

**WAR ON TERROR & THE DESENSITIZATION
OF NEWS VIEWERS**

MS THESIS

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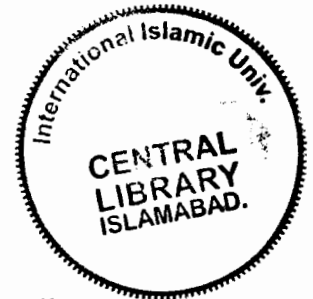
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First and foremost, this research would not have been possible without God's help and the cooperation friends and family members who were willing to provide assistance in every shape and form, lent an ear to my grumbling and a shoulder to cry on!!

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated whether and to what extent regular exposure to reporting on the war on terror in television news causes desensitization to terrorism in news viewers. The objectives of the study were to find out the frequency of television exposure to news on war on terror of Islamabad viewers and to investigate the extent to which exposure to news on war on terror in television is leading towards acceptance of violence. The study also aimed to find out the level of emotional empathy, pro-violence attitude and compassion fatigue on war on terror among television news viewer. Another objective of the study was to find out the level of desensitization towards war on terror among heavy television news viewers and light viewers.

The researcher conducted a *quantitative research* using quantitative research methods, i.e.: survey research. The decision to use this method was taken by keeping under consideration the need to determine the relationship between TV violence and desensitization of news viewers. The proposed research was *descriptive* in nature as the researcher collected, organized and summarized information about the research problem and issues identified therein (Punch, 2000).

The researcher's assessed the desensitizing effect of coverage on news viewers via survey research. The researcher developed a 30 item, close-ended questionnaire to evaluate two variables: pro-violence attitude & compassion fatigue. In order to analyze the effect of this coverage on the third variable, empathy, the researcher use the *Emotional Empathy Scale* developed and used by D. R. Caruso & J. D. Mayer (1998).

A voluntary, non-probability (convenient) sample of 450 residents of Rawalpindi/Islamabad were asked to participate in the study. The drop-off format was used as the response rate is much better than in mail or phone surveys. 378 questionnaires were collected from the respondents of which 325 were retained for the purpose of the study. 53 questionnaires were rejected due to inaccurate filling. Of the 325 retained questionnaires 154 were from female respondents & 171 were from male respondents.

For the purpose of the proposed research news coverage of the war on terror by local television news channels was identified as the independent variable; while compassion fatigue, emotional empathy and pro-violence attitudes were identified as dependent variables.

In Pakistan, the rate on reporting these incidences is far higher due to the country's proximity and involvement in the War itself. Pakistan's proximity to Afghanistan and its active participation in the War has led to a number of terrorist incidents in the country. Consequently, people in Pakistan are regularly exposed to terrorism in its varied manifestations via the media, especially television news.

Observing the media's behavior and keeping media effects research on exposure to violence in mind, the researcher was interested in seeing whether regular exposure to terrorism news on TV and terrorist acts leads to desensitization of the audience.

Desensitization to violence has been most often cited as a negative outcome of exposure to violence on media. Desensitization has been defined as the "attenuation or elimination

of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to a stimulus, which would normally elicit a significant response” (Rule & Ferguson, 1986).

One approach towards the study of desensitization to media violence has been to examine the individual’s capacity for moral evaluation. As mentioned above, desensitization includes changes in both emotional and cognitive responses. Emotional desensitization can be seen as the blunting or absence of emotional reactions to violent events, which would normally produce a strong response.

Audiences are constantly bombarded with news and images focusing on the war on terror. It has become a permanent feature in the news, covering terrorist acts to the human tragedy associated with them. Hard news, features, human interest stories and pictures of these events have become a routine matter for audiences around the world.

Certification

This is certified that the contents and form of the research report entitled “War on Terror & Desensitization of News Viewers” by Amrat Haq has been found satisfactory and fulfills the requirement of the degree.

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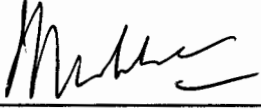
Final Approval

It is certified that we have read this thesis submitted by Amrat Haq. It is our judgment that this thesis is of sufficient standard to warrant its acceptance by the International Islamic University, Islamabad for MS in Media and Communication studies.

Viva Voice Committee

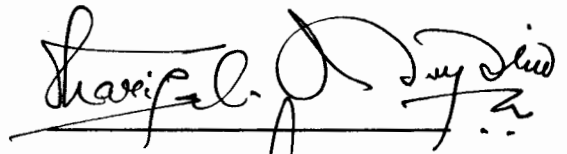
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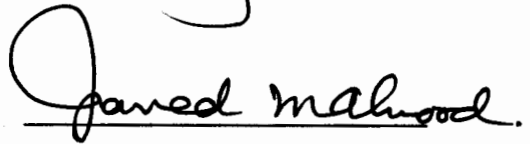
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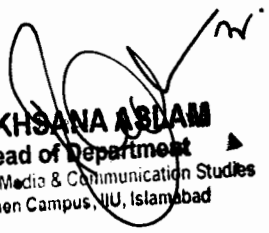

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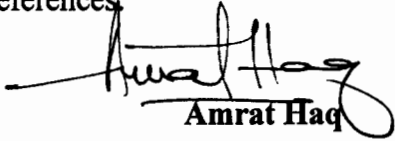
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Declaration

This thesis has been submitted as partial fulfillment of MS in Media and Communication Studies to the Center for Media and Communication Studies. I solemnly declare that this is my original work and no material has been plagiarized and any material quoted from a secondary source has been provided with proper citations and references.


Amrat Haq

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Post 9/11 the war on terror has become a permanent feature in different forms of media from around the world – ranging from news to Hollywood movies, plays and books. However, it features prominently most prominently in the news – with issues ranging from the conflict in Afghanistan, Iraq, the hunt for Al-Qaeda as well as other consequent acts of terror. Reports of alleged suspects and their victims, governments’ policies and action, all have become a permanent part of news coverage from around the world.

Audiences are constantly bombarded with news and images focusing on the war on terror; covering terrorist acts to the human tragedy associated with them. Hard news, features, human interest stories and pictures of these events have become a routine matter for audiences around the world.

In Pakistan, the rate on reporting these incidences is far higher due to the country’s proximity and involvement in the War itself. Pakistan’s proximity to Afghanistan and its active participation in the War has led to a number of terrorist incidents in the country. Consequently, people in Pakistan are regularly exposed to terrorism in its varied manifestations via the media, especially news media.

Here it also needs to be kept in mind that during the last eight years there has been exponential growth in Pakistan’s private media industry. Over 50 channels have started with a number in the pipeline. Of these channels the most prominent are news channels which, for the first time, provided the Pakistani public multiple options for seeking news and information (previously only PTV, a state owned channel was available) – the Pakistani public is now spoiled for choice.

However this growth in the media industry also resulted in the over-exposure of issues as the channels vied for viewers. Consequently the audience is regularly exposed to news on the war on terror – with coverage ranging from the graphic to the mundane.

Observing the media's behavior and keeping media effects research on exposure to violence in mind, the researcher was interested in seeing whether regular exposure to terrorism news and terrorist acts leads to desensitization of the audience.

As Moller (1999) has suggested that the public's response to unpalatable coverage is a lapse into ennui. Here the concept of '*compassion fatigue*' or a disinterest in similar events starts showing in the audience, who are no longer affected by the images and news related to terrorism. This leads to a desensitization of the audience towards a particular issue or event – which in this case is the war on terror.

1.1.1 Media Desensitization

Wilson and Smith (1998) propose that “desensitization refers to the process by which repeated exposure to a stimulus can result in reduced emotional responsiveness to it”.

Potter & Smith (2000) defined it as “Desensitization is characterized by a decrease (almost to the point of absence) of sympathy or empathy, both of which have emotional components”

Huesmann, Moise, and Podolski (1997) describe desensitization as “Cognitive desensitization refers to the idea that the more an individual is exposed to violence, the more violence will come to be seen as a normal and acceptable form of behavior. This process, in turn, will increase the person's acceptance of violent behavior”

Desensitization to violence has been most often cited as a negative outcome of exposure to violence on media. Desensitization has been defined as the attenuation or elimination of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to a stimulus, which would normally elicit a significant response (Rule & Ferguson, 1986).

Although these definitions provide an overview of the concept of media desensitization, no consensus can be found about the effect on viewers. Existing research suggests that prolonged exposure to violence can produce a dulling of response in any of these four domains—cognition, emotion, physiology, and behavior—but researchers have as yet ignored the interrelations and distinctions among these types of potential responses to prolonged exposure to violence (Rudy, 2006).

A number of approaches have been identified for the study of desensitization to media violence. One such approach is to examine the individual's capacity for moral evaluation. As mentioned above, desensitization includes changes in both emotional and cognitive responses. Emotional desensitization can be seen as the blunting or absence of emotional reactions to violent events, which would normally produce a strong response; whereas cognitive changes can be seen through acceptance of violence as the rule; instead of the exception (Rudy, 2006).

1.1.2 Moral Evaluation:

Both emotional and cognitive desensitization can be assessed through the process of moral evaluation. Empathy and attitudes towards violence are components of the process

of moral evaluation. A decrease in empathy and strengthening of pro-violence attitudes are indicators of emotional and cognitive desensitization.

1.1.3 Desensitization and Media Effects

Desensitization is a psychological process that has often been involved in explaining viewers' emotional reactions to media violence. Research on emotional reactions to violent messages has been concerned with the possibility that continued exposure to violence in the mass media will result in desensitization, that is, that exposure to media violence will undermine feelings of concern, empathy, or sympathy that viewers might have toward victims of actual violence (Online Encyclopedia¹).

