Exploring Gaps between Media Students' and Journalists' Perceptions on Objectivity in News

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Journalists

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Certificate of Approval

It is certified that we have read this thesis entitled "Exploring Gaps between Media Students' and Journalists' perceptions on objectivity in News" submitted by Sajid Hussain. It is our judgement that this thesis is of sufficient standard to warrant its acceptance by the International Islamic University Islamabad for the award of MS Degree in Media and Communication Studies.

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Declaration

I, Sajid Hussain, hereby declare that the matter printed in this thesis is my original work and has been carried out under the supervision of Dr. Manzoor Khan Afridi, Associate Professor, Department of Politics, International Islamic University, Islamabad. To the best of my knowledge, this thesis does not contain any material that has been submitted for the award of any other degree in any other university, neither does this thesis contain any material published or written previously by any other person, except in the text for which due references are given.

Sajid Hussain

Certificate

It is hereby certified that the thesis entitled ***"Exploring Gaps between Media Students' and journalists' Perceptions on Objectivity in News"*** is based on original work carried out by ***Mr. Sajid Hussain*** and that has not been previously presented for the higher degree. He has done his work under my direct supervision. He has fulfilled all the requirements and is qualified to submit the accompanying thesis according to the prescribed format for the degree of MS in Media & Communication Studies.

Dr. Manzoor Khan Afridi
Supervisor

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Abstract

Objectivity is a key element of fair reporting but nowadays it seems that journalists' affiliation with different parties and individuals is affecting this professional norm. This study will conduct on media students' and working journalists' perceptions about objectivity in news. Specifically, the study will determine what media students and working journalists view as objective news, how they evaluate certain components of objectivity, and how all this related to their own practices. To know the perception and practices of media students and journalists, a survey is conducted. The sample of 200 respondents: 100 from journalists and 100 from media students (students of B.S, M.Sc, M.S and Ph.D. Media and Communication Studies). The study compares the differences between perceptions of journalists and media students concerning objectivity. Ultimately, this study will promote journalistic ethics by shedding new light on the perceptions and practices relating to objectivity, for the benefit of new students and journalists. The results show that media students and working journalists are not on same page in this regard and a huge difference is found between them about objectivity in news.

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Chapter-1

Introduction

We are living in a world where hundreds of news papers are being published on daily basis. Media organizations and institutions have employed thousands of people to maintain these newspapers and magazines. The news media tells us which issues are important and which ones are not. We have never seen the war situations of Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and Kashmir with our own eyes. Even then we have pictures of these disputed areas in our minds. The media's daily reports inform us about the latest events and changes taking place in the world beyond our reach. As a result of this phenomenon, most of our perceptions about the world are a second-hand reality created by the media organizations. There is no assurance and no guarantee that this reality is an accurate picture of the world.

This behavior of media organizations and institutions not only distorts the reality but also affects the journalistic ethics and specially objectivity of news which is, adopting the position of impartiality, keeping himself neutral during the reporting of news items, avoiding from subjectivity and personal opinion, preferring to factuality and truth. Sometimes reporters report the news and they mix the news with views even on the front pages of well-established newspapers of the country. This mixture of news and views distorts the soil of objectivity. In this way these news reporters try to influence in building the public opinion regarding a specific issue which is totally against the journalistic objectivity and in Philip Meyer's (1987) opinion the core values of objectivity are following:

a) Identifying the facts and keeping the writer's opinion separate from the news,

b) Confirming news from columns, features and editorials.

These newspapers and organizations do in such way because they have their own news policy and agenda and they work according to this agenda. This news agenda prevents them to publish every news story and event. In this way newsroom staff and news editors use the option of choice which is called gate keeping. But some time in selecting the news stories, news editors try to influence the news stories and they select the specific stories and ignore the others regardless the importance of news. This behavior of news editors affects the objectivity of news that is very important for the profession of journalism.

The difference of news from columns, editorials and features is very necessary in journalism today. It is necessary to separate the news from the editor's opinion and editorial columns so that reporters and working journalists can struggle for news objectivity in their news coverage. It demands all working journalists and media practitioners to follow media ethics and professional standards in their daily news gathering. The selection of topics for editorials is the concern of editorial teams while being one of the most important portion of a newspaper that can enhance the readership and circulation of the newspaper. Objectivity also plays a very important role in this section.

According to the agenda-setting theory, because of the fact of paying attention to some issues and neglecting and ignoring the others, the mass media will have an effect on public opinion. People will be inclined to know about those issues and things, which are highlighted by the mass media and they adopt the order of priority assigned to different issues. This theory primarily deals with learning and not with attitude or opinion change. Some of the empirical studies of mass communication had confirmed that the most

expected effects to occur would be on matters of information. Usually, people learn what the issues are and how these are ordered in importance in the media agenda.

This is important to mention that the most of the agenda-setting research has concerned itself with the election campaigns. In a typical election campaign it has become a common practice to build the 'image' of a candidate by association with certain point of view on the important problems and issues of a society and with certain other issues of the candidate's choice. This is assumed that if voters can be convinced that an issue is important, they will vote for the candidate or the political party which has been projected as the most capable to deal with it.

Print journalism and the concept of news objectivity did not exist before the 1800s. After that the discipline of journalism started in colleges and universities in the United States and United Kingdom meanwhile media ethics started being discussed. Newspapers began to follow professional standards and began to keep themselves free from political affiliation and political pressure in order to help build independent and democratic institutions. So they became independent media houses and they practiced objectivity and media ethics in their daily news. Being a core value of journalism, objectivity played a very important role in enhancing the credibility of newspapers and all kinds of journalism. Mirando (2001) says that objectivity had to pass many steps to come in recent shape in newspaper history.

1. In the beginning, newspapers were used as a commercial product, businessmen and capitalists used newspapers for their personal benefits that needed protection. Objectivity was the only way to protect the newspapers and run them on professional basis rather than for business purposes.

