

TELEVISION

Talk Shows During September 2015

In the 8 Talk Shows analyzed during September 2015, PML-N had the most airtime representation (32%); only 6% of guests invited to talk shows were women; 'Security' was the main topic under discussion (29%); and majority of the guests were politicians (62%). GALLUP Pakistan

Islamabad, November 24, 2015

According to a Monthly Research Study conducted by Gallup Pakistan Media Research Consultancy, 'Security' was the main topic under discussion (29%) in the analyzed talk shows, while majority of the guests were politicians (62%) and PML- N was the political party with the most airtime representation (32%). The duration of the analysis is September 2015.

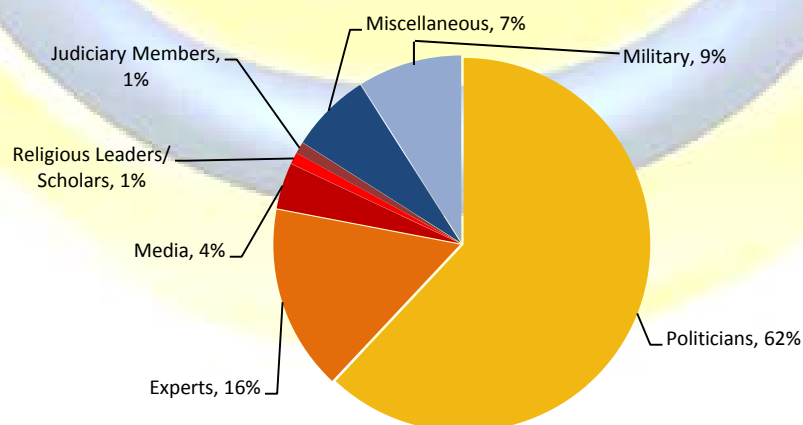
Content analysis of 8 popular current events talk shows (Off the Record; Capital Talk; Meray Mutabiq; Sawal Yeh Hai; News Eye; Aapas Ki Baat; Nadeem Malik Live and Tonight with Fareeha) consisting of a total of 121 episodes aired on different cable television networks was conducted for September 2015. The topics discussed in these shows were distilled into 7 broad categories: 'Economy', 'Governance', 'Law', 'Politics', 'Media', 'Security' and 'Miscellaneous'. Issues that were discussed less frequently, for example sports and socio-cultural subjects, have been included in the 'Miscellaneous' category.

Average Number of Guests: 3 Guests per Episode

On average 3 guests appeared per episode for each show. While some guests were frequently invited on different talk shows, overall there were 134 unique guests out of a total of 379 guests in the 121 episodes analyzed. The figure of repeat appearances by same guests signifies the limited availability and rudimentary capacity of talk shows in attracting fresh faces. It also underlies the limited nature of fresh ideas and lack of diversity of opinion in talk shows.

Background of Guests Invited: Politicians Continue to Dominate

Furthermore, majority of the guests were Politicians (62%), followed by academics (including professors), defense analysts and senior analysts at 16%. Guests from the military: army rangers, air force, police and elite forces constituted 9% of total guests while 7% were from miscellaneous occupational categories such as art, cricket, civil society and bureaucracy. Media personnel (anchors, experts, journalists) formed 4 % of the total while religious leaders and judicial members came last at an equal standing of 1%.



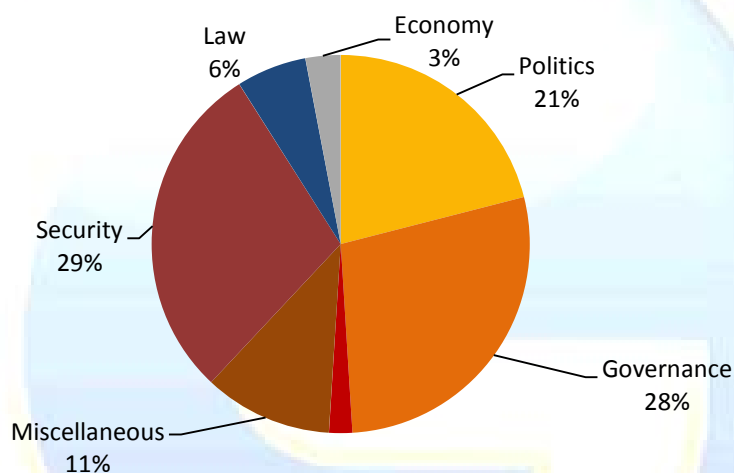
Source: TV Content Analysis by Gallup Pakistan Media Research Consultancy

Air- time Share of Political Parties: PML-N in the lead

In September, the maximum representation amongst political parties was from Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) at 32% followed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and Pakistan People's Party at 24% each. The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) was in third place with a representation of 11% with Jamaat-e-Islami and other parties constituting the remaining portion of airtime.

