

## THE IMPACT OF RADIO PROGRAMS ON INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL PUNJAB, PAKISTAN

**Anila Saleem**

Station Director, Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation, Islamabad, Pakistan.

**Wajiha Raza Rizvi**

Associate Professor, School of Media and Mass Communication,  
Beaconhouse National University, Lahore, Pakistan.

**Maria Saleem**

Research Scholar, UCP Business School,  
University of Central Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

### ABSTRACT

*This article studies the impact of Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation or Radio Pakistan in guiding the socioeconomic development in the Central Punjab through programs on infrastructure from 2008 to 2013. The researchers reviewed extensive literature on the infrastructure and socioeconomic development through radio all over the world and the archives of the Finance Division of the Government of Pakistan. The study assumes that Radio Pakistan has significantly contributed in socioeconomic and infrastructure development in the Central Punjab by spreading information for resolving the needs of this country. It used the agenda setting theory, considering the programmers set the agenda to improve the quality of the Radio programs on regular basis. The researchers paid special attention to the efficacy of the programs by interviewing the programmers in regards to the policy, quality and topics of the programs, and knowledge of guest speakers on the topics under discussion. The Radio Pakistan depends on the response of listeners, programmers, governmental and foreign bodies who use development support communication for the betterment of the society. It is a multi-sectoral process in the sharing of the information about the agendas of government as well as its deliberate actions for the development in Central Punjab. This article uses qualitative research method based on the interviews of 35 producers employed at three main radio stations at Lahore, Sargodha and Faisalabad. The researchers developed a questionnaire for in-depth interviews of the producers, including 22 males and 13 females. This study found that the producers feel that Radio Pakistan is playing a significant role in the socioeconomic and infrastructure development in the Central Punjab through following policies of government, maintaining quality of programs, selecting latest topics for discussion, and finding guests who have sufficient knowledge of the topics. Collectively, these choices make programs most beneficial for the public.*

**Keywords;** Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation, infrastructure, development, Central Punjab, radio Pakistan.

### INTRODUCTION

Pakistan, an agriculture-based economy, is heavily relying on Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) or Radio Pakistan for socioeconomic and infrastructure development in the country since the Independence. It has not only entertained people through cultural programs, songs and dramas, it has also educated peasants through two hours daily transmission on agriculture and seasonal crops, and developers and industrial sectors through programs on ongoing projects. Radio Pakistan's transmission is not restricted to the entertainment or agricultural domains. It also takes care of programs on health, education, oil, energy, construction and infrastructure. The radio has been the only medium for communicating information about multifarious governmental support programs to the masses on socioeconomic and development matters, and for educating, grooming, and entertaining young and old listeners throughout the country like a family

member. Radio Pakistan claims nearly 18 million nationwide listeners and approximately one million listeners in Central Punjab seek information from its comperes and guests during the broadcast of programs from various stations.

This study assumes the listeners heavily relied on Radio Pakistan to seek answers to their queries on socioeconomic and infrastructure matters of foreign funded projects such as Shahrah-e-Karakoram and Neelum-Jhelum projects in 2008-2013. Radio Pakistan collected information and invited experts in various live programs to answer questions of listeners/callers on social and economic development issues in the country/region. It fulfilled listener cum governmental needs for socioeconomic development in Central Punjab and answered queries of callers on various topics through programs covering various topics on the infrastructure. These programs were aired from Lahore, Faisalabad and Sargodha stations that cover 300km<sup>2</sup>, 120km<sup>2</sup>, and 50km<sup>2</sup> areas respectively. These stations cater to the needs of the listeners in mainly agricultural and industrial regions and the cottage industry in large urban areas of Punjab. These services are provided under the guidance from the provincial policy making departments such as Punjab Assembly, Punjab Secretariat, and head offices of many concerned organizations or foreign developmental agencies since their establishment in 1947, 1982 and 2005. The socioeconomic development in the Central Punjab is basically dependent on governmental policies, style or format, budget and content of programs (independent variables).