Research has shown that viewers who watch large amount of media violence show less reactions to violence as well. Many researchers, including Foa and Kozak (1986), have demonstrated that simply exposing a person to frightening stimuli, regardless of whether it is presented in graduated form, will significantly diminish the anxiety or negative affect that the stimulus once evoked. This logic may be applied to the effects of repeated exposure to violence on media.

1.1.4 Definition of terrorism:

The United Nations General Assembly in 2002 offered one definition of terrorism that has apparently been deemed serviceable for most purposes:

¹ <http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/articles/pages/6500/Desensitization-and-Media-Effects.html>
Desensitization and Media Effects, 15-12-2008

'Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes...whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other nature that may be invoked to justify them'

Despite the UN definition ambiguity remains. For example, the limitation of terror to "criminal acts" seems to rule out acts by governments, which are the authorities who determine when an act is "criminal" and when it is not. A definition used by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has a similar limitation in its use of the word "unlawful": Terrorism is the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives. (The Terrorism Research Center, 2002)

The observation that "one man's *terrorist* is another man's *freedom fighter*" frequently can be applied to statements about terrorist actions made by both governments and the mass media. The use of allegedly "terrorist" guerrilla actions by an unjustly oppressed and desperate people with no access to the mass media and no military force to contest their oppression on an open battlefield is not necessarily morally justified, but it is very different from the daily terror they may be subjected to by a dominant state system.

1.1.5 War on Terror & Media Desensitization:

Over the last decade and a half revolutionary changes have occurred in the mass media, especially in the news media. Growing in parallel with increasingly fierce inter-media and intra-media competition and commercial pressures the media industry has seen the growing dominance of the visual. Television has become the leading news medium, with

newspapers only supplementary to TV's instant, live, emotional coverage (Ramonet, 2000).

In Ramonet's (2000) view, television imposes its own perversions on the other information media, beginning with its fascination with pictures. And the basic idea that only what is visible deserves to be news. Television thus tends to set the agenda of all news media, focusing all other media on the spectacular events on which TV itself thrives.

Terrorism, on the other hand, has all the hallmarks of being news that grabs and holds viewers' attentions. Conflict and tragedy have always sold newspapers, and terrorism provides both in abundance. According to Hoffman and Jengolley (2007) although it (terrorism) is typically committed by nameless, faceless individuals, its commission threatens the established order and enables the media to cast perpetrators as active opponents of government policies. Terrorist organizations typically choreograph their actions to appeal to journalistic sensibilities about what makes "good copy" (Kelly and Mitchell 1981; Wilkinson: 1986).

However, while major terrorist attacks like the 9/11, the London bombings and the Mumbai attacks receive front-page coverage; smaller incidents receive no more than a few lines these days. This treatment of terrorism news has been attributed to the over-exposure of terrorism as a topic. According to Hoffman (1998) the media it self is becoming desensitized to terrorism. Hoffman (1998) argues repeated exposure to violent content makes the editors who decide whether and where to publish a story inured to its consequences. As a result, editors are less likely to make stories about terrorism front page news unless something dramatic or new happens.

On the other hand, there are others that worry the media is sensationalizing terrorism in its effort to attract an audience. Nacos (2003, 2002), for example, argues that the media has turned news into an “infotainment” industry – it is less concerned with important stories and more concerned with bloody ones.

Research (Krafka et. al., 1997) on this over exposure and treatment of terrorism has demonstrated a link between media coverage of terrorism events and the creation of traumatic reactions from those who view them. Viewers not only react in fear of further victimization, but they also undergo desensitization . . . to depictions of violence and reduced concern for its victims (Krafka, et.al., 1997).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The present study aimed to investigate whether and to what extent continuous exposure to reporting on the war on terror in television news causes desensitization to terrorism in news viewers.

1.3 Objectives:

The objectives of the study were:

- To investigate the extent to which exposure to news on war on terror in television is leading towards acceptance of violence.
- To find out the level of emotional empathy, pro-violence attitude and compassion fatigue towards war on terror among television news viewer.

- To find out the level of desensitization towards war on terror among heavy television news viewers and light viewers

1.4 Research Questions:

RQ₁: What effect does constant exposure to news on the war on terror have on viewer's perceptions about terrorism?

RQ₂: Does constant exposure to news on war on terror effect viewers' perception about the severity of the problem?

RQ₃: Does the constant reporting on war on terror:

RQ_{3.1}: Reduce emotional empathy amongst television viewers?

RQ_{3.2}: Increase pro-violence attitude amongst television viewers?

RQ_{3.3}: create compassion fatigue amongst television viewers?

RQ₄: Does the economic status of news viewers play a role in the level of desensitization towards war on terror amongst television viewers?

RQ₅: Does gender of the news viewer play a role in desensitization?

1.5 Research Hypotheses:

H₁: *Constant exposure to news on terrorism and war on terror results in desensitization of news viewers*

H_{1.1}: Male viewers are more desensitized than female news viewers

H_{1.2}: Lower income groups are more desensitized than higher income groups

H₂: Constant exposure to violent news on the war on terror results in pro-violence attitudes in news viewers

H₃: Constant exposure to violent news on the war on terror results in compassion fatigue in news viewers

H₄: Constant exposure to violent news on the war on terror results in decrease in emotional empathy in news viewers

1.6 Significance of the Study:

This is the first time a study on desensitization of audience was conducted in Pakistan. The current study on desensitization in news viewers' over the war on terror was a relevant and timely study. It will help in better understanding media's role in the War on Terror in Pakistan and how the war is now being perceived by people. It also provides a clearer understanding of viewers' attitude towards terrorism – whether they consider it news or not. The study also provides information on how the level of compassion fatigue in our society today, which is an indication of how the populace reacts to the violence taking place around them as well as the victims of this violence.

The present study will help identify how the War on Terror is being perceived by the people. This understanding can help the government in understanding the extent to which

the people are willing to claim ownership of this war and how much support their efforts have in the public sphere.

The study can also help in developing a deeper understanding of the role played by media, especially electronic media in shaping people's perceptions about war and conflict. How exposure to constant conflict affects their opinion about the conflict, its participants and the victims/sufferers who are directly affected by the conflict.

While the present study was a survey research, the researcher feels that there is a need for experimental research in order to determine the full extent of desensitization that exists in Pakistan with reference to War on Terror in particular and conflict in general. The results show a level of desensitization; however the results are not conclusive and require further research.

The present study also highlights the need for more in-depth studies on the desensitizing effect of media on its consumers. While there have been multiple studies on the cultivation affects of the media, desensitization opens up a host of questions which need to be addressed.

Pakistan has been ground zero in the war against terrorism for close to a decade now. The level of violence and terrorist incidents has escalated alarmingly in the recent years. This study can help provide a better understanding of how this increase has affected the people – what kind of morale the people have and how they perceive the continued efforts of the government against this menace. The study can also help provide a direction for social analysts who are assessing this phenomenon.

One of the major beneficiaries of this study can be the media industry itself, as it can help them understand how viewers are responding to their coverage of terrorist attacks and on-going operations against terrorist strongholds. It can help them identify the strengths and weaknesses of their coverage and how to improve it.

The Government of Pakistan can be another beneficiary of this study as it identifies how people are responding to their efforts in the War on Terror. The study identifies factors which are affecting peoples' perceptions and support of the war effort, this identification can be helpful in as much that the government can understand factors eroding support.

1.7 Limitations of the Study:

There are a number of limitations to this study that should be considered when interpreting its results. First, since the study employs survey methodology, no claims of causation can be made. However, since the responses were based on the emotional responses of the survey participants themselves, the chances of causation are very high and reversal of results very low. A second limitation is the self-report aspect of the study, particularly in asking respondents to report on their emotions, it is possible that such reports are inaccurate and may be shaped by social-economic, cultural, religious and/or other biases. Third, the sample is not representative, and therefore, one cannot generalize from these results. Finally, no efforts were made to control the effect of any one variable and its influence on the survey participants; i.e. the study was not conducted in a controlled environment. The participants were not exposed to any specific stimuli, nor were their responses monitored.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework:

Media researchers share no clear consensus about the meaning of *desensitization*. Some study it as a physiological phenomenon, some study it as an effect on emotion, some study its influence on cognition, and some study its implications for behavior, but few even acknowledge the existence of this diversity of types of responses. Existing research (Rudy, 2006) suggests that prolonged exposure to violence can produce a dulling of response in any of these four domains—cognition, emotion, physiology, and behavior—but researchers have as yet ignored the interrelations and distinctions among these types of potential responses to prolonged exposure to violence.

There remains a lack of consensus on how desensitization is to be defined. The gamut runs from focusing purely on the emotional to the cognitive. According to Wilson and Smith (1998) Desensitization refers to the process by which repeated exposure to a stimulus can result in reduced emotional responsiveness to it while Huesmann, Moise, & Podolski (1997) argue that Cognitive desensitization refers to the idea that the more an individual is exposed to violence, the more violence will come to be seen as a normal and acceptable form of behavior. This process, in turn, will increase the person's acceptance of violent behavior....Similarly, there is some evidence that a real physiological desensitization can occur.