2. News editors and media owners started a new trend in journalism that is called investigative journalism that was to protect newspapers from businessmen and news from bias.

The concept of objectivity was the only way for the editors and publishers to run their newspapers on professional basis. Although they introduced and adopted other principles of journalism like accuracy, fairness, factuality and balance to protect themselves from lawsuits but objectivity's contribution was most important (Mirando 2001).

In a journalistic context objectivity has great importance. Without it, independent and impartial journalism is impossible. But there are curtain reasons and factors that influence news objectivity and cause subjectivity, which include:

1. Procedure of news selection
2. The influence of culture and environment
3. Personal interests
4. Social and personal relationships
5. Organizational setup
6. Media ownership
7. Time limits

Besides these there are many other factors and reasons that can influence news objectivity and cause subjectivity in journalism.

Without discussing the media ethics the understanding of concept of objectivity is impossible.

1.2 Media Ethics

Media ethics can be discussed in different ways and many dimensions are available for debate. Media ethics deal with principles and standards in print media, film, broadcast media, and the internet, which has a subdivision of applied ethics. The field of media ethics is vast, covering highly controversial topics and issues, ranging from war journalism to advertising. The ethics of journalism is a branch of media ethics that is taught in the institutions of journalism. Many topics are discussed in this field but the most common and the most important is journalistic news manipulation. News can manipulate and be manipulated. Governments and corporations can manipulate news media for their own purposes: governments by censorship and corporations by sharing ownership and other tactics. Manipulation can be voluntarily or involuntarily. Sometime those who are being manipulated are not aware of this.

Ward (1999) argues that journalistic ethics provide a guideline and pave the way to create flexible objective journalism in which media practitioners and journalists not only care about the newsworthiness of the news but also think about the impact of the news on their readers and listeners.

1.3 Objectivity

In the history of journalism, objectivity has been remained a very common issue for discussion, debate and there are many ways of discussing it. Gans (1979) and Tuchman (2000) argue that objectivity is an examination of content that is collected by journalists and media practitioners. Glasser (1992) says that objectivity is a balance of ideas and opinion managed by a journalist and presented to the readers. It is impossible to test the objectivity of a journalist because everyone has his own beliefs and information about an

issue or event. Objectivity is the credibility of facts that has been gathered by a journalist and finding that is difficult. Glasser points out that objectivity are a journalistic principle used by journalists that can produce news responsibly and present them to their consumers and audience (Glasser, 1992).

In Glasser's (1992) opinion, objectivity in journalistic profession is a concept that is practised for the presenting of the facts of the story.

According to Cohen (1992) objectivity is the gathering of facts that keeps journalists' own beliefs, ideas, information, personal perspective, emotion, interpretation, personal liking and disliking and any political affiliation out of the news. In his opinion objectivity is a reporter's duty to gather the complete detail about the occurrence and without any inclusions and exclusions, forwarding those details to the editors for final news for the readers.

According to the Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics (1998) objectivity is a guideline for journalists using that journalists can report the news without bias. Objectivity, though can be difficult to define, Mindich (1998) described the five elements of what traditionally has been called objectivity as detachment, nonpartisanship, the inverted-pyramid style, naive empiricism, and balance. He added that objectivity could be seen as an unobtainable goal.

Lee (2005) pointed to the presence of accuracy, balance, and fairness in determining objectivity. News reports that can withstand the scrutiny of the "professional community" were termed objective by Schudson (1978), who also maintained that objectivity is "the belief that one can and should separate facts from values" (p. 5).

1.4 Brief History of Objectivity

Journalism was started in the universities and colleges of United States as an academic discipline in 1820 and journalistic objectivity was also discussed under media ethics in that era as well. So the history of journalistic objectivity is as old as journalism itself. In Hackett's (1984) opinion the ideal of objectivity is a way that media professionals and reporters separate facts from opinions. In other words, it is a factual presentation of an incident using neutral news reporting techniques and methods.

A large number of media scholars and historians agree that the concept of objectivity started as a dominant discourse among media professionals and working journalists in the United States since the beginning of the period of modern newspapers in the Jacksonian Era of the 1890s. When modern newspapers were published and society depended on newspapers for news, media ethics were also discussed under that objectivity was also a part of hard discussion. The rise of the idea of objectivity in the journalistic profession also went to the scientific positivism of the 19th century, as various scientific methods are used in journalism nowadays.

Historians like Gerald Baldasty think that objectivity went hand in hand with the need to make money in the newspaper business by selling advertising. Media owners and publishers did not want to lose a single chance of advertising to customers and that is why they supported and encouraged news editors and news reporters to show all sides of an event. Like this, the occurrence of wire services and other arrangements of this kind forced the media professionals to write more political stories that would make a place in newspapers and support political persuasions.

On the other hand some scholars think that after the critical election of 1896 and the subsequent Progressive reform era the situation changed and the concept of objectivity came into being. It is called the political explanation of the rise of objectivity, which took place earlier in United States than most other countries. According to Richard Kaplan political parties needed to lose their influence over the loyalties of voters and the institutions of government before the media could feel free to present a nonpartisan, impartial and neutral account of news events.

According to McQuail, the concept of objectivity has great importance in information quality and without objectivity fair reporting is impossible. In McQuail's opinion the core characteristics of objectivity are:

1. Being neutral during the reporting of news and events
2. Keeping aside personal involvement and subjectivity
3. Belief in accuracy and truth
4. Adopting the position of detachment and neutrality (McQuail, 2000).

Real professionalism is to practise journalism without bias and personal opinion so people can get knowledge of the actual situation of an event. McQuail argues that objectivity is necessary in media as everyone has his own interests and objectivity is a hurdle in personal interests that keeps reporters far from it. Readers of the newspapers and audience of news channels value news objectivity and prefer to the newspapers and media channels which are credible and value journalistic objectivity. On the other hand, media owners and publishers view that journalistic objectivity enhances their readership and market value as well. That is why they care about news objectivity in their news stories.