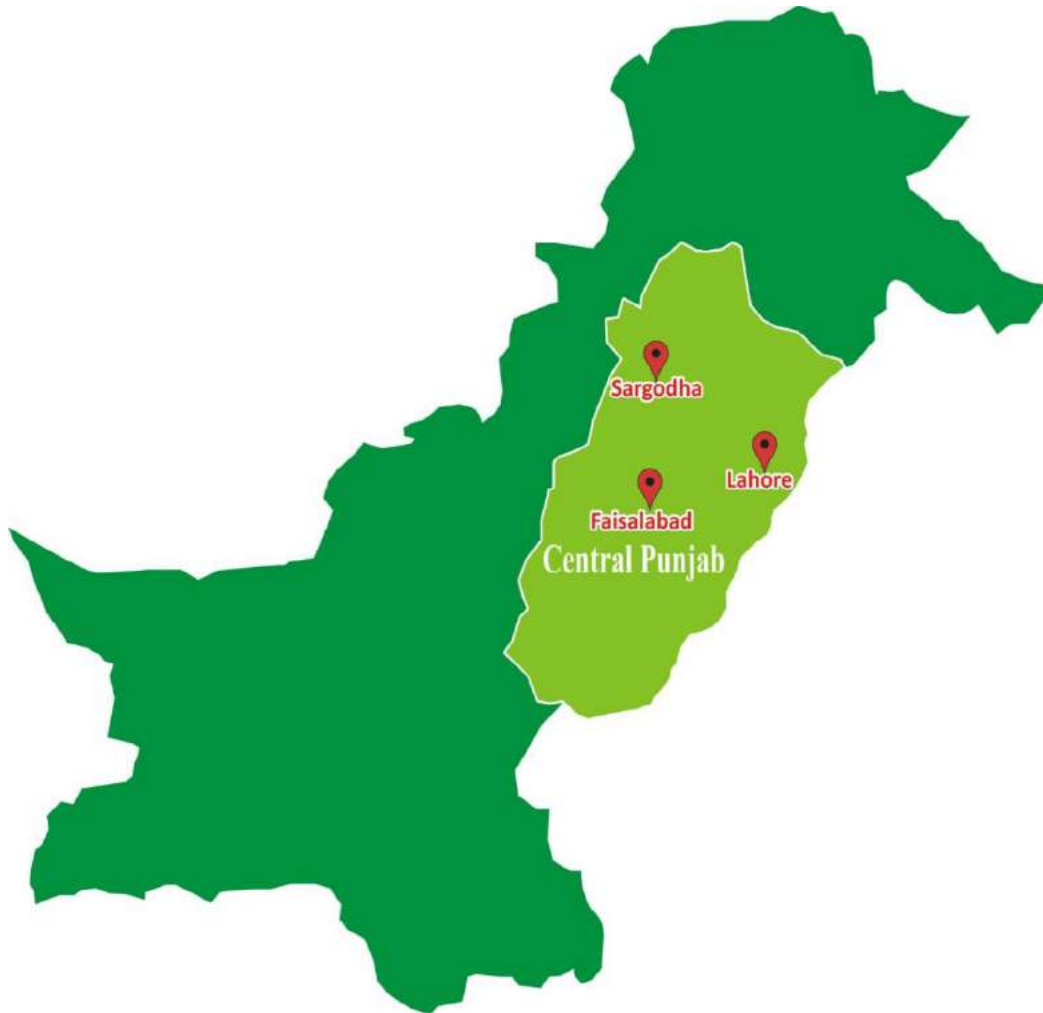


Figure 1. Radio Stations in Central Punjab

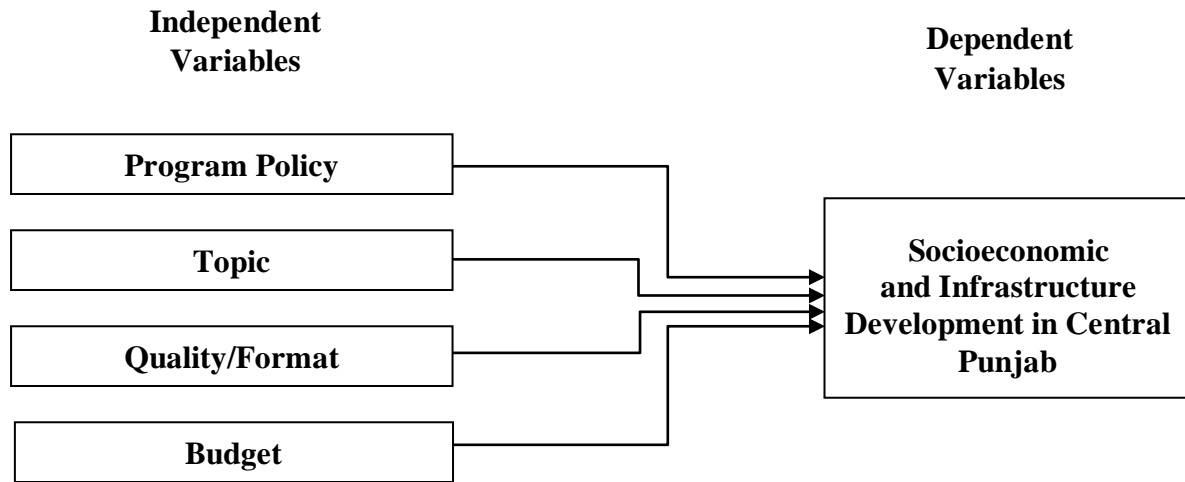


Figure2. Theoretical model of research

### Statement of the Problem

According to Pakistan Economic Survey (2008-2009), “major financial inflows dried up” in Pakistan “during the July-November 2008” (“Finance,” 2009, p. i). “Growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for 2009/10, on an inflation-adjusted basis, has been recorded at a provisional” 4.1% (“Finance,” 2010, p. i). While the world economy was expected to contract by 1.3% in 2009 and 3.8% in developing countries (2009, p. i), Pakistan’s “account balance” showed an impact due to snappy “increase in oil prices and “import of 1.2 million metric tons of fertilizer” in 2011 (“Finance,” 2012, p. i). Irrespective of global decrease, Pakistan succeeded in maintaining the impressive growth in its rate of exports in 2011 and 2012. Remittances also showed a buoyant 16% increase at near thirteen billion dollars (“Finance,” 2012, p. i). The economy showed some signs of improvement in 2013 (“Finance,” 2013, p. i). Giving an overview of the economy, the Finance Division of Government of Pakistan (GOP) reported an overall growth in many sectors including “the commodity producing” and agriculture sectors in the fiscal year 2011-2012 as opposed to the year before—GDP 3.7% as opposed to 3.0%; agriculture “3.1% against. 2.4%; the ‘Large-Scale Manufacturing (LSM)’” 1.1% against 1.0%; “the Services sector” 4.0% (Finance, 2013, p. i).

The study assumes that the above said growth has been possible because of contributions of Radio Pakistan, radio being the powerful electronic medium which provides entertainment, information, education to the public and works for the community development. Just as radio stations are working all over the world to serve and groom their publics and a large number of communities, Radio Pakistan uses various FM and Medium Wave channels, Pakistani Motorway Police uses FM 95, Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) uses FM 92.4 and Traffic Police Lahore uses FM 88.6 channels for the awareness of traffic rules and to solve traffic and other problems in different parts of the city, or to serve the community. Radio Pakistan, with the largest network in the Pakistan, gives maximum coverage and provides all kind of information for the betterment of people and development of infrastructure in the country. Most of Pakistan’s population relies on the information provided by Radio Pakistan. It is playing a pivotal role in lives of the public, and it is working for the basic growth and development of both rural and urban communities in Central Punjab.

### Significance of the Study

The study on the development support communication for the infrastructure and socioeconomic development in Central Punjab through radio is important because of its emphasis on the role of program producers and listeners. Harold Dwight Lasswell explained the three foremost acts of mass communication as: observation of the situation, connection on the part of the people in reacting to the situation, as well as communication of the social legacy and tradition from one generation to another (1948, pp. 136-139). This