Linz, Donner-stein, and Penrod (1988) measured the reactions of adult men to films that portrayed violence against women, often in a sexual context. The viewings took place over a period of several days, and comparisons of first-day reactions and last-day reactions to the films showed that, with repeated exposure, initial levels of self-reported

anxiety decreased substantially. According to the results, the research participants' perceptions of the films also changed from the first day to the last day. Material that was previously judged to be violent and degrading to women was considered to be significantly less so by the end of the exposure period. Participants also indicated that they were less depressed and enjoyed the material more with repeated exposure. These effects generalized to responses to a victim of sexual assault in a mock trial presented to the men at a later time. Men who had been exposed to the sexually violent films, compared to a no-exposure group, rated the victim as being less severely injured. The men who had been exposed to the violent film, again compared to men in a no-exposure control group, were also less sympathetic to the rape victim portrayed in the trial and less able to empathize with rape victims in general. These effects did not emerge following exposure to a single film. Longer film exposure was necessary for it to affect the violence-viewing participants' general empathetic response. Linz et al (1988) suggested that the viewers were becoming comfortable with anxiety-provoking situations much as they would if they were undergoing desensitization therapy. In a similar study Linz, Donnerstein, & Adams, (1989) also established that diminishing perceptions of the amount of violence in media stimuli that occur through repeated exposure is joined by perceptions of violence as more commonplace and normative. It also showed that a reduction in physiological responsiveness accompanies repeated exposure to sexualized violence and that viewing violent films result in less sympathy for victims of domestic violence as well as rape victims.

More recently, Erica Scharrer (2008) verified that those with greater exposure to violence in the news and entertainment (both electronic and print) were less disturbed by violent

news stories. The study also identified two more factors responsible for desensitization, one heavy exposure to violent news content in newspapers and two heavy viewing habits in news viewers. According to the author this leads to increased acceptance of violence as the norm and nothing special.

In addition, Mullen and Linz (1995) demonstrated that viewers who show desensitization toward victims of violence in non-media contexts following exposure to media violence may recover sensitivity rather quickly provided they are not exposed to additional violent depictions. An experiment was conducted to examine the effects of repeated exposure to sexually violent films on emotional desensitization and callousness toward domestic abuse victims. Results indicated that emotional responses, self-reported physiological arousal, and ratings of the extent to which the films were sexually violent all diminished with repeated film exposure. Three days following exposure to the final film, participants in the experiment expressed significantly less sympathy for domestic violence victims and rated their injuries as being less severe than did a no-exposure control group. Five days after the final film exposure, the participants' level of sensitivity to the victims of domestic violence rebounded to the baseline levels that were established by the no-exposure comparison group.

Exposure to violence in the mass media may result in a desensitization effect in which viewers experience diminished feelings of concern, empathy, or sympathy toward victims of actual violence. According to Dexter, Penrod, Linz, & Saunders (1997) viewers who watch large amounts of media violence show less physiological reactivity to violence in other contexts. "In these studies, (Linz, Donnerstein, & Adams, 1989; Linz, Donnerstein,

& Penrod, 1984, 1988) men exposed to so-called slasher films containing violence against women became less anxious and reported fewer negative affective reactions with repeated film viewing; they later showed reductions in physiological reactivity to depictions of domestic violence, showed less sympathy for victims of sexual violence in more realistic contexts, and judged these same victims to be less injured compared to no-exposure control subjects.(Ibid)

However, Rudy (2006) found that while media violence exposure produced emotional and physiological desensitization in men, it failed to produce the same in women. The study investigated the interrelationships among these domains using television violence as a stimulus and measures from all four domains (cognitive, emotional, physiological and behavior) as outcome variables. Material used in the experimental conditions was taken from *Sports Disasters* and *24*. Two experimental tapes were created; the second presented different episodes from those on the first, and in reverse order. *Sports Center* and *The West Wing* provided a control version of the violent material. A final stimulus tape, consisting of five minutes' worth of violent content from *The Shield*, was created for presentation to all participants. Ninety-five introductory communication students in a California university participated in this study, one at a time, in exchange for course credit. An experimenter randomly assigned each participant to one of two experimental conditions or a control condition. Participants in the no-violence condition watched the control video, participants in the low-violence condition watched one of the experimental tapes (chosen at random), and participants in the high-violence condition watched both experimental tapes (the first chosen at random, to reduce order effects), one tape in each of two research sessions. The results indicated that physiological response to violent

media was the strongest predictor of intervention behavior, that emotional response to violent media was the strongest predictor of pro-violence attitudes, and that the influences of physiology and emotion were largely independent of the other domains. The study also found that cognitive and emotional desensitization are linked.

The previous stand is also supported by Felson (1996) who argues that while it can be argued that some people would be more susceptible to media influence than others, research has not shown any consistent statistical interactions involving individual difference factors and media exposure. This failure to find individual difference factors that condition the effects of media exposure on aggressive behavior contributes to skepticism about media effects. Felson (1996) studies empirical evidence regarding whether media violence has a causal effect on the aggressive behavior of viewers. He reviewed classic studies, the meta-analyses, and more recent researches in order to assess this phenomenon. He also examined the theoretical processes that might explain short-term & long-term effects. According to his studies, exposure to television violence probably does have a small effect on violent behavior. However, he also states that it is unlikely that media violence is a significant factor in high crime rates in the US. He further adds that the people who engage in criminal violence also commit other types of crime. An explanation that attributes violent behavior to socialization that encourages violence cannot easily explain the versatility of most violent criminals.

Mieller (1999) states that compassion fatigue is the unacknowledged cause of much of the failure of international reporting today. It is at the base of many of the complaints about the public's short attention span, the media's peripatetic journalism, the public's

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boredom with international news, the media's preoccupation with crisis journalism. What does compassion fatigue do? It acts as a prior restraint on the media. Editors and producers don't assign stories and correspondents don't cover events that they believe will not appeal to their readers and viewers. Compassion fatigue abets Americans' self-interest. If conventional wisdom says that Americans are only interested in their own backyard, the media will prioritize stories where American political, cultural, or commercial connections are evident. Compassion fatigue reinforces simplistic, formulaic coverage. If images of starving babies worked in the past to capture attention for a complex crisis of war, refugees and famine, then starving babies will headline the next difficult crisis. Compassion fatigue ratchets up the criteria for stories that get coverage. According to Mieller (1999) journalists reject events that aren't more dramatic or more lethal than their predecessors. Or through a choice of language and images, the newest event is represented as being more extreme or deadly or risky than a similar past situation. Compassion fatigue tempts journalists to find ever more sensational tidbits in stories to retain the attention of their audience. Compassion fatigue encourages the media to move on to other stories once the range of possibilities of coverage have been exhausted so that boredom doesn't set in. Events have a certain amount of time in the limelight, then, even if the situation has not been resolved, the media marches on (Mieller, 1999). This search for news means that the more violent an event is the more interested the media will be in covering it. As a result violent news has become a staple in news programs around the world – from domestic violence to street crimes to terrorist attacks.

Regular coverage of conflict by news media is also contributing to the phenomenon of compassion fatigue which is developing rapidly amongst news viewers. Dimitrova (2006)

argues that journalists author the frames within which atrocities appear. Specifically, as story-tellers, they select the relevant sources, excerpt their quotes and rank-order them in the structure of their narrative in such a way that the audience can make sense of the reported events. Furthermore, to facilitate the process of meaning construction, journalists rely on footage to represent, and emphasize the most pertinent points of their reports. Using an ethnographic content analysis (ECA) to document and interpret the meanings, emphases, and nuances of the messages produced by CNN international and domestic correspondents in the coverage of atrocities, Dimitrova gathered from data from the online collection of the Vanderbilt Television News Archive. Preliminary investigation of public discourse, and intensive study of the subject--important steps in theoretical sampling--revealed that the plural noun atrocities was used in a range of situations, and by a variety of speakers. CNN devoted 5 hours and nine minutes to the reporting of atrocities on the nightly news. Structurally, these appear in 32 segments. A total of 147 stories were found. References to atrocities were made in fifty-two stories, framed as diplomacy, military operation, refugees and evidence. Dimitrova argues that this repetition of an idea or news by the media leads to desensitization and compassion fatigue in the viewers – reducing their empathy with the victims of the aggression.

Another reason why mass-mediated terrorism needs to end is because there tends to be serious effects when it comes to children and fear of terrorism. According to Waddell (2008) children may be especially fearful that threatened or actual military action overseas will result in more personal loss and violence here at home. Children do not understand terrorism, so when they see repeated scenes of destruction and property they are terrified that they are going to be personally harmed. Children see images on

television and they also hear things at school, so when they think of terrorism their imaginations run wild and they think of the most horrible things that could happen. Since children are not mature enough to understand the war on terrorism they begin to feel anger, loss of stability, confusion and most of all fear. Overall, it is evident that there is an immense amount of fear that is being portrayed because of mass-mediated terrorism. People are suffering all over the globe because of it and more importantly children are suffering. The war on terrorism is not going to stop, but the media can help by stopping such dramatic and horrifying images, that is spreading fear throughout the globe.

However, Potter & Smith (2000) present a case dissimilar to Waddel's conclusions. They argue that the case for a fear effect is stronger. According to the authors the process of constructing explanations about how television violence influences viewers necessarily moves from content through viewer perceptions of the content to effects. This study focuses attention on the first of these components--content. The researchers argue that desensitization can be a long term effect while more immediate effects are those of fear and disinhibition. The data for this analysis were from the second year of the three year National Television Violence Study (NTVS, 1997). The sample consisted of 3,235 programs representing a composite week of programming from 6 a.m. until 11 p.m. from 23 channels, including broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, Fox, and NBC), independent broadcast channels in the Los Angeles market (KCAL, KCOP, and KTLA), public broadcast, basic cable channels (A&E, AMC, BET, Cartoon Network, Disney, Family Channel, Lifetime, Nickelodeon, TNT, USA, VH-1, and MTV), and premium cable (Cinemax, HBO, and Showtime). Selection of programs was random from a sampling frame of 20 weeks of programming beginning on October 7, 1995 and ending June 7,

1996. Excluded from coding were the 478 programs that were religious, game, sports, infomercials, instructional, and breaking news shows. A total of 2,757 programs were coded. The results show that judgments of high violence and high seriousness would seem to lead more to an effect of fear than to the effects of desensitization or disinhibition. Also that the linkage of graphicness with reality would seem to increase the likelihood of a fear effect, because research has consistently shown that realistic settings and human type characters lead to more intense responses than do fantasy settings and characters

In the case of 9/11 Wohl and Branscombe (2007) found that reminders of the Sept. 11 attacks seem to dull the responsibility that Americans feel for the harm caused by the botched U.S. war in Iraq. In controlled experiments the social psychologists divided the participants in the following groups: one group was reminded of the terrorist attacks, while another was told about Nazi atrocities in Poland during World War II. A third group was reminded of the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The volunteers were then quizzed on their views about the Iraq war. According to their results volunteers reminded about the Sept. 11 attacks were less likely to perceive the distress the war has caused many Iraqis, and less likely to feel collective responsibility, compared with volunteers told about the tragedy in Poland. The research showed that when you reminded Americans of those instances in which their group has been victimized in the past, you see an increased legitimization of American actions in Iraq and reduction in the amount of guilt they feel for the amount of harm their country may have inflicted on another group. The research further indicated that even when Americans were reminded of their history of victimization with an event that cannot be linked to the war in Iraq, an increase in legitimization and a decrease in collective guilt could be seen.