1.5 Problem Statement

Aim of this research study is to investigate and explore the difference between the perceptions of media students and working journalists on objectivity in news. Survey method is used to explore the difference of perceptions between both media students and working journalists. A sample of 200 respondents; 100 from media students and 100 from working journalists is selected and tried to find the results.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The purposes of this study are:

- To explore the gaps between media students' and working journalists' perceptions about objectivity in news.
- To provide guidelines for new comer journalists who are not fully aware of media ethics.
- It will be helpful to provide fair content for audience.
- To analyze who gives more importance to the objectivity.
- To highlight the importance of journalistic ethics.

1.7 Significance of Study

This research has great significance because it makes clear certain ambiguities about objectivity and makes clear that what elements make the reporting objective.

The research makes clear that both media students and working journalists are not equal in objective reporting.

This study gives a torch to journalists under its light they would use objectivity in reporting. Researchers will be better to use this study in their researches related to objectivity in newspapers and TV channels.

It will help the common literate people by giving information about journalistic ethics and in the light of these ethics; they will be in better positions to make their view regarding particular news.

Chapter-2

Literature Review

Journalistic objectivity is a basic demand in the profession of good journalism and without objectivity fair reporting is impossible. Objective journalism provides an accurate picture of what is happening in surroundings and does not allow the journalists to mix the facts with opinion. Media professionals consider journalistic objectivity a guideline for themselves using that they deal with different kind of news sources who want to bribe them to produce a story in their favor. Objectivity prevents media professionals to show one side of a story and hide the other one. Objectivity is also a hurdle in their personal liking and disliking (Yat).

Yat only described the importance of objectivity and told that how objectivity plays its role in fair and objective reporting but he did not say anything about the existence of objectivity in today's news and what journalists and media students think about objectivity in news. My study will focus on existence of objectivity in news and also what is difference in opinion of professional journalists and media scholars in objectivity in news.

Reese (1990) defines objectivity to separate facts from values and personal opinions and journalists' role is being neutral only to pass the information to the audience without any changing. On the other hand, Mirando (2001) defines objectivity as use of inverted pyramid style, adopting position of detachment, nonpartisanship, reliance on facts and appearance of balance in news.

Both Reese and Mirando tried to define the objectivity but they did not described 'that either objectivity exists in news or not and media professionals and media students'

taught objectivity at journalism school, but now believes it is a false high standard that they could not help but fail (Alex,2009).

Alex first described the history of objectivity and the circumstances that make the objectivity functional then he told about the media misuse and how media is used for political and financial corruption. He also tried to explain that being a human it is impossible for a journalist to be objective as he has his own point of view. He also quoted the enemies of objectivity's point of view that objectivity is impossible in news that is to some extent match my study. Alex also included Jeff Jarvis, one-time reporter and editor at the Chicago Tribune and founder of the blog BuzzMachine, who says that objectivity is a false idea now. That is also to some extent relevant to my study because Jeff Jarvis, a famous journalist, says that objectivity is no more in news. But Alex did not tried to explore the gaps between media students and journalists' perceptions in objectivity in news that will be focused in my study. He also did not try to find out the difference of perceptions of journalists and media students in objectivity in news and my study will try to cover this gap.

In nineteenth century journalism's preference for objectivity and media ethics is very much important and before this journalism was used for personal promotion and benefits. Party papers were published for political advertisement and misuse of power. Independent journalism was not exist. Political leaders and pressure groups used journalism to press the opposition parties and political enemies. Gradually, the press freed itself from the wrangling of politics and political leaders. The news and editorials become free from a particular segment of public opinion and political bias (Kaplan,2012).

Kaplan tried to explain that due to objectivity publishers are no longer free to present the one side of a story and leave the other one. He did not talk about the existence of objectivity in news and what does journalists and media students think about objectivity in news that is my study area.

Objectivity is a best method for reporting balanced and fair information. Lack of bias and appearance of balance (equal time and space for major sides) make the journalism objective. Most definition shows that reporting which is based on factuality and accuracy (based on facts), detachment and neutrality (ability to keep personal bias and emotion from influencing story, as lack of preference for one side) and balance and fairness (presenting the sides of a story equitably) is an objective reporting. It provides the fair information to readers and keeps them aware of what is happening in the world. In objective reporting journalists do not present their particular point of view, they just present the facts of a story (Soundra, 2006).

Soundra tried to explain the characteristics of objectivity and also described the benefits of objectivity. He did not talk about the objectivity's existence in news that is a gap in this study and I will try to cover this gap.

News with a particular point of view misleads the readers and perceived as more biased than traditional, objective formals (Faldam,2012,). Although a lot of criticism and controversies are made against objectivity but it is clear that objectivity is a necessary and invaluable principle in the field of journalism and without it good journalism is impossible. Glasser (1992), thinks that in journalism objectivity is a set of beliefs that helps a journalist to find the truth about an event. Glasser argues that objectivity is an ideology that promotes journalistic practices and presents the actual role of media, while according to Walter

Schudson (1996), says that objectivity is a backbone of American journalism although journalists find it hard to maintain objective and fair reporting in their news coverage. For example, areas like Africa and others where wars are common, journalist gather news from their sources and their sources are affiliated to some warring groups so it is clear that those sources influence the stories these journalists write for their newspapers.

Schudson says that objectivity has great importance in American journalism but my study will focus on Pakistani media and what Pakistani journalists and media students think about objectivity in news.

The presence of objectivity can be tested through two ways:

a) First norm for testing objectivity is factuality that demands that how much a journalist rely on truthfulness of information collected from his source and its relevancy.

b) The second norm of checking objectivity is impartiality that demands the reporter's detachment and disengagement from the issue he is covering(Tuchman 2000).

Tuchman tried to explain the concept of objectivity but he did not told about presence of objectivity in news which will be covered in my study.