model provides details about the major operations of mass media (Lasswell, 1948, pp. 136-139). Richard S. Croft adds surveillance as well as knowledge dissemination functions of media to the list (2004, pp. 4-6). This comprises the assortment and circulation of reports of knowledge, linking the inside as well as the outside of the civilization. The association means that media or news are offered to the public after they have been nominated, understood as well as analyzed by the makers and the concerned departments. This purpose is openly associated to the understanding of information on matters of ecological, industrial, financial and social development. Lasswell explained the shift of social tradition and media's role as a tool for the communication of our customs, ideals, and opinions. He later added two main functions, amusement and deployment, to this model because amusement or enjoyment provides a relief from the stress. Lasswell added mobilization as a function of encouraging society's awareness to the list of functions (1948, pp. 136-139). These accomplishments were passed out in prevailing media to educate, to teach and to amuse. Wright emphasized flexible functions of radio in the culture (1960, pp. 610-613) that help in making adjustments from time to time.

The Radio Pakistan broadcasts information on different infrastructure related issues besides social, political, religious and entertainment activities. Mazhar Abbas and A. D. Sheikh et. al. say Radio Pakistan amicably reinforces and fulfills the same responsibilities by focusing on social change in the rural and urban areas of Pakistan since social growth brings the economic prosperity (2010, pp. 22-25). Its list of programs on social or economic development is unending. It disseminates information about large scale infrastructure related projects and prioritizes production of programs on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This part of the study reviews literature on the impact of radio on different socioeconomic aspects of life from across the world, including a little from Pakistan. It begins with the definition of broadcasting and the concept of development, and relationship of radio to rural and urban broadcasts in the west and much more.

### **Radio Broadcasting**

Mass media's role in development is undeniable. It is a significant force to entertain, educate and inform any society. Radio can be signified as the strategic establishment for disseminating knowledge as well as amusement to all kinds of listeners (Folarin, 2000, pp. 10-13). The developmental communication through media gained great prominence with the emergence of the new postcolonial countries in the 1960s. The advanced nations and multilateral developmental agencies like the United Nations and World Bank believed in the exponents of the theory of modernization. In their view, the best path to bring development in the less developed places was through "the replication" of the tested models of the economic development that had proven their success in the west (Khan, et. al., 2013, pp. 1-20). Mass media especially radio was considered a necessary tool for spreading the models of the west and for bringing change in the attitudes of the populations in the less developed nations (Nazari, & Hasbullah, 2010, pp. 13-20).