Wohl and Branscombe (2007) believe that when people are reminded of times they felt helpless and victimized, they become unconsciously primed to lash out -- to do everything in their power to prevent such trauma from happening again. The psychologists similarly found that Jewish volunteers in North America feel reduced guilt and responsibility for Israeli actions that cause suffering among Palestinians when they are first reminded about the Holocaust, compared with when they are reminded about the genocide in Cambodia. There is no difference in the level of sympathy toward Palestinians between groups of Christian volunteers because, again, neither the Holocaust nor the Cambodia tragedy is personal to them.

In their article titled 'Aggressive Political Opinions and Exposure to Violent Media', Eyal, Keren, Metzger, Lingsweiler, Mahood, and Yao (2001) examine relationship between young people's exposure to media violence and their aggressive political opinions (APO), which were defined as support for positions that involve forceful resolution to social or political issues. Students from 2 U.S. universities completed surveys assessing their APO, exposure to violent media, authoritarianism, trait aggressiveness, political leaning, personal experience with crime, and demographics. Results revealed that violent television exposure significantly predicted several forms of APO above and beyond the control variables. Playing violent video games, however, predicted only a few aggressive political opinions. They test their proposal with data from a sample of young adult media audiences, exploring the connection between exposure to violent entertainment media and APO with both traditional and newer media forms. This study found that exposure to violent television programming specifically contributed to youth's support for the harsh punishment of criminals, as well as some opinions that tap support for the use of police

and military force. Although only statistically marginal, violent television exposure also contributed to the variance explained in young people's opposition to gun control laws and to two items measuring vigilantism.

These findings are mostly consistent with previous research such as Reith's (1999) study in which men's exposure to televised crime drama significantly and positively predicted increased levels of aggression against criminals who threaten the existing order. These findings are also consistent with researchers' suggestions about the importance of examining entertainment programming as it relates to people's political and social opinions. As noted, public opinion studies have looked at the socializing influence of news media, but have paid much less attention to investigating the influence of other types of media content on political attitudes.

However not all researchers are convinced of the role of news media in the desensitization process. Hoffman and Jengelly (2007) studied media coverage of terrorism using an original dataset of over 1300 articles drawn from the Washington Post between January 1, 1977 and December 31, 2004. Preliminary analysis of the articles suggests that, on average, stories on terrorism are getting neither more nor less prominent coverage over time. Their results suggest that concerns about media desensitization/sensationalism may not be plaguing the reporting of terrorism as many fear. There seems to be little relationship between the passing of time – a proxy for the interest of editors in particular stories – and the placement of articles in the newspaper. Time is associated with a gradual increase in the article length, but this effect is small – hardly of a size that suggests there is rampant sensationalism going on in the newspaper

business. An examination of front page articles tells a similar story – the percentage of front page articles has ebbed and flowed over the years, but shows no clear downward or upward trend. In short, they recommend that while much more analysis remains to be done, there is little in this first analysis to suggest that systematic desensitization is a problem in an important U.S. newspaper, the Washington Post.

2.2 Theoretical Framework:

Cultivation theory, an approach developed by George Gerbner study whether and to what extent watching television influences viewers' ideas of what the everyday world is like. They emphasize the effects of television viewing on the attitudes rather than the behavior of viewers. Heavy watching of television is seen as 'cultivating' attitudes which are more consistent with the world of television programmes than with the everyday world (Dominick, 1990).

According to Chandler (2009) the cultivation effect of television viewing is one of 'leveling' or 'homogenizing' opinion. Gerbner and his associates argue that heavy viewers of violence on television come to believe that the incidence of violence in the everyday world is higher than do light viewers of similar backgrounds. They refer to this as a mainstreaming effect.

In his article Rethinking Media Violence (1994) Gerbner argues that exposure to violence-laden television cultivates an exaggerated sense of insecurity and mistrust, and anxiety about the mean world seen on television. Furthermore, the sense of vulnerability and dependence imposes its heaviest burdens on women and minorities. The main

problem with media violence, says Gerbner, is that it promotes widespread feelings of vulnerability and fear, often at the expense of women and minorities, in the interests of corporate control and profit. Gerbner (1997) says that universal exposure to televised images of violence goes on from cradle to grave. He claims that conventional research concentrations on imitation alone, selective exposure, before-and-after exposure attitude change, viewer preferences, and the recurrent notion of "powerful" audiences miss the essential problem of television culture and its cultivation of conceptions about social relationships in deadly conflict.

Gerbner (1994) claims that seldom asked and rarely publicized are broader questions of media policy. Such questions focus on the implicit message of open season on the different and the deviant. They deal with victimization and the consequences of control, as well as with aggression. The key question is not what causes most violence and crime, as that goes far beyond media. It is what contribution does constant exposure to particular scenarios of violence and terror make to different groups' conceptions of their own risks and vulnerabilities.

In another article *The Scary World of Media Violence* (1994) Gerbner, Morgan, and Signorielli argue that heavy viewers are most prone to feelings of vulnerability and fear cultivated by repeated exposure to television violence. In this article, the authors examine the long-term societal consequences of media violence. First, they point to the rise of routine and thrilling "happy violence" as a departure from eras when the social consequences of violence were understood and addressed. Next, they examine the significance of media violence in relation to the broader power of television to cultivate

assumptions about how the world works. Based on their own research findings, they argue that heavy viewers are most prone to feelings of vulnerability and fear cultivated by repeated exposure to television violence. Minorities, the lower classes, and women pay the highest price for violence on television, they argue, a finding which is not unrelated to existing patterns of domination and exploitability in society.

According to Gerbner et al (1994), exposure to media violence from a young age results in the 'Mean World Syndrome'. This syndrome is made up of three consequences of media violence:

- One, watching a lot of television is that one comes to believe that the violence portrayed on television is normal - that everybody does it, and that it's a good way of solving problems.
- A more pervasive effect is that television de-sensitizes viewers to victimization and suffering; they lose the ability to understand the consequence of violence, to empathize, to resist, to protest.
- The third consequence, and I think the most debilitating one, is the pervasive sense of insecurity and vulnerability.

According to his research the mean world syndrome results in a reduced sensitivity to the consequences of violence. The sheer quantity of violence on television encourages the idea that aggressive behavior is normal. Viewers become desensitized. The mind, as Gerbner et al (1994) puts it, becomes "militarized."

Television's impact is especially pronounced in terms of how people feel about walking alone at night on a street in their own neighborhoods. Overall, less than a third of light viewers, but almost half of heavy viewers, say that being out alone at night on their own street is "not safe." Whatever real dangers may lurk outside people's homes, heavy television viewing is related to more intense fears and apprehensions.

These patterns illustrate the interplay of television viewing with demographic and other factors. In most subgroups, those who watch more television tend to express a heightened sense of living in a world of danger, mistrust, and alienation.

According to Gerbner et al (1994) this unequal sense of danger, vulnerability and general unease, combined with the reduced sensitivity, invites not only aggression but also exploitation and repression. Insecure people may be prone to violence but are even more likely to be dependent on authority and susceptible to deceptively simple, strong, hard-line postures. They may accept and even welcome repression if it promises to relieve their anxieties. That is the deeper problem of violence-laden television (Gerbner et al, 1994).

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview:

The aim of this research was to study whether and to what extent regular exposure to news on the war on terror desensitizes news viewers. In order to answer the research questions raised in this study, the researcher identified three main areas under desensitization: compassion fatigue, emotional empathy and pro-violence attitudes. These sub-variables were operationalized by the researcher for the purpose of this research in the following portions.

The researcher conducted a *quantitative research* using quantitative research methods, i.e.: survey research. The decision to use this method was taken by keeping under consideration the need to determine the relationship between TV violence and desensitization of news viewers. The proposed research will be *descriptive* in nature as the researcher intends to collect, organize and summarize information about the research problem and issues identified therein (Punch, 2000).

The researcher's aim to assess the desensitizing effect of coverage on news viewers was carried out via survey research. The research was questionnaire based. The researcher developed the questionnaire in order to assess whether and to what extent regular coverage of the war on terror has resulted in a desensitization of news viewers. This assessment was based on data collected on the three variables mentioned earlier: compassion fatigue, empathy and pro-violence attitudes.

3.2 Research Design:

The research focused on the extent of desensitization in news viewers, caused by repeated exposure to the same issue. The researcher aimed to calculate their correlation through a survey questionnaire designed specifically for this purpose. The aims and objectives of the current research impose a descriptive purpose upon the study, insofar as they lend to such questions as: (1) Do demographics (gender, income) affect the desensitization process?? (2) Is there an increase in pro-violence attitude of news viewers? (3) Is the audience suffering from compassion fatigue? These questions, immediately correlate to the research objectives, were integral to the testing of the hypotheses and were essential for the answering of the primary research question.