What is objective reporting and what are the component of objective reporting it is a complex judgment but the simple answer is that reporting that consist of all forms of journalistic standards is call objective reporting. It demands the journalists to look at fairness, newsworthiness, news relevancy, impartiality and factuality that can only be

examined by news editors. Journalism demands one to gain different type of neutrality for different kind of news. For example, two kinds of neutrality are required for straight news:

1) Cautious neutrality:

   It means reporter does not favor one side of the story and does not pay attention to controversial issues. Journalists should carefully gather the news and avoid the controversies. Caution is suitable where there is no much credible source of news.

2) Liberal neutrality;

   It is based on facts and provides the reporters a chance to think and make judgments and evaluations. (Ward 1999).

Ward explained that how a journalist can be objective and what are the precautions he need to do for objective reporting but he did not talk about the journalists' perception on objectivity in news that is gap and I will try to cover this gap.

In journalism the concept of objectivity remained disputed, all journalists, media scholars and academicians are not agree on one definition of objectivity but journalism critics should be content with what journalists called objectivity. Basically reporters and editors have to face many problems while choosing the news stories to run the newspapers. They have to face the issue of personal interest, political pressure and some other problems. Sometimes publisher also dictate them to run the newspapers according to their dictation and objectivity helps them to avoid all kind of such interruptions and run their newspapers on professional basis.

Objectivity is a basic need for good journalism but sometimes it is affected by some activities of newsroom and reporters have to do this unwontedly, one of those is meeting

journalistic norm and it harms the objectivity of news. Objectivity demands to present the both side of the story and let the people decide what is good and what is bad but according to Framing Theory media decide where people think about.

2.2.2 Gate keeping Theory.

The term "gatekeeping" was the first used by Kurt Levin (1947) which he used for a wife or mother as the person who will take decision of which food will be chose for the family's dinner. She has the power to decide which food can be served and which not. Same like this the gatekeeper decides what shall go for publishing and what not. At first he used his idea for food decision and after that he extended it to news item released through some media channels. This is the basic argument from which the gatekeeper studies started in the field of communication. All the concepts and ideas regarding gate keeping emerged after that and become the part of communication.

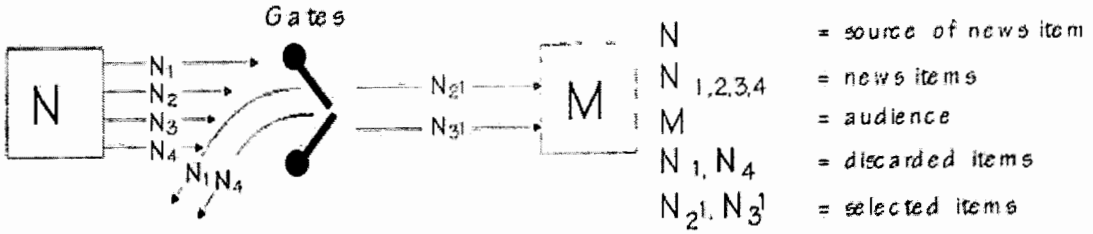
White (1964) was the first man who started work on Lewin's idea and applied it in journalism in 1950. McCombs and Shaw after observing the effect of decisions' of gatekeepers introduced the different directions of gatekeeping in 1970s. They explained that when media emphasis on a certain issue then audience give it more importance and discuss about it very often. McCombs and Shaw also explained that the concept of gatekeeping is relevant to the idea of agenda-setting in media. (McCombs et al, 1976).

The concept of gatekeeping is mature enough now and applied into field of many disciplines. In the field of Mass communication, media studies and media sciences the use of gate keeping is also very common.

2.2.2.1 Assumptions of Gatekeeping

Gatekeeping is a very common practice in media nowadays and the gatekeepers have the power to decide which news item will go for publishing and which will not. In short words it is a gatekeeper's job to allow which issues, problems, goods and information can go to the audience. Gatekeepers also control public knowledge by publishing some certain issues and stories and keeping the others out from the system. In this way they build a specific public opinion by publishing some certain stories and issues. Gatekeeping is not in media but in organizations also exists. In a governmental system there are also gatekeepers who control the information and keep the common people unaware from important issues and information. There are gatekeepers in every political party who regulate the information and disseminate the common issue and stop the information regarding some certain issues. In this way common workers of a political party always remain unaware of top secrets of the party. Same like this happens in many religious and social organizations.

2.2.2.2 Conceptual Model of Gatekeeping in media



Source: White (1964)

Gatekeeping is to block unwanted news items and information about any issue by stopping with a gate. The person who makes the decision of stopping unwanted news is call

gatekeeper. This term was at first used in the field of psychology and later it was also used in the field of communication very commonly and now it is a basic theory in communication studies.According to this theory reporters at first level and sub editors and editors at next level block some information about an issue which information they do not want to publish. This behavior of media professional controls public knowledge and damages the news objectivity and provides the audience half reality and keeps them un aware of some important news of their benefits. That's why this theory is being applied at my study area because audiences have the right to know complete reality without any missing.

2.3 Research Questions:

RQ1: Do media students give more importance to the objectivity than the journalists?

RQ2: Is there any difference between the perceptions of media students and working journalists about objectivity?

RQ3: While covering the news do journalists think about objectivity of news or not?

2.4 Hypotheses

Ho: There are differences between media students' and working journalists' perceptions about objectivity in news.

H1: Media students and working journalists understand objectivity as consisting of at least two dimensions: lack of bias and appearance of balance.

H2: Media students and journalists have opinion that objectivity no more exists in news.

Chapter-3

Research Methodology

This study aims to explore the gaps between media students and working journalists' perceptions in objectivity in news. Objectivity is a basic journalistic norm in media but nowadays it is ignored by present media professionals who give more importance to their personal benefits than professional standards. A lot of researches have conducted regarding objectivity in developed countries but in a developing country like Pakistan it will be ever first research which will focus on news objectivity and will focus on the existing gap between media students and journalists who are working with an organization. Basic focus of this research is to find difference of opinion and perceptions of media students and working journalists in objectivity in news, either they both think samely or differently about news objectivity. The researcher will conduct a survey of media students and working journalists to investigate their perceptions about objectivity in news. The main purpose of this study is to examine what media students and working journalist view the objective news and what are the components of objectivity in their point of view. A survey will be conducted to know their perceptions. Being conducted in a developing country hopefully this research will pave the way for new researchers in the field of news objectivity.

