their news in regular basis. Sometime they give special space to Taliban activities and also published the late night speech with banner headlines. This way, more people got scared and informed by these local media, so majority of the respondents 62.5% have the opinion that they used daily Azadi for propagation of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan in Swat.

### **Conclusion**

Journalism is an institution and social practice that proudly claims to possess special insight into shape and meaning of the endless torrent of events that constitute our lived universe. However, journalism as an institution suffers specially in conflict areas where the need to understand the real causes of the conflict are most important. In 2009, before operation in Swat Taliban have full command on local media, they used media as a tool and by this medium they changed the behavior of young ones and on large number of youth directly joined Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan by listening Radio Mullah or reading local newspaper in which full coverage was given to Taliban activities. Due to hold of Taliban on Media, newspapers not only gave positive response to Taliban's activities, but also became under threat regularly. Obviously, this success of the militants is evident from the above-cited

incidents and identifying the formulation and execution of a well-articulated media strategy by them. On the other hand, Pakistani journalists and media organizations have not been able to understand this strategy of Taliban so mostly inadvertently has played into the hands of the terrorists. Whereas, resultantly, there has been no official counter media

strategy in place in Pakistan. If the situation continues, Taliban and Al-Qaeda can further expect to succeed in their endeavors to control and use the media and scare the population of the area. Therefore, there is an urgent need of an effective media strategy to counter extremism and terrorism in Pakistan.

**TABLE NO-1**

No. of Respondents	Yes	No
80	75	5
Percentage	93.75%	6.25%

**Table No- 2**

Nos. of Respondents	Yes	No
80	45	30
Percentage	56.25%	37.5%

**Table No-3**

Nos. of Respondents	Print	Radio	TV	Any other
80	20	45	10	05
Percentage	25%	56.25%	12.5%	6.25%

**Table No-4**

No. of Respondents	Yes	No
80	65	15
Percentage	81.25%	18.75%

**Table No.5**

Respondent	Yes	No
80	50	30
Percentage	60%	40%

Table No. 6

No. of Respondents	30 %	80%	50%
50	15	20	15
Percentage	30%	40%	30%

Table No-7

No. of Respondents	Yes	No
80	70	10
Percentage	87.5	12.5%

Table No .8

Nos. of Respondents	Daily Azadi	Daily Shamal	both
80	50	25	5
Percentage	62.5%	31.25%	6.25%

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