3.3 Sample:

The universe for the research included all residents of Rawalpindi/Islamabad. Initially the researcher proposed a multi-stage survey research be conducted in Islamabad city area, with the sample selected using the multi-stage sampling (cluster sampling) technique. However, as explained in the pre-testing, the rate of response and interest was extremely low...consequently the researcher opted non-probability (convenient) sampling.

In order to include a cross-section of respondents the researcher distributed the questionnaires in the following areas of Rawalpindi (Westridge, Allahabad, Satellite Town and Lalazar) /Islamabad (F-6/2, F-7/1, I-8/2, G-10/2, G-11/3 & H-10)

A voluntary, non-probability (convenient) sample of 450 residents of Rawalpindi/Islamabad participated in the study. The drop-off format was used as the

response rate is much better than in mail or phone surveys, as seen by the researcher in previous researches. 378 questionnaires were collected from the respondents of which 325 were retained for the purpose of the study. 53 questionnaires were rejected due to inaccurate filling. Of the 325 retained questionnaires 154 were from female respondents & 171 were from male respondents of. 187 respondents were from Islamabad, while 138 respondents were from Rawalpindi.

3.4 Variables:

Independent Variable(s): independent variable has been defined as variables systematically varied by the researcher (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000). For the purpose of the proposed news coverage of the war on terror by local news channels has been identified as the independent variable.

Dependent Variable(s): dependent variables have been defined as those variables which are observed and their values presumed to depend on the effects of the independent variables (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000). In the present study compassion fatigue, emotional empathy and pro-violence attitudes have been identified as dependent variables.

3.4.1 Desensitization:

Conceptual Definition of Desensitization: the process by which repeated exposure to a stimulus can result in reduced emotional responsiveness to it (Wilson & Smith, 1998). The behavioral outcome of desensitization may be failure to intervene to stop violent actions or the voluntary commission of a violent act. (Funk, 2006)

Operational Definition of Desensitization: decrease in empathy and increase in pro-violence attitude of news viewers towards victims of terrorism

3.4.2 Emotional Empathy:

Conceptual Definition of Emotional Empathy: ‘capacity’ to share and understand another’s ‘state of mind’ or emotion. It is often characterized as the ability to ‘put oneself into another’s shoes’, or in some way experience the outlook or emotions of another being within oneself. Hoffman (1998) emphasizes the role of inductive discipline in the development of empathy. Inductive discipline requires children to imagine how they would feel in a victim’s situation, and encourages the development of moral scripts based on empathy. Theoretically, in a conflict situation, empathic scripts will automatically be triggered and guide behavioral choice. There is considerable experimental evidence that empathy inhibits aggressive behavior, with lower empathy being a factor in increased aggression.

Operational Definition of Emotional Empathy: the capacity to understand another person's experience from within that person's frame of reference

3.4.3 Pro-Violence Attitudes:

Conceptual Definition of Pro-Violence Attitudes: exposure to violence strengthens the attitude that, in certain situations, violence is an appropriate way to resolve conflict (Barkin, Kreiter, & DuRant, 2001). The development of attitudes towards violence is influenced by many factors including exposure to family and community violence, as well as exposure to violence in the media.

Operational Definition of Pro-Violence Attitude: support for violence as a solution to conflict.

3.4.4 Compassion Fatigue:

Conceptual Definition of Compassion Fatigue: also known as a Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder, is a term that refers to a gradual lessening of compassion over time. Journalism analysts argue that the media has caused widespread compassion fatigue in society by saturating newspapers and news shows with de-contextualized images and stories of suffering. This has caused the public to become cynical, or become resistant to helping people who are suffering.

Operational Definition of Compassion Fatigue: expression of the opinion that, 'no matter what we do, it is ineffectual'

3.5 Instruments:

The researcher's assessed the desensitizing effect of coverage on news viewers via survey research. The researcher used a 30 item, close-ended questionnaire developed specifically for this research. In order to measure emotional empathy, the researcher will use the *Emotional Empathy Scale* developed and used by Caruso & Mayer (1998). Permission to use the scale has already been sought and granted by the creators.

Demographics of the sample were collected using age, gender, education level and income of the respondents. The survey respondents were also asked about the time they spent watching television as well as the length of time (in years) spent watching news in

order to differentiate between the heavy and light viewers; and those with greater and lesser exposure over time to news media.

Level of Desensitization was evaluated using three variables, i.e., pro-violence attitude, compassion fatigue & empathy levels in the respondents.

Pro-violence attitude was assessed using two main dimensions: graphic images of terror events & methods of dealing with terrorists. 4 statements were developed for the first dimension, 2 positive and 2 negative: There is nothing wrong with live coverage of the aftermath of terror attacks, News Channels should not be stopped from showing graphic images of terrorist attacks, News coverage of terrorism/terrorists gives encouragement to terrorists, & News channels should not show coverage of victims' families. 3 positive statements were developed to evaluate methods of dealing with terrorists: Military operations are the right way to deal with terrorists, Locals who support militants should get the same treatment as the militants, & Special laws & punishments should be made for terrorists, present laws are not enough.

For the second variable, compassion fatigue, the two dimensions measured included lack of viewer interest in media coverage of terrorist events & apathy towards victims of terror. For analysis purpose 3 statements were developed to evaluate respondents lack of interest in media coverage: News about terrorism is no longer interesting, Terrorism is more of a media publicity than any real problem, & The media is too focused on terrorism, there are other more important issues in the country. 5 statements were developed to evaluate apathy towards victims of terror: The War of Terror is a drain on our economy, Refugees from terrorism affected areas are going to become a problem for the State, Presence of

refugees in settled areas is going to increase the vulnerability of these areas to terrorist attacks, The refugees should go back when the Army gives the all clear, & Once the army leaves the area the militants will return.

As the variables were continuous in nature, the five (5) point Likert scale was used in the study. The response range was: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree.

For positive statements the following values were assigned to the responses: strongly agree=5, agree=4, neutral=3, disagree=2 and strongly disagree=1. For negative statements the following values were assigned: strongly agree=1, agree=2, neutral=3, disagree=4 and strongly disagree=5.

For the third and final variable, emotional empathy, a 30-item close-ended questionnaire developed by David Caruso was used. The questionnaire was made up of 24 positive statements and 6 negative statements. Using the 5 point Likert scale the respondents were given the options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. For the positive statements the valued assigned were from 5 for Strongly Agree to 1 for Strongly Disagree while the inverse held true for Negative statements, i.e. 1 for Strongly Agree to 5 for Strongly Disagree.

SPSS was used in order to calculate the total value of responses for each variable. Each indicator was entered individually; next a sum of the indicators was computed to get the mean value for each dimension. A computed sum of the dimensions gave the mean value for each variable. A total response rate was computed by adding the two variables.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient is considered to be the most commonly used indicators of internal consistency and its value should be above 0.7. The reliability factor of the instrument used in this study on Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated at 0.944 for the 15 items by the SPSS 14.0 indicating internal consistency in the instrument.

3.6 Pre-Testing:

The questionnaire was pre-tested to establish its reliability. For the purpose of pre-testing questionnaires were distributed to fifteen (15) randomly selected individuals from the survey area identified by the researcher. However, participation rates in the survey were very low. Respondents showed little interest in participating in the study. This resulted in the researcher adopting convenient sampling method.

The results of the pre-test showed that the respondents had no problem in understanding any of the statements. However, on request of the respondents, the educational qualifications were expanded from the original three options to include 'Less than 12 Years of Education' as well.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

Demographic Description

In order to include a cross-section of respondents the researcher distributed the questionnaires in the following areas of Rawalpindi (Westridge, Allahabad, Satellite Town and Lalazar) /Islamabad (F-6/2, F-7/1, I-8/2, G-10/2, G-11/3 & H-10)

A voluntary, non-probability (convenient) sample of 450 residents of Rawalpindi/Islamabad participated in the study. The drop-off format was used as the response rate is much better than in mail or phone surveys, as seen by the researcher in previous researches. 378 questionnaires were collected from the respondents of which 325 were retained for the purpose of the study. 53 questionnaires were rejected due to inaccurate filling. Of the 325 retained questionnaires 154 were from female respondents & 171 were from male respondents of. 187 respondents were from Islamabad, while 138 respondents were from Rawalpindi.

Of the total 325 valid participants of the survey 171 were male respondents and 154 were female respondents. Therefore 53% of the responses recorded were from male participants, while 47% were from female participants.

The data collected of the age of the survey respondents shows that 24% of the survey participants were in the 20-24 age group, 26% in the 25-29 age group, 22% in the 30-34 age group and 28% in the 35 & Above age group. This distribution of respondents across the four age groups indicates that there is a relatively equal representation of all age groups in the sample.

In education, the data shows that 33% of the respondents were undergraduates, 31% were graduates and 36% held post-graduate qualifications.

With reference to the income groups of the survey respondents, the data shows that of the 325 survey participants 35% earned 10-20k per month, 39% earned 21-40k per month, 18% earned 41-60k per month while only 8% earned 61k & Above.

For news watching behavior, the data shows that 35% of the survey participants watch news on television regularly, 28% watch news frequently, 26% watch news sometimes, while only 11% of the survey participants reported watching news rarely.

For time (in years) watching news, the data shows that 54% of the survey participants have been watching news on television for more than 6 years, 26% have been watching news on television for 5-6 years, 11% have been watching for 3-4 years, while 9% have been watching for 1-2 years.