3.1 Research Design

Appropriate Research Design has a great importance for accurate results. Keeping in mind the nature and requirements of the study survey research is adopted to explore the

gaps between media students and working journalists in objectivity in news. To explore the gaps between media students and working journalist, a survey of 200 respondents (100 from media students of International Islamic University Islamabad and 100 from working journalists of Twin cities of Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Muzaffarabad, the capital city of Azad Kashmir) is conducted. Questionnaires are filled by media students and working journalists.

3.2 Study Population.

Population is a total set of interest which is being investigated in a study. The population of this study is all the media students of Pakistani universities and working journalists of Pakistani media from which the results are being generalized. But within limited resources and limited time it is impossible for the researcher to cover the whole population of the study that's why a sample is selected for this study and then the results are generalized for whole population.

3.3 Sample

A sample represents the whole population of the study. Results of a sample can be generalized to the whole population of the study. In this way a researcher in an easy way can prove or disapprove his hypothesis and research questions. A sample also helps the researcher in saving his time and money and in a limited time he can find out his results.

3.4 Sampling Size

A sample size must be representative of the whole population then it can be generalized to study population. The sample size of this study is 200 respondents from media students of International Islamic University, Islamabad and working journalists from

Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Muzaffarabad. 100 respondents from media students and 100 respondents from working journalists will fill the questionnaire.100 media students are selected from International Islamic University as this university has international environment and students of this university are from all over the world as well as all parts of Pakistan. So selecting students from this university means selecting students from all parts of Pakistan. In this way this sample size will be representative of whole country. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan and people from all parts of Pakistan are living in this city for their business, work and jobs. So it will be also representation of whole Pakistan.

3.5 Sampling Method

Sampling method in this study is non-random convenience sampling. According to this method, sample is selected on the basis of easy approach. Same happens in this study, all the media students from International Islamic University and working journalists from Rawalpindi, Islamabad and Muzaffarabad that were accessible are selected in this sample. Because of limited resources and time it is convenient for the researcher to choose this method.

3.6 Limitations

This study aims to explore the gaps between media students and working journalists' perception in objectivity in news. For this survey research is adopted and a sample of 200 respondents is selected from media students and working journalists as this sample is not enough for generalizing it for all the media students and working journalists. Sampling method which is being used in this study is not appropriate for broad study because convenient sampling method is often used for limited study and collected data

from the sample through this sampling method has no diversity. Sample size cannot be extended due to shortage of time, limited resources and financial limitation. So these reasons make this study limited.

3.7 Conceptualization and Operationalization of Variables

3.7.1 Objectivity

Objectivity is a basic journalistic norm and without it fair and balance reporting is impossible. It means while covering the news put your personal opinion and point of view aside and present the both sides of a story in front of readers and let them decide what is wrong and what is right. Objectivity is a key element of journalistic ethics. Some indicators like fairness, factuality, accuracy, truthfulness and balance which make the objectivity clear. To find objectivity in news these indicators have a great importance and without them objectivity cannot be judged. Conceptualization of these indicators is following:

3.7.1.1 Indicators of objectivity:

3.7.1.1.1 Balance:

Balance means presenting the both sides of a story equitably without favoring anyone. In this study balance would be used that while going through different news media students and working journalists find balance in news that's necessary for news objectivity.

3.7.1.1.2 Lack of bias

Bias means to do not build a story on facts, as facts can be easily verified; conversely, opinions cannot be verified. Bias also means that while covering a story journalists favor one side of the story and give that more importance than other. Bias stories are full of opinion and reporter's personal interests that is against the news objectivity. Objectivity demands to report the story without favoring anyone. In this study bias is used that while

reading and watching different news media students and working journalists found lack of bias in news. The other four issues of the study are following.

1. Who gives more importance to the objectivity?

   Basically this issue relates to the importance of the objectivity and it means that whether media students or working journalists give more weight and importance to the objectivity. Importance means who care more about objectivity and prefer objective news.

2. Difference between the perceptions of media students and working journalists about objectivity.

   Everyone's perceptions differ from other so same like here, media students and working journalists have different perceptions about objectivity in news. In this study it is tried to know how much difference is in both perceptions.

3. While covering the news journalists think about objectivity of news or not?

   Think about objectivity means do they keep in their mind the fairness and neutrality of the news and do they keep their opinion aside and let the actual facts go to the audience.

4. Existence of objectivity in news

   Existence of objectivity means is today's news items have fairness, balance and lack of bias?

Th. 16851

3.8 Technique of Data Analyzing and Interpreting

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is used to analyze and interpret the collected data. First, all the data is collected through questionnaires and then SPSS is used to analyze the collected data to find the results. On the basis of main findings,

conclusion is drawn and recommendations are made for the future work. Questionnaire is developed on the base of likert scale.

3.9 Implications of research

This research will help to know about the objectivity in news as well as difference between media students and journalists' perceptions about objectivity. This study will also help to understand the general viewers to develop their understanding about objectivity and while reading different newspapers and watching different media channels to decide whether these newspapers and media channels are being run on professional lines or just making money and doing sensationalism.

Chapter-4

Data Analysis

This study aims to find gaps between media students' and working journalists' perceptions on objectivity in news. A sample of 200 respondents is selected from media students and working journalists; 100 from media students and hundred from working journalists. To find the answers of the research questions and test the hypothesis of the study the questions are asked from both media students and working journalists. The findings of the survey research are following.

4.1. Who gives more importance to objectivity?

The most important question of this survey was to know whether media students or working journalists give more importance to objectivity. The same question is asked of both and the findings are very different. Table 4.1 elaborates the difference of giving importance to objectivity from media students and table 4.2 elaborates the difference of giving importance to objectivity from working journalists.