Stephen Barnard mentioned that leadership played an entirely different role in the media for masses in the newly advanced nations (2000). The western countries as well as the developmental agencies view the media as channels for the developmental communication, and for politicizing local classes. They view the power of the mass media for the advancement of their political agendas (Barnard, 2000, pp. 5-8). The elite class controls the mass media through legal as well as non-legal means. In the past, they restricted freedom of space for the individuals as well as the community. The elite or the ruling class used media for their own convenience, self-promotion and gain and voices of marginalized communities were excluded. The elite used the media to exalt their individual image and demonize images of those that they conceived as their rivals. The rapid growth in the radio industry geared democratization of the global political and governance systems in the underdeveloped countries 1990s onwards (Khan, et. al., 2013, pp. 1-20).

Over the years, the developmental communication models have evolved tremendously as the different schools of thought supported the models (Abbas, Muhammad, & Ashfaq, 2010, pp. 22-25). The modernization paradigm holds that diffusion of information is the best of ways to increase the level of the development in not-so-developed countries. The media persuades the public "to embrace the core values" and modern "practices in order to spur economic development" (Besley, Burgess, & Prat, 2002, pp. 45-60).

The modern school of thought believed in the power of mass media in influencing behavior of the people which results in the change through the desired actions towards socioeconomic development. A number of factors such as culture and interpersonal relationships help in measuring the changes or development, as they constantly leave impact on the attitude and behavior of the people (Myers, 2011, pp. 17-19).

Asia Bashir strongly supports the idea that producers are flooded with emails and letters from listeners and viewers of media that promote all kinds of products, moods and attitudes as well as a sense of what is and what is not important for them (2010, pp. 11-40). Arthur Asa Berger says a rapid growth of the broadcasting businesses was observed in Pakistan at the start of the millennium (1998). The drift is particularly an outcome of globalization, liberalization, denationalization, socioeconomic expansion, and the market in financial arrangement (Berger, 1998, pp. 14-20). Government (authoritarian government; dictatorship) manages the researchers and bodies to control the processes of production and transmission of the digital radio which may be charged with imposing a decent code of broadcasting. Pakistan government also manages radio processes and radio programs are mostly funded through advertising and marketing and other sources. Most programs focus on human development and the welfare of the public and some programs focus on the pleasure and entertainment of the public (Bashir, 2010, pp. 11-40).

In short, radio broadcasting has come a long way since its inception when it comes to policies of programs, or targets for meeting the requirements of listeners against their ever-changing needs or of the period (Khawaja, 1997, pp. 43-45). Still the broad roles of this medium are to inform, to entertain, and to educate people through current affairs, drama, documentaries, news, magazine and special audience programs on infrastructure etc. to include women, children, labor, forces, intellectuals, farmers and students (Nazari, & Hasbullah, 2010, pp. 13-20).

### **Radio and Development**

Ebenezer Oludayo Soola says that development programs aim at bringing a better change, or reordering process of socioeconomic development in such a manner that may eradicate gross level poverty, and improve poor health and living standards for general public (2003, pp. 9-28). Radio is not only used to entertain people but it also assists in the development of infrastructure and betterment of the general public. It is used all around the globe for instructional commitments. There is absolutely no doubt that the broadcast of radio in Pakistan is run efficiently in public interest (Curran, & Gurevitch, 1993, pp. 71-76).

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The study on the Radio Pakistan's role in influencing socioeconomic development through programs on the infrastructure in Central Punjab is conducted in the light of agenda building/setting theories, believing in the impact of the agenda on the public and development sectors.

#### **Agenda Building/Setting**

The agenda-setting theory assumes that the media filter and shape what we see and think (Bob Franklin et. al, 2005). Croft adds its influence is visible when a sensational story stays at the top and a story that affects people disappears from a broadcast e.g. an impending storm or reform of legislative tax. The more media attention to an issue makes it look more important to the public (Croft, 2004). Resultantly, mass media establishments tell us how to perceive or feel a story or an issue.

Agenda-setting relies on scientific and psychological merit. Greater publicity in the mass media makes a story prominent in people's memories (Mattelart, Armand, & Michele, 1998). They can recall it even if they do not register it as an important matter in their heads (Milan, 2009). Yet, it is difficult to measure the impact of the agenda-setting theory (Mattelart, Armand, & Michele, 1998). Research shows a causal relationship between prominence of news in public minds and coverage in media. Everyone can dig news on the internet and social media without any constraint. People can get information of all sorts from different kinds of media (Scroft, 2004). Khan and Pembecioğlu say social and economic growth and prosperity go hand in hand (2015). Radio Pakistan is already struggling to introduce a slow pace social change in the society especially in rural areas (Khan, & Pembecioğlu, 2015). Radio Pakistan broadcasts a

number of programs in this respect. It started programs on the Punjabi cultural system to influence people who plan their cultural and economic lives as per need. Nakabugu says these interventions make people more civilized (2001). People are now more civilized in Punjab than the past, and developments in infrastructure had their own impact in these changes. Farmers are better informed and have better control over their crops due to better communication system and industrialists due to improvements in roads and infrastructure. Their economic condition is almost totally changed and radio listeners are earning more than before (Nakabugu, 2001). The theory becomes ineffective for people who make up their minds themselves, or without seeking information from sources like radio. Someone may believe he made the right choice for “his or her elected official” who had an impact on the socioeconomic development in the face of different compelling news stories and reports that the mass media present (Nazari, & Hasbullah, 2010).