The data shows that 47% of the survey respondents spend less than 2 hours per day watching news on television, 24% watch news for 2-3 hours, 10% watch for 4-5 hours, 9% watch for 5-6 hours while another 10% watch news on television for more than 6 hours daily.

The data indicates that there is an inverse proportion between long-time viewing and light viewers in light of Pearson's Correlation ($r = .223$, $N = 325$, $p < 0.01$). Those participant who have been found high on the length of time (in years) spent watching news have also been found as light viewers.

Table 1 Relationship between Time Watching News and Years Watching News

Pearson Correlation	
Time watching news	Significant
Years watching news	.223(**) .000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The computed total of responses to statements related to the calculation of presence of pro-violence attitudes in research participants shows that 67% of the survey respondents possess pro-violence attitudes while 33% of the respondents are not pro-violence.

Table 2 Computed Total Value of Pro-Violence Responses

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not Pro-violence	109	33.5%	33.5%	33.5%
Pro-violence	216	66.5%	66.5%	100.0%
Total	325	100.0%	100.0%	

The computed total value of survey participants responses to statements related to levels of compassion fatigue in respondents indicates that 77% of the survey participants show high levels of Compassion Fatigue, while 23% show no compassion fatigue.

Table 3 Computed Total Value of Compassion Fatigue Responses

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Compassion	75	23.1%	23.1%	23.1%
Compassion Fatigue	250	76.9%	76.9%	100.0%
Total	325	100.0%	100.0%	

The computed total value of survey participants' response to statements related to empathy indicates that 90% of the respondents do not empathize with the victims of terrorism and/or terrorist attacks, while the responses of 10% of the participants show empathetic attitudes.

Table 4 Computed Total Value of Empathy Scale

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Empathetic	31	9.5%	9.5%	9.5%
Not Empathetic	294	90.5%	90.5%	100.0%
Total	325	100.0%	100.0%	

The computed total value of desensitization (pro-violence attitude + compassion fatigue + empathy) shows that 67% of survey participants are highly desensitized in comparison to 33% of the participants who show no or low levels of desensitization. The results for the total computed value reflect results similar to those for individual variables. This indicates greater internal validity for the instrument.

Table 5 Computed Total Value of Desensitization in Survey Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Sensitized	109	33.5%	33.5%	33.5%
Desensitized	216	66.5%	66.5%	100.0%
Total	325	100.0%	100.0%	

HYPOTHESES TESTING:

H₁: constant exposure to news on terrorism and war on terror results in desensitization of news viewers

H₁ assumed that a relationship exists between exposure over time of news viewers to violent news on terrorism and terrorist events and their levels of desensitization, i.e., that the longer a viewer had been exposed to violent news on terrorism, the more they would be desensitized towards the events and the victims of these events. Chi-square was applied to the data to determine whether such a relationship exists.

Table 6 Exposure over Time of News Viewers to News on Terrorism & Level of Desensitization

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.518(a)	3	.915

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.40.

The results (Chi-square: .518, df 3, N=325) indicate that a strong relationship exists between exposure over time and level of desensitization in research participants. Those participants who have been exposed to violent news for longer period of time (in years) are more desensitized in comparison to those participants who have been watching it for a shorter period (in years). This provides support for H₁, proving that constant exposure to violent news content can lead to desensitization in news viewers.

H_{1.1}: male viewers are more desensitized than female news viewers

In H_{1.1}, the researcher hypothesised that men are more desensitized than women, i.e. men have more pro-violent attitudes and greater incidences of compassion fatigue in relation to women. In order to test the hypothesis, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare level of desensitization between male and female news viewers. The results show that there was no significant difference in the scores for male respondents (M=.67, SD=.473) and female respondents (M=.66, SD=.474) conditions; $t(323) = .082$, $p = .934$. These results do not provide support for H_{1.1}.

The results show that no significant relationship exists between gender of the respondents and their level of desensitization. Both the male and female respondents of the survey record similar levels of desensitization, with a slightly higher level for male respondents, but not significantly.

The results of H_{1.1} remain almost identical even when gender is evaluated separately with both variables, pro-violence attitudes and compassion fatigue, indicating that there is no significant difference between male and female respondents' levels of pro-violence attitudes and compassion fatigue.

However, when gender is evaluated with the third variable, empathy, There was a significant difference in the scores for male respondents (M=.99, SD=.076) and female respondents (M=.81, SD=.397) conditions; $t(163.214) = 5.805$, $p = .000$. This indicates that greater degree of empathy exists in the female participants of the survey in comparison to the male participants, demonstrating that the gender of the respondent

affects their level of empathy. However when a cumulative score is calculated, this significant correlation does not impact the overall result, indicating that the relationship is not strong enough to effect the overall outcome.

Table 7 Relationship between Genders of Respondents & Level of Empathy

		T-Test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total empathy	Equal variances not assumed	239.529	.000	5.805	163.214	.000

H_{1,2}: lower income groups are more desensitized than higher income groups

In H_{1,2}, the researcher assumed that news viewers belonging to lower income groups are more desensitized in relation to those belonging to higher income groups. Pearson's Correlation test was applied to H_{1,2} in order to evaluate the relationship between income level of respondents and level of desensitization.

The results (r= -.472, p<0.01) indicate that a strong negative correlation exists between income levels and desensitization levels of respondents, i.e. as income level of respondents increases (41k-60k and 61k+) lower levels of desensitization are recorded; while it increases as the income level of the respondents decreases (10-20k and 21-40k).

Table 8 Relationship Between Income Level of Respondents & Level of Desensitization

		Pearson Correlation	
		Total desensitization	Sig. (2-tailed)
Income		-.472(**)	.000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

This provides support for H_{1,2}; proving that respondents belonging to lower income groups are more desensitized in relation to those belonging to higher income groups, hence the hypothesis is proven.

Table 9 Relationship between Income Levels of Respondents & Pro-Violence Attitudes, Compassion Fatigue and Empathy

	Total Pro-Violence	Total compassion fatigue	Total empathy
Income	-.472(**) (.000)	-.450(**) (.000)	.000 (1.000)

.....
 ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

When the relationship between income levels of respondents and individual research variables is studied the results remain the same for pro-violence ($r = -.472$, $N=325$, $p < 0.01$) & Compassion Fatigue ($r = -.450$, $N=325$, $p < 0.01$). This provides further support for H_{1,2}, proving that income has a direct affect on the level of desensitization, i.e. respondents belonging to lower income groups are more desensitized in comparison to respondents belonging to higher income groups. However, for the third variable, empathy, no significant co-relation exists ($r = .000$, ns). Nevertheless, this should not be taken as an indication of low desensitization, rather as can be seen from the figure given below; level of desensitization is high in all groups when studied across income groups.

H₂: constant exposure to violent news on the war on terror results in pro-violence attitudes in news viewers

H₂ assumed that a relationship existed between long-term exposure of news viewers to news on terrorism and the level of desensitization experienced by the survey respondents,

i.e. that the longer (over time, in years) a respondent had been exposed to news on terrorism, the greater would be his/her level of desensitization. Pearson's Chi-square was run to determine whether constant exposure to violent news on the war on terror results in increase in pro-violence attitudes in news viewers (Table 10). According to the results respondents with longer exposure to violent news (including news on terrorism & terrorist events) reported stronger responses to pro-violent attitudes (Chi-square: .518, df 3, N=325), thereby providing support for H₂. The results indicate that those respondents with longer exposure, over longer periods of time are more desensitized to violent news in comparison to those who have been viewing it for shorter time duration.

Table 10 Relationship between Exposure over Time & Pro-Violence Attitude

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.518(a)	3	.915

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10.40.

H₃: constant exposure to violent news on the war on terror results in compassion fatigue in news viewers

H₃ assumed that there exists a relationship between exposure over time of news viewers' to violent news and his/her level of compassion fatigue, i.e. the longer a person is exposed to news on terrorism and terrorist events, the less is his/her level of compassion for the victims of these events. High levels of compassion fatigue also indicate a feeling

of helplessness in the respondent, as they feel that there is nothing they can do under the circumstances.

Pearson's Chi-square was run to determine whether constant exposure to violent news on the war on terror results in compassion fatigue in news viewers (see Figure 21). The test results (Chi-square: .477, df 3, N=325) indicate that those respondents who have longer exposure over time to news on terrorism and terrorist events show less compassion for the victims of terrorist events. This provides support for H₃.

Table 11 Relationship between Exposure over Time & Level of Compassion Fatigue

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.477(a)	3	.924

a.0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.15.

H₄: constant exposure to violent news on the war on terror results in decrease in emotional empathy in news viewers

H₄ assumes that regular exposure over time results in the blunting of emotional responses of news viewers to violent news content, i.e. viewers no longer feel the pain or suffering of the victims of terrorism and do not feel that they can relate to them, in short, news viewers stop empathizing with the victims of terrorism and terrorist events. Low levels of empathy indicate growing indifference on part of the respondents to the victims of terrorism. Pearson's Chi-square was run to determine whether constant exposure to violent news on the war on terror results in decrease in emotional empathy in news

viewers. The results show (Chi-square: 13.631, df 3, N=325) indicate that those respondents who have longer exposure over time to news on terrorism and terrorist events show less empathy towards victims of terrorism. This provides support for H₄.

Table 12 Relationship between Exposure over Time & Level of Empathy in Respondents

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.631(a)	3	.003

a. 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.96.

CHAPTER 5
FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS &
RECOMMENDATIONS

The study explored the relationship between exposure over time of news viewers to violent news, especially news on terrorism & terrorist events and their level of desensitization. The study aimed to establish a relationship between amount of exposure and level of desensitization, i.e. the longer a viewer's exposure time the higher will be his/her level of desensitization. Observing the media's behavior and keeping media effects research on exposure to violence in mind, the researcher was interested in seeing whether regular exposure to terrorism news on TV and terrorist acts leads to desensitization of the audience. The objectives of the proposed study were to investigate the extent to which exposure to news on war on terror in television is leading towards acceptance of violence, to find out the level of emotional empathy, pro-violence attitude and compassion fatigue towards war on terror among television news viewer and to find out the level of desensitization towards war on terror among heavy television news viewers and light viewers.