Table 4.1 of media students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	46	46.0	46.0	46.0
Agree	41	41.0	41.0	87.0
Neutral	10	10.0	10.0	97.0
Disagree	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

As is evident from table 4.1, the majority of the media students give more importance to objectivity. 46 and 41 percent of the selected media students agreed and strongly agreed that they give more importance to it than the working journalists while 10 percent remained neutral and the other 3 percent disagreed with this.

Table 4.2 of working journalists

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	12	12.0	12.0	12.0
Agree	24	24.0	24.0	36.0
Neutral	36	36.0	36.0	72.0
Disagree	18	18.0	18.0	90.0
Strongly Disagree	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

On the other hand only 12 percent of the selected working journalists and 24 percent agreed and strongly agreed that media students give more importance to the objectivity than journalists. While 36 percent of the working journalists remained neutral and they did not expressed their opinion and 18 and 10 percent of the selected working journalists disagreed and strongly disagreed that media students give more importance to objectivity than working journalists.

4.2. Difference between the perception of media students and working journalists about objectivity.

The second important issue of this survey was to know the difference between the perceptions of media students and working journalists about objectivity. For this the same question is asked of media students and working journalists and then the data is analyzed. A huge difference is found between the perceptions of media students and working journalists about objectivity. Findings of the survey are following.

As apparent from table 4.3, 19 and 20 percent of the working journalists of the selected sample agreed and strongly agreed that there is a difference between the perception of media students and working journalists. While 32 percent of the selected working journalists remained neutral and 24 and 5 percent disagreed and strongly disagreed that there is difference between the perception of media students and working journalists about objectivity.

Table 4.3 of working journalists

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	19	19.0	19.0	19.0
Agree	20	20.0	20.0	39.0
Neutral	32	32.0	32.0	71.0
Disagree	24	24.0	24.0	95.0
Strongly Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

4.3. While covering the news do journalists think about the objectivity of news or not?

This is also an important issue of this survey, whether or not while covering the news journalists think about the objectivity of news. The same question is asked of the media students and working journalists and found different findings. A huge difference is found between media students and working journalists in this regard. The findings of the survey are following.

As is evident from table 4.5, 16 and 18 percent of the working journalists from selected sample agreed and strongly agreed that journalists while covering the news think about objectivity, while 31 percent of the working journalists from the selected sample remained neutral and 24 and 11 percent of working journalists from the selected sample disagreed and strongly disagreed that while covering the news journalists think about the objectivity.

Table 4.5 of working journalists

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	16	16.0	16.0	16.0
Agree	18	18.0	18.0	34.0
Neutral	31	31.0	31.0	65.0
Disagree	24	24.0	24.0	89.0
Strongly Disagree	11	11.0	11.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

As is apparent from table 4.6, 9 percent of media students from the selected sample remained neutral while 48 and 43 percent of media students from the selected sample disagreed and strongly disagreed that while covering the news journalists think about the objectivity of news. In this issue not a single one respondent agreed or strongly agreed that while covering the news journalists think about the objectivity of news.

Table 4.6 of working journalists

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
Disagree	48	48.0	48.0	57.0
Strongly Disagree	43	43.0	43.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

4.4 Two dimensions of objectivity: lack of bias and appearance of balance.

The most important issue of this study was whether or not media students and working journalists understand objectivity as consisting of at least two dimensions: a lack of bias and the appearance of balance. For this the same question is asked of media students and working journalists. A big difference is found between media students and working journalists in this regard. The findings of the survey are following.

As is apparent from the table 4.7, 20 and 23 percent of media students in the selected sample agreed and strongly agreed that media students and working journalists understand objectivity as consisting of at least two dimensions, while 30 percent of media students from selected sample remained neutral. And 20 and 7 percent of media students from selected sample disagreed and strongly disagreed that media students and working journalists understand objectivity as consisting of at least two dimensions.

Table 4.7 of media students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	20	20.0	20.0	20.0
Agree	23	23.0	23.0	43.0
Neutral	30	30.0	30.0	73.0
Disagree	20	20.0	20.0	93.0
Strongly Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

As is apparent from table 4.8, 9 percent of working journalists remained neutral that media students and working journalists understand objectivity as consisting of at least two dimensions, while 48 and 43 percent of working journalists from the selected sample disagreed and strongly disagreed that media students and working journalists understand objectivity as consisting of at least two dimensions: lack of bias and appearance of balance.

Table 4.8 of working journalists

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
Disagree	48	48.0	48.0	57.0
Strongly Disagree	43	43.0	43.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

4.5. Existence of objectivity in news

This was also an important issue of the study that media students and working journalists think that objectivity no longer exists in news. The same question is asked of media students and working journalists for this. A huge difference is found between media students and working journalists in this regard. The findings of the survey are following.

As is apparent from table 4.9, 5 percent of media students from the selected sample remained neutral and they did not express their opinion while other 54 and 41 percent of the media students disagreed and strongly disagreed that news objectivity is found in news items. And not a single one respondent agreed or strongly agreed with this.

Table 4.9 of media students

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	5	5.0	5.0	5.0
Disagree	54	54.0	54.0	59.0
Strongly Disagree	41	41.0	41.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

On the other hand as is apparent from table 4.10, 29 and 13 percent working journalists from the selected sample agreed and strongly agreed that news objectivity is found in news items while 29 percent working journalists from selected sample remained

neutral. And 22 and 7 percent of working journalists disagreed and strongly disagreed that news objectivity is found in news items.

Table 4.10 of working journalists

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	29	29.0	29.0	29.0
Agree	13	13.0	13.0	42.0
Neutral	29	29.0	29.0	71.0
Disagree	22	22.0	22.0	93.0
Strongly Disagree	7	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Chapter-5

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Results and Findings of the Study

Following are the major findings of this study.