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

The researchers examined the role of radio in socioeconomic and infrastructure development in Central Punjab in 2008-2013. The research is based on a qualitative study of the data collected from 35/35 radio programmers and producers employed at Lahore, Faisalabad and Sargodha stations of Radio Pakistan. They developed a checklist for collecting data through in-person, in-depth interviews of 13 male and 9 female programmers in Lahore and a questionnaire for collecting data from 9 male and 4 female radio programmers and producers in Faisalabad and Sargodha with the help of Station Managers (35/35 altogether). Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation did not intervene in the data collection process, and let the researchers collect authentic data without any prejudice in good faith.

### **Population**

There are 35 programmers/producers at the three radio stations in Central Punjab while there are 85 working at nine radio stations in Punjab and 230 working at 32 radio stations in the four provinces of Pakistan.

### **Sampling**

The researcher included 35 programmers/producers (22 males and 13 females) at Lahore, Faisalabad and Sargodha stations in the study. She trained the Station Managers at the latter two stations for conducting the survey, highlighting she was collecting anonymous data from the producers and programmers in the three cities with support yet without any intervention by the PBC in the process. She provided hard and soft copies of the questionnaire to the Station Managers at Radio Pakistan Faisalabad and Sargodha stations, where they collected first hand data from producers/programmers who had no idea about the information being sought by the first researcher in in-person, in-depth interviews at Radio Pakistan Lahore station via the checklist.

### **Sample distribution**

The data was collected through in-depth interviews/survey of 35 programmers and producers working at Lahore, Faisalabad and Sargodha stations of Radio Pakistan in Central Punjab.

### **Sampling technique**

The researchers used purposive sampling method for collecting data from the producers and programmers. It is a non-probability sampling method and it occurs when “elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgement of the researcher. Researchers often believe that they can obtain a representative sample by using a sound judgement, which will result in saving time and money” (Black, 2010). The researchers selected the most suitable people for the interviews and survey, who had produced these programs broadcast by Radio Pakistan Lahore, Faisalabad and Sargodha stations from 2008 to 2013.

The qualitative study desired to analyze 22 in-depth, open ended interviews and 13 copies of the survey questionnaire filled by a purposive sample of 35 radio programmers about the policy, content and format of programs for socioeconomic development in Central Punjab by focusing on the infrastructure from 2008 to 2013. The researcher personally or with the help of station managers included all the producers

and programmers working at the three radio stations in in-depth interviews/requested them to fill truthful information in blank copies of the open-ended questionnaire (and requested them to use extra sheets or soft copies of the form where necessary). The study focused on critical appreciation, emphasizing strengths and weakness in larger interest of the organization, and mentioned issues they will normally avoid mentioning before any outsider. Many of the respondents opted to fill forms when convenient and returned them in two months. The researcher selected the entire population as a sample, expecting different responses from each unit (producer) in view of different nature of the social or economic development programs, their structures, formats, presentation styles, budgets and policies. They analyzed personal statements (content) concerning five social (religion, healthcare, education, culture, politics) and five economic (agriculture, trade & business, small & medium enterprises, infrastructure and internationally funded big projects such as China Pakistan Economic Corridor) indicators, but reported a quality study of the programs on the infrastructure development based on personal statements of the programmers in this paper. It mentions the key points and outliers based on a majority of responses, and supports the discussion and conclusion with the literature.

### **Sample size**

The researchers included 35 programmers/producers working at Radio Pakistan Lahore, Faisalabad and Sargodha stations in the study for the purpose of qualitative data collection.

### **Programmers/Producers in Central Punjab**

	Male	Female
Lahore	13	9
Faisalabad	6	5
Sargodha	2	0

### **Unit of analysis**

The unit of analysis comprises a respondent (with an interview checklist/questionnaire duly filled by a producer/programmer).

### **Method**

Despite already being very familiar with the content, policy, format and style of the programs being Deputy Controller at radio herself, the first researcher closely re-examined the content of all types of radio programs on the infrastructure and prepared the transcripts of a few transmitted programs. She trained the Station Managers at Faisalabad and Sargodha for collecting data from 35 producers and programmers for the instant qualitative study and another for collecting quantitative data from 1000 listeners for triangulation purposes, highlighting she was collecting anonymous data from the programmers and listeners in the three cities with support from PBC without any prejudice.