Evidence of significant relationships between amount of exposure and level of desensitization emerges from the data. Those with longer exposure to news on terrorism and terrorist events are more desensitized in relation to those with shorter amount of exposure over time. Therefore, respondents self-reported responses to degree of desensitization clearly indicate that longer exposure over time leads to emotionally blunted responses, as has been seen in earlier researches (Erica Scharrer, 2008; Rudy, 2006; Linz, et al, 1988).

The results of the survey show that respondents with longer exposure over time to violent news on terrorism and terrorist events are more desensitized in comparison to those whose exposure over time is of a shorter period or limited. The study does not show any difference in the level of desensitization between male and female respondents. However, a significant difference can be seen in the level of desensitization in respondents' belonging to lower-income groups in relation to those belonging to higher income groups.

Findings:

Of the respondents 53% were Male while 47% were Female. 24% of the respondents were between the ages of 20-24, 26% were 25-29 years, and 22% were in the 30-34 years age bracket, while the remaining 28% were in the 35 & above age group. The age distribution of the respondents shows an almost even representation of all age groups. However in the income distribution 35% of the respondents fell in the 10-20 (thousand) category, while another 38% fell in the 21-40 (thousand) category. Only 19% & 8% fell in the 41-61 (thousand) and 61k & Above categories respectively.

Exposure of news viewers to violent news was calculated using two dependent variables, i.e. *exposure over time* (number of years) of exposure to news on terrorism, heavy and light viewers were also computed, however they were not a part of the main study, hence were only studied marginally to see their relation with exposure over time. Only 11% of the respondents reported watching news for 1-2 years, the figure was even lower for 3-4 years with only 9% of the respondents selecting this option. Both 5-6 years and 6+ years were reported in high percentages, with 26% reporting the first and 54% reporting that they have been watching news regularly for 6+ years. The results for heavy viewers (4+

hours) and light viewers (less than 4 hours) shows that 47% of the respondents watch news for less than 2 hours per day, while another 24% watch for 2-3 hours per day. Respondents who reported watching news daily over 4 hours a day made up the remaining 29% (4-5 hrs: 10%, 5-6 hrs: 9% & 6+ hrs: 10%)

However those who have been found high on the length of time (in years) spent watching news have also been found as light viewers. There appears to be an inverse proportion between long-time viewing and light viewers in light of Pearson's Correlation ($r = .223$, $N = 325$, $p < 0.01$). However a few intervening variables like age, income and/or education might have a spurious effect on the above relationship.

Discussion:

The cumulative data provides ample evidence that viewers who have been exposed to news on terrorism for longer time period are more desensitized in relation to those who have been exposed for shorter periods of time. While these results are supported by previous research, the data challenges Rudy's (2006) results that while media violence exposure produced emotional and physiological desensitization in men, it failed to produce the same in women. The results of the present study show that there is no significant difference in the level of desensitization between male and female respondents...both are more or less equally desensitized. However it needs to be kept in mind that Rudy's research was based on an experimental study whereas the present research was based on the respondents' own emotional responses. These results can also be attributed to the socio-political situation in Pakistan. Whereas Rudy's (2006) study was based on exposure of participants to stimuli based on violent programming, the

respondents in Pakistan have been exposed to news on terrorism for a very long period of time – since the start of the war on terror in 2001. And with the launch of operations in Pakistan itself as well as the increased involvement of the country in the war since 2004, the news coverage has been continuous. Incidents of suicide bombings and killings have been on the rise. This could be one of the factors responsible for the similar level of desensitization in male and female respondents. However there is a need to study this phenomenon in greater detail before definite conclusions can be reached.

An interesting result that emerged from the study was the high levels of desensitization in respondents belonging to lower income groups in relation to those belonging to higher income groups. This result is supported by the Cline experiment (Cline, Croft and Courier, 1973) which shows that children belonging to lower-income groups are more desensitized in relation to children belonging to higher income groups. It can be argued that respondents belonging to lower income groups were exposed to more violent news because of socio-economic condition, but these need to be studied in greater detail.

However it needs to be kept in mind that the Cline experiment was conducted on children, while the present study focused on adults. There is a need for experimental studies to establish a concrete relationship between the level of a respondents' income and their level of desensitization.

One of the main dimensions identified in order to assess the respondents' level of desensitization was pro-violence attitude. The responses indicate that those with higher levels of exposure over time were more inclined to support violence as an answer for violence. They asked for harsher punishments for perpetrators of terrorism and were

highly in favor of military operations against militants. This attitude reveals the acceptance of violence as a solution, which is one of elements for desensitization (Huesmann, Moise, & Podolski, 1997; Reith's 1999), and is a result of long exposure over time to news on terrorism and terrorist events. Likewise respondents with longer exposure over time to violent news were less emotionally disturbed by graphic images of terrorist incidents and found no problem with media coverage of the families of terrorism victims. They also felt that the media was correct in providing live coverage of the aftermath of terrorist events, irrespective of their magnitude. This attitude shows a 'reduced emotional responsiveness' (Wilson and Smith, 1998) to violence. According to Wilson & Smith (1998) this reduced responsiveness is a result of the process by which repeated exposure to violence can decrease reaction to it.

The third dimension of compassion fatigue was evaluated in order to evaluate the relationship between respondents' level of sympathy and compassion with the victims of terrorism. Compassion fatigue has been identified as one of the main indicators of desensitization (Linz, Donnerstein, & Adams, 1989; Linz, Donnerstein, & Penrod, 1984, 1988). The data provides evidence of high rates of compassion fatigue in viewers with longer exposure over time to news on terrorism in comparison to viewers whose exposure over time has been of lesser durations. Viewers with longer exposure were less inclined to sympathize with the victims of terrorism and terrorist events; instead there was a definite attitude of indifference towards the victims. The results also showed that those viewers whose exposure to news on terrorism was of a longer period had also lost interest in the media's coverage of these events. They were less inclined to pay a great deal of attention to the coverage of terrorism. This result is supported by Dimitrova's (2006)

argument that this repetition of an idea or news by the media leads to desensitization and compassion fatigue in the viewers – reducing their empathy with the victims of the aggression.

The final dimension in this research was the study of exposure over time of news viewers to news on terrorism and its impact on their emotional empathy with the victims of terrorism & terrorist events. The researcher assumed that regular exposure over time results in the blunting of emotional responses of news viewers to violent news content, i.e. viewers no longer feel the pain or suffering of the victims of terrorism and do not feel that they can relate to them, in short, news viewers stop empathizing with the victims of terrorism and terrorist events. Low levels of empathy indicate growing indifference on part of the respondents to the victims of terrorism.

The results show that those respondents who have longer exposure over time to news on terrorism and terrorist events show less empathy towards victims of terrorism. This is in line with Potter & Smith (2000) argument, who define desensitization as “...a decrease (almost to the point of absence) of sympathy or empathy...” According to Dexter, Penrod, Linz, & Saunders (1997) viewers who watch large amounts of media violence show less physiological reactivity to violence in other contexts. This is supported by the evidence provided by this research.

However, while Rudy (2006) found that while media violence exposure produced emotional and physiological desensitization in men, it failed to produce the same in women, the present study found little to no difference in the level of emotional apathy in men and women. When gender was evaluated with the third variable, empathy, the results

show that a relationship exists between the two. This indicates that a slightly greater degree of empathy exists in the female participants of the survey in comparison to the male participants, demonstrating that the gender of the respondent affects their level of empathy. However when a cumulative score is calculated, this significant correlation does not impact the overall result, indicating that the relationship is not strong enough to effect the overall outcome when calculating the effects of gender on the level of desensitization of news viewers.

Conclusions & Recommendations:

The results of the survey show that respondents with longer exposure over time to violent news on terrorism and terrorist events are more desensitized in comparison to those whose exposure over time is of a shorter period or limited. The study does not show any difference in the level of desensitization between male and female respondents. However, a significant difference can be seen in the level of desensitization in respondents' belonging to lower-income groups in relation to those belonging to higher income groups. There is a need to study desensitization in Pakistani society in greater depth and establish whether a causal relationship exists through experimental research in the same.

There are a number of limitations to this study that should be considered when interpreting its results. First, since the study employs survey methodology, no claims of causation can be made. However, since the responses were based on the emotional responses of the survey participants themselves, the chances of causation are very high and reversal of results very low. A second limitation is the self-report aspect of the study, particularly in asking respondents to report on their emotions, it is possible that such

reports are inaccurate and may be shaped by social-economic, cultural, religious and/or other biases. Third, the sample is not representative, and therefore, one cannot generalize from these results. Finally, no efforts were made to control the effect of any one variable and its influence on the survey participants.