1. A sample of 200 respondents is selected from media students and working journalists; 100 media students and 100 working journalists. The first and major issue of this study was whether media students or working journalists give more importance to objectivity. It is found that media students give more importance to objectivity than working journalists. The survey results proved that media students and media scholars give more importance and they think seriously about objectivity as compared to working journalists. As evident from the figure 4.1, 46 and 41 percent of media student respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they give more importance to objectivity. The results supported the hypothesis of the study as well.
2. The second issue of this study was the difference between the perceptions of media students and working journalists about objectivity. It was also an important issue of this study. It is found that media students and working journalists are not on the same page as regards objectivity in news. Both have different opinions about objectivity in news. As apparent from the figure 4.3, 39 percent of working journalists respondents agreed and strongly agreed while on the other hand as apparent from the figure 4.4, 72 percent of media student respondents agreed and

strongly agreed that there is difference between the perceptions of media students and working journalists about objectivity. In this way the results supported the hypothesis of the study.

3. The third issue of this study was whether while covering the news journalists think about objectivity. It was also an important issue of this study. It is found that in this regard media students and working journalists are not on the same page. As apparent from the figure 4.5, 34 percent of working journalist respondents agreed and strongly agreed while on the other hand as evident from figure 4.6 not a single respondent agreed or strongly agreed that while covering the news journalists think about the objectivity of news. These results supported the hypothesis of the study that media students and working journalists think differently.
4. The fourth issue of the study was the two dimensions of objectivity: a lack of bias and the appearance of balance. It was the most important issue of this study. The whole study was based on this issue. It is found that in this regard media students and working journalists are not on the same page. As apparent from figure 4.7, 43 percent of media student respondents agreed and strongly agreed in this regard while on the other hand as is evident from figure 4.8, there was not a single respondent amongst working journalist who agreed or strongly agreed that media students and working journalists understand objectivity as consisting of at least two dimensions: a lack of bias and the appearance of balance.
5. The fifth and last issue of the study was the existence of objectivity in news. It was also an important issue of this study. It is found that in this regard, like others, media students and working journalists have different opinions. As is apparent from figure 4.9, 95 percent of the media students disagreed and strongly disagreed in this

regard while on the other hand, as is evident from figure 4.10, only 29 percent of respondents amongst working journalists disagreed and strongly disagreed that media students and journalists think that objectivity no longer exists in news.

5.2. Discussion on Results

The most important result of this study is that media students and working journalists do not have the same opinions about objectivity in the news. There are certain gaps between media students and working journalists in this regard. The first issue of this study was who gives more importance to objectivity. The results showed that a huge gap exists between media students and working journalists in this regard. Results showed that media students give more importance to objectivity as compared to working journalists. As is apparent from figure 4.1, 87 percent of respondents amongst media students give more importance to objectivity while on the other hand only 36 percent respondents amongst working journalists agreed and strongly agreed to this. Results showed that media students and working journalists have different opinions. As regards the backgrounds of both media students and working journalists, they are different; media students have an academic background and journalists have field experience, so the difference in results is not unnatural.

The second issue of the study was to know difference between the perceptions of media students and working journalists about objectivity. The results showed that in this regard media students and working journalists are not on the same page. A huge gap is also found in this regard. As apparent from figure 4.3, a total of 39 percent of working journalist respondents agreed and strongly agreed

that in their opinion working journalists and media students have different perceptions about objectivity in news while on the other hand, as is apparent from figure 4.4, a total of 72 percent of respondents amongst media students agreed and strongly agreed that media students and working journalists have different opinions about objectivity in news. In this way results showed that there is a huge gap between the perceptions of media students and working journalists about objectivity. As concerns media students, they belong to an academic environment and in everyday lectures they listen to and discuss about the objectivity of news. That is why they give more weight to objectivity and they also had learned more about media ethics, which is why they also are more conscious about objectivity. On the other hand, many working journalists in our country are not well educated and they do not have a degree in journalism, which is why they are not fully aware of media ethics and their importance. This is the basic reason of difference between media students and working journalists.

The third issue of this study was whether or not while covering the news journalists think about the objectivity of news. The results showed that in this regard both media students and working journalists are not on same page. A huge difference is examined in this regard. As apparent from the figure 4.5, a total of 34 percent of respondents amongst working journalists agreed and strongly agreed that while covering the news journalists think about the objectivity of news, while on the other hand not a single respondent from media student agreed or strongly agreed that working journalists think about objectivity while covering the news. In this way a huge gap is found between media students and working journalists on this issue. The basic reason of this gap is that media students, while going through the news,

keep media ethics in their minds and whenever media ethics are ignored by journalists they get it, while working journalists only report the news and complete their quota. They do not care whether the news reported has kept media ethics in mind or not.

The fourth and most important issue of the study was the two dimensions of objectivity: a lack of bias and the appearance of balance. The results showed that media students and working journalists have different opinions in this regard. A huge difference is also found between both regarding this issue. As is apparent from figure 4.7, a total of 43 percent of respondents amongst media students agreed and strongly agreed that they understand objectivity as consisting of at least two dimensions: a lack of bias and the appearance of balance. On the other hand, as is apparent from figure 4.8, not a single respondent amongst working journalists agreed or strongly agreed with this. So a very huge gap is found between media students and working journalists in this regard. The basic reason for this gap is that media students are aware of media ethics and they know better what objectivity is and what are its other dimensions and indicators while on the other hand working journalists are not fully aware of media ethics and their knowledge is very limited, which is why they depend on their limited knowledge. This difference in knowledge and awareness resulted in a difference in understanding.

The fifth and last issue of this study was the existence of objectivity in news. The results showed that both media students and working journalists do not have the same opinion on this issue. A huge difference is found between both in this regard. As is apparent from figure 4.9, not a single respondent amongst media students agreed or strongly agreed that objectivity is found in news, while on the

other hand, as is apparent from figure 4.10, 42 percent of respondents amongst working journalists agreed and strongly agreed that objectivity is found in news. So the results showed a very huge difference between both media students and working journalists. The basic reason of the difference is also knowledge and awareness as media students have more knowledge about media ethics and they read and go through news items keeping these ethics in their minds, while working journalists do not care about that.