### **Instrumentation**

The researchers collected data from 35/35 radio programmers at Lahore, Faisalabad and Sargodha stations through a questionnaire/checklist, asking 40 demographic and specific information questions (SED 1-40) on the role of Radio Pakistan in socioeconomic and infrastructure development in Central Punjab. They developed one questionnaire/checklist for in person, in-depth interviews of the radio producers and programmers (22 males and 13 females) and included open-ended questions in both the checklist and the questionnaire for the study.

The researchers distributed the questionnaires among the programmers/producers directly or through the with the help of two assistants or Station Managers at Faisalabad and Sargodha. They collected data both by survey and conducting in depth interview of the producers and programmers in person in Lahore. They distributed hard copies of the questionnaire through the Station Managers at Faisalabad and Sargodha for filling the forms, and received them back by mail. The Station Manager at Lahore also helped in data collection via the form.

The researchers collected authentic data from the programmers for the qualitative study without any intervention by PBC in good faith and analyzed. The data covers program policies, formats: content creation and presentation styles, strengths, weaknesses, budgets, and suggestions for improvement of various radio programs in Central Punjab and analyzed the themes under discussion. They carried out thematic analysis of collected data based on responses of radio programmers or producers (respondents).

## **FINDINGS**

This section discusses the findings of the qualitative study based on survey and the in-depth interviews of programmers about the role of Radio Pakistan in socioeconomic and infrastructure development in Central Punjab. It presents thematic analysis of open-ended interviews of 35 radio program producers that examined how Radio Pakistan contributed in the socioeconomic and infrastructure development in Central Punjab through radio programs from 2008 to 2013. The researchers adopted the purposive sampling technique to interview all producers/programmers working at the three stations in Central Punjab. They created an interview guide and a checklist/questionnaire for asking the open-ended questions from the programmers. This questionnaire focused on the requirements for the production of different programs in the category of socioeconomic and infrastructure development (includes China Pakistan Economic Corridor). The researchers collected authentic data with the help of two assistants (Station Directors at Faisalabad and Sargodha) and analyzed. They focused on the topics, policies and budgets of various radio programs on the infrastructure as below:

### ***Topics of programs on the infrastructure***

The topics of the programs on infrastructure development are very important for the radio audience and aim at making them a better society. The programs include the construction and planning reports on the specific ongoing mega projects in the country. Most of the program managers stated that programs on infrastructure cover the policies of government organizations, interviews with the government officials and talks with the analysts on the policies or policy changes. They highlight the government projects either in the form of interviews with the concerned experts or questions and answers for the information of the audience. Live programs are especially useful through which audience can understand the developmental projects.

An overview of the projects, an introduction with different institutions, different organizations affiliated with these institutions, and people working in these areas helps. Radio Pakistan publicizes the government projects, highlights the different aspects of these projects and promotes them. The sitting government always wants to publicize its new projects, specifically about those produced for the young generation to encourage them to seek careers and interest in infrastructure development. In doing so, the radio not only imparts information about the challenging situations, it also creates a soft image of the sitting government. A programmer, Khaula Arshad stated that these programs emphasize “the policies of government organizations through interviews and talks with the government officials and the analysts on the policies” (personal communication in 2017). The respondents recommended to publicize all the given tasks of the government, and to inform the audience about all projects to develop their understanding of the building of infrastructure. Programmers said best scripts make these programs popular among the audience; favorite personalities or public figures must be invited in these programs as audience are interested in listening their point of view. Usually, these programs highlight the development projects like CPEC, Motorways, hospitals, universities, and character building of youth who can take interest in infrastructure and development and be good citizens. These programs focus on new projects and subsidies of government. Almost all the respondents stated that the topics of the programs on development and infrastructure are catchy and short. Their content does not look boring, is serious in nature and dry, and it is very difficult to organize these programs.

### ***Policy of programs on the infrastructure***

The respondents said that the government sets and maintains the policy of programs on the infrastructure. It puts some limits on providing information to the audience. The programmers invite the best speakers and experts in these programs to discuss the details of the projects. The respondents felt it is necessary to include



positive criticism in these programs, which will have positive impact on the project's installation, and guide the public opinion if anything goes wrong. Criticism can help in rectifying the problem in time. Some respondents thought the current program policy of Radio Pakistan is comprehensive for the broadcasting purposes, and some thought it is satisfactory. Irfan Jamil though emphasized that "Radio Pakistan's policy is always positive and up to the mark" (2017), he also added that the government should incorporate criticism by the opposition, as it will enhance the quality and listening of the programs by covering the conflicting views. The respondents recommended to inform people about the positive or negative aspects of the projects to increase their understanding of the relevant issues. They feel that the policy must be flexible because the audience is wise enough to understand everything and easily judges the actual situation.