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ANNEX I: DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE

			GENDER		TOTAL
			<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
AGE	20-24	<i>Count</i>	43	36	79
		<i>% of Total</i>	13.2%	11.1%	24.3%
	25-29	<i>Count</i>	37	47	84
		<i>% of Total</i>	11.4%	14.5%	25.8%
	30-34	<i>Count</i>	33	39	72
		<i>% of Total</i>	10.2%	12.0%	22.2%
	35&Above	<i>Count</i>	58	32	90
		<i>% of Total</i>	17.8%	9.8%	27.7%
TOTAL		<i>Count</i>	171	154	325
		<i>% of Total</i>	52.6%	47.4%	100.0%
EDUCATION	Undergraduate	<i>Count</i>	48	61	109
		<i>% of Total</i>	14.8%	18.8%	33.5%
	Graduate	<i>Count</i>	45	55	100
		<i>% of Total</i>	13.8%	16.9%	30.8%
	Post Graduate	<i>Count</i>	78	38	116
		<i>% of Total</i>	24.0%	11.7%	35.7%
TOTAL		<i>Count</i>	171	154	325
		<i>% of Total</i>	52.6%	47.4%	100.0%
INCOME	10-20 k	<i>Count</i>	45	68	113
		<i>% of Total</i>	13.8%	20.9%	34.8%
	21-40 k	<i>Count</i>	74	51	125
		<i>% of Total</i>	22.8%	15.7%	38.5%
	41-60 k	<i>Count</i>	38	23	61
		<i>% of Total</i>	11.7%	7.1%	18.8%
	61k & Above	<i>Count</i>	14	12	26
		<i>% of Total</i>	4.3%	3.7%	8.0%
TOTAL		<i>Count</i>	171	154	325
		<i>% of Total</i>	52.6%	47.4%	100.0%
TV WATCHING HABIT	Rarely	<i>Count</i>	10	27	37
		<i>% of Total</i>	3.1%	8.3%	11.4%
	Sometimes	<i>Count</i>	29	56	85
		<i>% of Total</i>	8.9%	17.2%	26.2%
	Often	<i>Count</i>	43	48	91
		<i>% of Total</i>	13.2%	14.8%	28.0%
	Regularly	<i>Count</i>	89	23	112
		<i>% of Total</i>	27.4%	7.1%	34.5%
TOTAL		<i>Count</i>	171	154	325
		<i>% of Total</i>	52.6%	47.4%	100.0%
YEARS WATCHING NEWS	1-2 yrs	<i>Count</i>	12	22	34
		<i>% of Total</i>	3.7%	6.8%	10.5%
	3-4 yrs	<i>Count</i>	13	18	31
		<i>% of Total</i>	4.0%	5.5%	9.5%

	5-6 yrs	<i>Count</i>	40	44	84	
		<i>% of Total</i>	12.3%	13.5%	25.8%	
	6+ yrs	<i>Count</i>	106	70	176	
		<i>% of Total</i>	32.6%	21.5%	54.2%	
TOTAL		<i>Count</i>	171	154	325	
		<i>% of Total</i>	52.6%	47.4%	100.0%	
TIME WATCHING NEWS	Less than 2 hrs	<i>Count</i>	94	58	152	
		<i>% of Total</i>	28.9%	17.8%	46.8%	
	2-3 hrs	<i>Count</i>	45	32	77	
		<i>% of Total</i>	13.8%	9.8%	23.7%	
	4-5 hrs	<i>Count</i>	11	23	34	
		<i>% of Total</i>	3.4%	7.1%	10.5%	
	5-6 hrs	<i>Count</i>	9	19	28	
		<i>% of Total</i>	2.8%	5.8%	8.6%	
	6+ hrs	<i>Count</i>	12	22	34	
		<i>% of Total</i>	3.7%	6.8%	10.5%	
	TOTAL		<i>Count</i>	171	154	325
			<i>% of Total</i>	52.6%	47.4%	100.0%

WAR ON TERROR AND DESENSITIZATION OF NEWS VIEWERS

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questionnaire is the basis of research for my university dissertation for partial fulfillment of our degree program. Your participation and assistance, by filling out this questionnaire, will be highly appreciated. Thank you!!

- Age Group:** () 20 – 24 () 25 – 29 () 30 – 34 () 35 & Above
 () Male () Female
Education: () less than 12 years () Undergraduate () Graduate () Post Graduate
Income: () Less than 10,000 () 10,000 – 20,000 () 21,000 – 40,000 () 41,000 – 60,000 () 61,000 & Above

1. Do you watch news on television?
 a. Never () b. Rarely () c. Sometimes () d. Often () e. Regularly (✓)
2. How long have you been watching news on television?
 a. 1 – 2 years () b. 3 – 4 years () c. 5-6 years () d. More than 6 years (✓)
3. How much time do you spend watching news channels?
 a. Less than 2 Hours () b. 2-3 hrs () c. 4-5 hrs () d. 5-6 hrs () e. 6+ hrs (✓)
4. Which channel do you watch most frequently? (Please check any one)
 a. GEO News () b. Dawn News () c. Express () d. Aaj () e. Other _____ (✓)
5. Which of the following is the cause for the war on terror?
 a. The London Bombings () b. Attack on World Trade Center, New York (✓) c. Bombing of US Embassy in Nigeria () d. Vietnam ()

For The Following Table Kindly Select (✓) The Option You Believe Reflects Your Personality

	QUESTIONS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
6.	The war on terror is a not our (Pakistan's) war:					
7.	Foreign hands are responsible for financing and arming terrorists in Pakistan:					

8.	If the US leaves the region, our problems would be over:					
9.	News about terrorism is no longer interesting:					
10.	Terrorism is more of a media publicity than any real problem:					
11.	The media is too focused on terrorism, there are other more important issues in the country:					
12.	The War of Terror is a drain on our economy:					
13.	Refugees from terrorism affected areas are going to become a problem for the State:					
14.	Presence of refugees in settled areas is going to increase the vulnerability of these areas to terrorist attacks:					
15.	The refugees should go back when the Army gives the all clear:					
16.	News coverage of terrorism/terrorists gives encouragement to terrorists:					
17.	There is nothing wrong with live coverage of the aftermath of terror attacks:					
18.	News Channels should not be stopped from showing graphic images of terrorist attacks:					
19.	News channels should not show coverage of victims' families:					
20.	Military operations are the right way to deal with terrorists:					
21.	Locals who support militants should get the same treatment as the militants:					
22.	Special laws & punishments should be made for terrorists, present laws are not enough:					
23.	Once the army leaves the area the militants will return:					

For The Following Table Kindly Select (✓) The Option You Believe Reflects Your Personality

Sr.#	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	I cry easily when watching a sad news story.					
2.	Certain pieces of music can really move me.					
3.	Seeing a hurt child is very upsetting.					
4.	I don't give others' feelings much thought.					
5.	It makes me happy when I see people helping each other.					
6.	The suffering of others deeply disturbs me.					
7.	I always try to tune in to the feelings of those around me.					
8.	I get very upset when I see a young child who is being treated meanly.					
9.	Too much is made of the suffering of IDPs.					
10.	If someone is upset I get upset, too.					
11.	When I'm with other people who are laughing I join in.					
12.	It makes me mad to see someone treated unjustly.					
13.	I rarely take notice when people treat each other warmly.					

14.	I feel happy when I see people laughing and enjoying themselves.					
15.	It's easy for me to get carried away by other people's emotions.					
16.	My feelings are my own and don't reflect how others feel.					
17.	If a crowd gets excited about something so do I.					
18.	I feel good when I help someone out or do something nice for someone.					
19.	I feel deeply for others.					
20.	I don't cry easily.					
21.	I feel other people's pain.					
22.	Seeing other people smile makes me smile.					
23.	Being around happy people makes me feel happy, too.					
24.	TV or news stories about injured or sick people greatly upset me.					
25.	I feel saddened by tragedy in the movies I see.					
26.	Being around people who are depressed brings my mood down.					
27.	I find it annoying when people cry in public.					
28.	It hurts to see another person in pain.					
29.	I get a warm feeling for someone if I see them helping another person.					
30.	I feel other people's joy.					



Empathy Scale

By: Caruso & Mayer

1. I cry easily when watching a sad movie.
2. Certain pieces of music can really move me.
3. Seeing a hurt animal by the side of the road is very upsetting.
- 4-R. I don't give others' feelings much thought.
5. It makes me happy when I see people being nice to each other.
6. The suffering of others deeply disturbs me.
7. I always try to tune in to the feelings of those around me.
- 8 I get very upset when I see a young child who is being treated meanly.
- 9-R. Too much is made of the suffering of pets or animals.
10. If someone is upset I get upset, too.
11. When I'm with other people who are laughing I join in.
12. It makes me mad to see someone treated unjustly.
- 13-R. I rarely take notice when people treat each other warmly.
14. I feel happy when I see people laughing and enjoying themselves.
15. It's easy for me to get carried away by other people's emotions.
- 16-R. My feelings are my own and don't reflect how others feel.
17. If a crowd gets excited about something so do I.
18. I feel good when I help someone out or do something nice for someone.
19. I feel deeply for others.
- 20-R. I don't cry easily.
21. I feel other people's pain.
22. Seeing other people smile makes me smile.
23. Being around happy people makes me feel happy, too.
24. TV or news stories about injured or sick children greatly upset me.
25. I cry at sad parts of the books I read.
26. Being around people who are depressed brings my mood down.
- 27-R. I find it annoying when people cry in public.
28. It hurts to see another person in pain.
29. I get a warm feeling for someone if I see them helping another person.
30. I feel other people's joy.

Note: R indicates a reverse-scored item. To score the scale, change the scoring on the reverse-scored items (1=5, 2=4, 3=3, 4=2, and 5=1).



amrat haq <amrat.haque@gmail.com>

Information on Emotional Empathy Measurement Scale

Caruso, David <david.caruso@yale.edu>
To: amrat haq <amrat.haque@gmail.com>

Sat, May 16, 2009 at 8:26 PM

Dear Amrat –

Thank you for asking permission to use this scale. Your research idea sounds extremely interesting. You can certainly use the empathy scale – I am attaching an article which lists the items and the scoring key.

The attached should provide you with all of the information you require to utilize the empathy scale correctly. If not, please contact me.

I would be very interested in your results and hope that you will share your thesis with me when it is completed. Best of luck,

- David

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