5.3. Conclusion

On the basis of the findings of the study, it can be concluded that media students and working journalists have different opinions about objectivity in news and there are certain gaps between them in this regard. All the findings and results proved the basic assumption and hypothesis (Ho) of the study that "there are differences between media students' and working journalists' perceptions about objectivity in news." There is nothing a single issue that can be common between media students and working journalists. The basic reason for this difference is the difference of approach, knowledge and awareness that is resulted in difference of understanding.

The second hypothesis (H1) of the study is approved by media students as (figure 4.7) 43 percent of media students respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they understand objectivity as consisting of at least two dimensions: a lack of bias and the appearance of balance. However, it was not approved by working journalists as there is not a single respondent amongst them who agreed or strongly

agreed that they understand objectivity as consisting of at least two dimensions. The basic reason for this difference is also the difference of knowledge and awareness as in our country media is not mature and working journalist are not well educated. Their knowledge is very limited and mostly they depend on their limited knowledge and there are not enough opportunities for workshops and training. So they remain ignorant about media ethics and survive without them. On the other side, media students have opportunities in daily lectures, discussion, seminars and also workshops, which is why their knowledge about media ethics is mature. This difference also appeared in the results and findings.

The third hypothesis (H2) of the study is proved by media students as (figure 4.9) not a single respondent amongst media students agreed or strongly agreed that objectivity is found in news items but this hypothesis is not proved by working journalists as (figure 4.10) 42 percent of respondents amongst working journalists agreed and strongly agreed that objectivity is found in news items. The basic reason for this difference is the difference of approach as media students have critical approach and they go through news deeply keeping in mind all complications so they know better which news has objectivity and which has not while on the other hand working journalists approach is very tentative. This difference also be seen in findings and results.

5.4.Implications

As media has become the fourth pillar of the state and everyone needs to make himself up to date. This research study generally will help everyone who watches, listens or reads media to make him aware of media ethics and professional

requirements. The specific implications of the study are following:

- This study will especially help new comer media students to enhance their knowledge and awareness about media ethics and will also help the old media students to keep them aware about the news objectivity and will also encourage them to search the new dimensions of news objectivity.

- This study will also help working journalists who spend their whole life in the field and never get a chance to come to the university to get information about media ethics and professional standards.

- Overall this study will help media owners and the authorities to run their media houses on a professional basis.

5.5. Recommendations

Followings are the recommendations in researcher's point of view:

- Objectivity is a very important factor in media practice. When objectivity is distorted the whole story is changed so it is necessary to publish the story without any outside addition.
- Working journalists need more training and more knowledge about media ethics. There should be workshops and training for them so they can build a critical approach.
- Media students need practical work instead of only getting lectures and having discussions.

- Universities and colleges need to arrange workshops and training sessions, especially for students and for the public to make them aware of media ethics.

5.6. Limitations

This study is limited to exploring gaps between media students and working journalists on objectivity in news. Other aspects of research can exploring gaps between media students and working journalists on media ethics and professional standards.

The sample of the study is 200, which is very small and it cannot be generalized to the whole population. So it is necessary to choose a sample which can be generalized to the whole population.

Due to limited resources and time, the research is limited to the journalists of Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Muzzafarabad. It can be enhanced to the whole country.

Due to limited resources only media students of the International Islamic University, Islamabad, are selected. It can be enhanced to all universities.

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Appendices

Questionnaire for Survey

This questionnaire is for the fulfillment of the MS Media & Communication Studies. Topic is Exploring gapes between media students and working journalists' perception in objectivity in news. Information gathered from respondents are used for only research purpose and will be kept confidential. Your cooperation will be highly appreciated in filling out this questionnaire.

Age group:

a)20 yrs or below

b)21 to 30 yrs

c) 31yrs to 40

d) above 41

Education:

a) Bachelors or below

b)Masters

c)M.phil

d)Ph.D

Gender:

a)Male

b)Female

other

Region

a)Islamabad

b)Muzaffarabad

c)Rawalpindi d)Any

Q.1: Do you read/listen/watch newspaper/TV channels daily?

1)Yes	2)N0

Q.2: How much time you spend on reading or watching news?

1) 1 hour	2) 2 hours	3) 3 hours	4) 4 hours	5) any other

Q. 3: Which medium do you prefer for accessing news?

1) Electronic	2) Print	3)Radio	4) online	5)Mobile

Q. 4:Which media channel do you like for news listening?

1) Geo News	2)ARY	3)DunyaNews	4)ExpressNews	5)other

Q. 5: Which newspaper do you like for news reading?

1)Daily Dawn	2)Express Tribune	3)Jang	4) Express	5) other

Q.6: which radio channel do you prefer for listening news?

1) Radio Pakistan	2) FM 99	3) FM89.4	4) FM 101	5) Anyother

Q. 7: Do .you think present media cares about the journalistic ethics?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.8: Do you think news objectivity is found in news items?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.9: Do you think news objectivity as consisting of at least two dimensions: lack of bias and appearance of balance?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.10: Do you think journalists care about balance while covering the news?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.11: Do you think journalists care about lack of bias while covering the news?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.12: Do you think media students and journalists have same opinion about objectivity in news?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.13: Do you think media students give more importance to news objectivity than working journalists?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.14: Do you think objectivity is no more exist in news?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.15: Do you think is there any difference between the perception of media students and working journalists about objectivity?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.16: Do you think present media is being run on purely professional bases?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.17: Do you think present media is doing its job responsibly?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.18: Do you think media professionals need more training?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree

Q.19: Do you think media need educated media professional who are fully aware of journalistic ethics?

1) Strongly agree	2) Agree	3) Neutral	4) Disagree	5) Strongly Disagree