Most Discussed Topic in Talk Shows: Politics

In the month of September, Security overtook Politics to become the most popular subject of conversation on talk shows. Security concerns and issues formed 29% of total discussions. Governance constituted the next most significant share at 28 %, while 21% of the total airtime in talk shows was dedicated to debating the political situation in Pakistan. Miscellaneous topics were talked about 11% of the time, while subjects connected to law took up 6% of airtime. Discussions on economic matters and media-related topics were relatively infrequent at 3% and 2% respectively.



Source: TV Content Analysis by Gallup Pakistan Media Research Consultancy

Most Discussed Topic Under Security: Pakistani Armed Forces

Within Security, discussions on the armed forces of Pakistan formed the majority at 19%, followed closely by topics connected to the National Action Plan, terrorism and military counteraction at 18%. Debates on various security related incidents and the sensitive situation across Pakistan occupied 12% of airtime, followed by deliberations over the Karachi Operation at 11%. Concerns over the dynamics of the Pakistan-India relationship were expressed in 10% of total airtime devoted to Security.

Most Discussed Topic Under Governance: Corruption and the National Accountability Bureau

Security was followed by Governance as the second most frequently discussed topic. Under the umbrella of Governance, the National Accountability Bureau and corruption were discussed 34% of the time, followed by discussions on democracy at 18%. Investigations into the inefficiency of the Nandi Pur Project occupied 17% of the total airtime. The performance of the PML-N and Nawaz Sharif constituted a share of 11% of discussions on Governance, while debates on health and education had a representation of 6%.

Most Discussed Topic Under Politics: MQM Politics/Resignation/Future of the Party

Politics was the third most frequently discussed topic. Debates on the politics of the MQM, resignations and the future of the party were recurrent, forming 24% of total airtime under politics. Topics linked to elections constituted a 20% share, while the future plans of the PPP and its political dynamics were discussed 15% of the time. General political deliberations stood at 12%, followed by interactions of the PPP with the PML-N and MQM that consumed 9% of total talk show airtime.

The main topics discussed within the category of Miscellaneous were Eid and the collection of animal hides (18%) in addition to Defence Day (6th September) at 15%. Under Law, the Dr. Asim Hussain case was emphasized the most at 68% while Economic discussions focused on the Kisan Package and Nandi Pur Project equally at 50% each. Media airtime was devoted mainly to discussing attacks on the media (71%).

Commentary by Gallup Pakistan Media Research Consultancy Team:

The analysis of talk shows during September portrays the reduced influence of politics over the media landscape, in contrast to the pattern over the past year. In August, Politics had a lead of 12% over the next most discussed category of Security. However, political discussions fell from 40% in August to 21% in September. In September, Security led the show at 29%, closely followed by Governance at 28%. Security may have been the most popular topic, but the major rise in discussion was exhibited by Governance, with an increase from an 11% share in August to a representation of 28% in September. This trend may be understood as partly caused by the overwhelming and increasing interest in security related topics like terrorism and the use of military and the National Action Plan to counteract it. Moreover, the sharper focus on tackling corruption through the National Accountability Bureau as well as the emphasis on democracy and the transparency of the Nandipur Project are the primary reasons for the attention Governance has received in September.

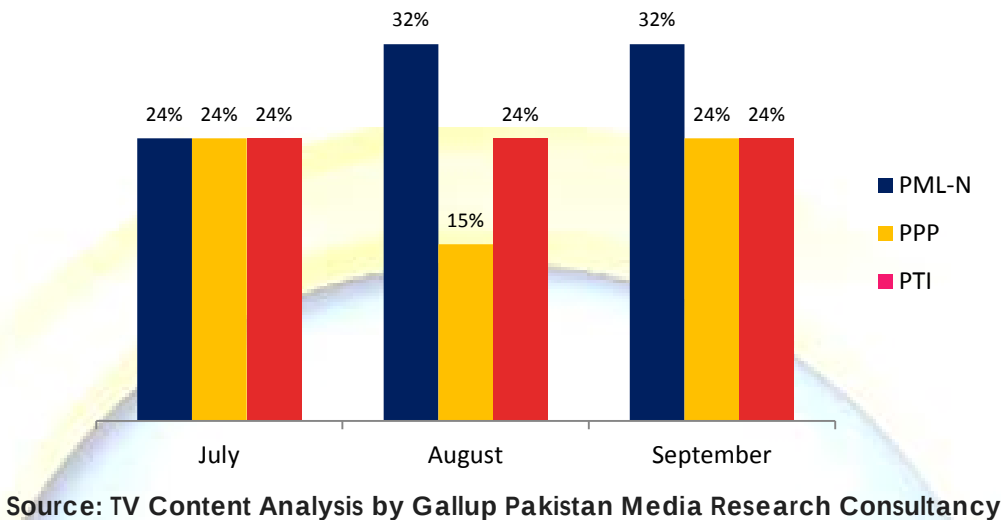
This pattern is welcome in terms of counter-terrorism endeavors and efforts to improve the transparency of the authorities but it is also alarming considering the poor representation of economy and media in talk shows. This trend also illustrates the tendency of Pakistani talk shows to discuss the immediate, short- term issues facing the country, while more concrete, long- term debates such as those on development and energy crisis are neglected and relegated to the sidelines.