Radio Pakistan dutifully broadcasts programs according to the government policy. It provides a moral support system and, thus, it plays a key role in efficient installation of the projects. It appreciates positive criticism on projects and avoids negative criticism being a government owned media. The government and programmers expect that people would like this policy. The respondents felt Radio Pakistan's policy follows the government's policy and it is always positive and up to the mark. Radio believes in devising a policy that allows comparing the old days with the new ones and aims at educating and informing people about the heroes of the past.

Jaffery said that "the policy must always cater to the people's interest and publicize the project's detail in radio programs" (2017). The policies must be unbiased and neutral, which will increase the audience's trust in radio and government. The policy for restrictions on broadcast creates problems. In this era of easy access to information, it is very difficult to hide anything from private media or audience. It is essential to provide high quality reports to listeners about the governmental projects and their shortcomings.

#### ***Presentation style of programs on the infrastructure***

The programs on infrastructure mostly focus on the specific details of the government projects, inventions and procedures. They are boring for the general audiences, but good for the special audience who want the information or statistical details of developmental projects of the government. The study found that large scale programming is a must for the analysts to present their point of view on the developmental issues or schemes. Government officers give solid answers to the questions of the audience and help them judge the actual situation. The programmers thought that the radio should broadcast a special current affairs program daily to promote the developmental work or projects of the government and fulfill the needs of the audience. Khaula Arshad, Program Manager, PBC Lahore emphasized that "these programs require large scale programming for the analysts to present their point of view on the developmental issues or schemes, and for government officers to reply to the queries of the public by giving solid answers to their questions. This style helps the audience judge the actual situation efficiently" (2017). Programs on infrastructure include interviews of government officials, opinions of infrastructure experts, and impressions of representatives of the local bodies. They broadcast everything according to the radio and governments point of view. Almost all the respondents stated that the programs on infrastructure cover the developmental projects of the government as the people want to know the details of expenditure and the completion schedules of the projects. It is necessary to make these programs interesting for the general public and make them a success.

#### ***Problems of infrastructure programs***

The program participants are on high posts, and have busy schedules that makes it very difficult for radio to invite them in the studio to give correct information to the public. It is hell of a job for the producer. It is difficult to record radio reports on these projects due to the security policy of the government and no official wants to give a statement about the success or failure of a project, or some controversy concerning a project. The producers stated that the policies of the government and the PBC headquarter are very clear in such matters, and take care of the matters in the interest of both the government and public. There is no problem in producing or recording these programs, as the given policy guides how to cover the projects on the infrastructure. The lack of budget is the primary problem, which leads to a series of other problems. Hifzur Rehman pointed out that "time is always a problem while time must be given to the writer for writing the best script for producing these programs" (2017). It is very difficult to reach the target audience or to gather

information through representatives of the radio in the concerned area in limited resources. Also, it is a long procedure to get specialists, or high officials in the studio. Sometimes, they impart insufficient information to producers, or are very busy, or they usually forget to come in a scheduled program, which makes it very difficult to record a program on a developmental project.

### ***Suggestions for programs on the infrastructure***

As the nature and content of these programs are dry, the producers make them a little interesting by limiting their time and duration and they also sugarcoat them. The selection of project consultants is very important to catch the attention of the listeners. The programmers suggested that the PBC should not broadcast these programs separately, but in other popular disc jockey programs. It will increase the program's listenership. It should start broadcasting programs on projects before their commencement. It should cover or announce information regarding effects of projects such as road closures or diversions of traffic. All calculations must reach the people before a project commences. Almost all of the departments of government have their own publicity and public relations sections. It is their duty to provide all the information to the radio producers for the broadcast and arrange interviews of their high ups.

The programmers at Lahore suggested to start inviting public messages and broadcast pep information for the audience besides participation of the experts or officials. They claimed that radio schedules and broadcasts best programs but there is always room for improvement. In this regard, Khan and Pembecioğlu emphasize that radio serves as an alternative source of information and disseminates knowledge to benefit the marginalized sections of the society that are excluded from the content and format of programs by the larger mainstream broadcasting/media houses (2015, p. 678). The Radio Pakistan invites officials in the programs on developmental issues to inform the audience about the details of the projects, or to promote the point of view of the government. It schedules interesting government programs and includes pleasant personalities as guests to engage people in programs, especially younger listeners. Kashif Ghauri stated that it helps in "building national character, as it is necessary to engage the young generation and students with the experts and highlight their positive activities before the public. It motivates them and presents them as role models for the new generation" (2017). Ghauri recommended that the "participation of the officials of the concerned sector or project is essential, and the PCB must increase the number of short duration informative programs and sugar coat them because these are very dry in nature" (2017). The PCB must find ways to better assure that complete information reaches the listeners. The study found that outdoor recordings and shorter programs will increase the understanding of issues on part of the people. It is a necessity to create appealing content by inviting the experts in these programs, and prepare radio reports that help the radio programmers in producing better programs.