Furthermore, a trend that has been persistent over the past months yet again surfaced in August 2015 talk shows. Data reveals that gender- wise representation of guests is very unbalanced in these leading talk shows. 94% of the guests invited were males while only 6% were females. This figure had temporarily risen to 9 % in July but has again fallen (7% in August as well), confirming gender bias in terms of guest participation. This low representation of females on talk shows can also be due to the lesser participation of women in the political sphere in general.

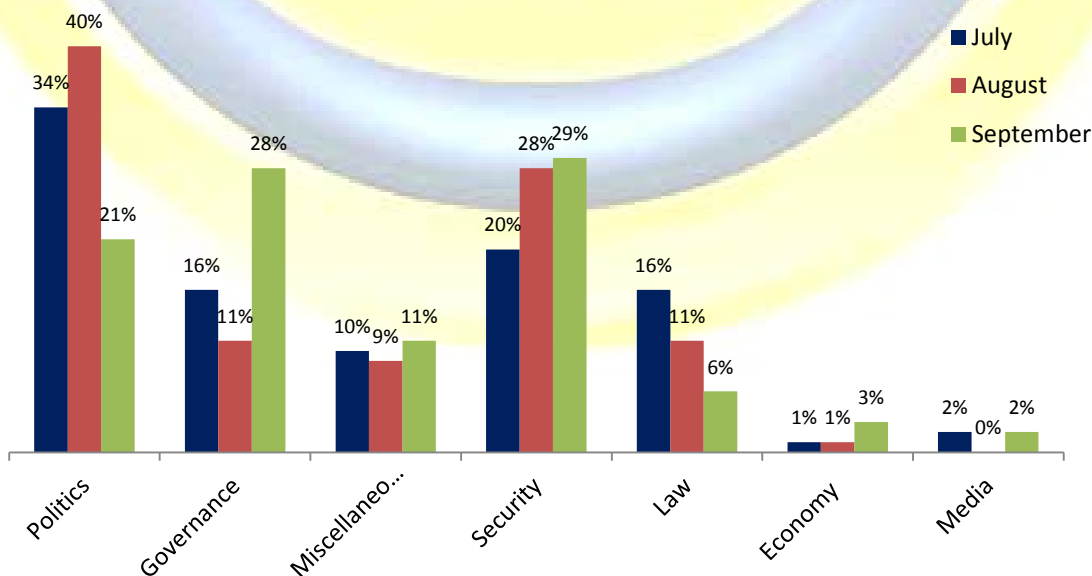
Trend Analysis

This study is part of a longer project hence a comparison of current trends with past ones is helpful in detecting new developments. Comparison of participation of political parties in talk shows reveals that PML-N, PTI and PPP were once again the three parties with the highest representation in talk shows during September, with the PML-N leading at 32%, followed by the PTI and PPP at 24% each. The PML-N showed an increase in representation between July and August but remained stable at 32% between August and September. The PPP, on the other hand, exhibited a decrease in representation between July and August but was stable on an overall between July and September (24%). The PTI had a consistent representation of 24% throughout these three months.

This distribution indicates that media in Pakistan is independent to a large extent and there is little, if any, bias towards propagating the views of a single political party. The fluctuations in representation may be linked to the parties' role in or views on the prevailing situation in the nation, their performance, level of activity in the political domain or their own choices in terms of participation in the media. However, the consistent high representation of the same three parties over these months points to limited airtime occupied by other parties.



A topic-wise comparison between the July, August and September 2015 Analysis reveals that the significance of politics in talk show discussions has considerably fallen, from 40% in August to 21% in September, as people become more concerned about Governance: the prevalence of corruption, the measures to enhance accountability as well as democracy. Security related topics continue to occupy a major portion of time in leading talk shows of Pakistan, while the Law, Economy and Media continue to be underrepresented. Pakistan is a nation whose economy has a pressing need for revival, where media is an important source of information for the public and where bad governance and discrimination is the cause of frequent discontentment from the masses. The increased focus on governance is a good start to this process of revival. We can also see that the Economy and Media have shown some improvement in terms of representation, which is a promising trend for the future of this nation. However, the representation of law has fallen considerably over these three months, a phenomenon that needs special attention if justice is to be served effectively.



The study was released by Gilani Foundation and carried out by Gallup Pakistan, the Pakistani affiliate of Gallup International. The duration of the analysis is September 2015. This data was obtained after reviewing over 70 hours of video, spread over 8 talk shows (Off the Record; Capital Talk; Meray Mutabiq; Sawal Yeh Hai; News Eye; Aapas Ki Baat; Nadeem Malik Live and Tonight with Fareeha) and 121 episodes.

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Gilani Research Foundation is headed by Dr. Ijaz Shafi Gilani who pioneered the field of opinion polling in Pakistan and established Gallup Pakistan in 1980. Currently Dr. Gilani, who holds a PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and has taught at leading universities in Pakistan and abroad, is Chairman of Gallup Pakistan.

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