## **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

This qualitative study is based on 35 in depth interviews of all the producers and programmers of three radio stations at Lahore, Faisalabad and Sargodha in Central Punjab. It asked 40 open ended questions on socioeconomic and infrastructure development through radio programs in Central Punjab. The researchers analyzed in-depth interviews and questionnaires filled by the programmers on policies, budgets, style and quality of various kinds of radio programs on infrastructure and socioeconomic development in Central Punjab, produced and broadcast on Radio Pakistan from 2008 to 2013. The interviews/questionnaires focused on topics, contents, budgets, expert opinions, caller queries and suggestions for improvement of the programs by the radio programmers. The study found that the Radio Pakistan strives minute by minute to meet the audience expectations by adjusting to their needs or by upgrading the content of the programs on the indicated socioeconomic domain on daily basis. It relies on the exchange of information between the programmers and listeners during the 18 hours daily transmission. The data collected through the interviews of programmers and producers shows that the radio transmission is restricted to the provincial and national agenda and policy of the government. The limited budget, less skilled staff, conventional approach and less interest of high government officials in radio programs are the hurdles in upgrading the medium's capacity to engage a larger audience with more efficient results.

The study proved the hypothesis that the Radio Pakistan plays a positive role, or it has a positive association with socioeconomic development through infrastructure in Central Punjab. Radio programs cover the infrastructure, one of the important aspects of economic development in the country. They cover the big projects of the government in the energy sector and others. People want to know about these projects. The officials participate in programs on infrastructure related developments.

The hypothesis about the positive association (relationship) between the programmers and listeners of the programs of Radio Pakistan on infrastructure and socioeconomic development in the Central Punjab was also found correct.

The production of the radio programs on the infrastructure is important, considering the Finance Division reported that there was no significant development in infrastructure in the country in 2008 (2009). The study found that the radio covered several industrial domains: oil, construction and electricity, etc. during the study period. In 2008-2013, the oil extraction increased only slightly at a rate of 4.43% even though Pakistan has huge reserves of crude oil. Though Pakistan experienced several blackouts every year, no change/improvement was seen in the production of electricity anywhere in the country. The power stations are mainly powered by petrol in Pakistan, and due to the high oil prices, the production of electricity was expensive and a burden on the citizens who paid heavy bills ("Finance," 2008-2013). In the construction sector, the economy improved, and it showed a growth of 11.31% in 2013. The Nawaz government aimed at enhancing the number of the construction projects in the country. The most significant component of the industrial sector was electricity being the main source of power. It met 9.15% needs of the industrial sector at about 1.9% rate of the GDP ("Finance," 2011; "Finance," 2012 content; "Finance," 2013).

This study is important for seeking radio's help for developing a better infrastructure across Pakistan, considering the radio has played, what Bosch calls, an important role in socioeconomic development across the world especially in far off areas of the developing countries (2010). Globalization, liberalization, socioeconomic expansion and denationalization of markets in financial arrangement further it. Berger (1998, pp. 14-20) says the effect of the changing infrastructure was well felt, and the last ten years have observed a rapid development in the broadcasting business of Pakistan.

The Radio Pakistan has played an important role in development sectors in the country through programs that have positive impact on the psychology of the public. Its positive contribution is towards generating consciousness of the rights amongst the general public (Hussain, 2017, pp. 16-19). Radio put forth a positive psychological impact on people about their voting rights not only in urban areas with better infrastructure but also rural areas during the 2008 elections despite the difference in development and their exposure to the media. People began to support and vote for democratic leadership against any kind of dictatorship in the country in view of their focus on the development of infrastructure. It reflects radio's influence in the socioeconomic sectors or public awareness about the changing infrastructure. Radio Pakistan prepared and presented different programs for the people and tried hard to involve experts, high profile personalities and civil society members in the programs on infrastructure development issues and projects. These programs were produced according to the needs of the audience, and they were very popular among the listeners during 2008-2013.

## **CONCLUSION**

The programs of Radio Pakistan on the infrastructure cater to socioeconomic needs of listeners residing in the main agricultural and industrial regions and those engaged in the cottage industry in the large urban areas of Punjab. The PCB produces and broadcasts programs as per guidelines set by the provincial policy making departments: Punjab Assembly, Punjab Secretariat, head offices of any concerned organization, or in collaboration with foreign developmental agencies, or banks.

Government of Punjab heavily relies on broadcasts of Radio Pakistan for socioeconomic development in Central Punjab. The development is dependent on the governmental agenda, plans, projects and policies that Radio Pakistan uses as the guidelines for planning, producing and transmitting programs. In result, socioeconomic development in Central Punjab depends on Radio Pakistan's policy, topic, content (style or format), guest(s)' knowledge of the topic(s), and budget(s) of programs. Radio Pakistan does, what

“Development” calls, “the practice of development support communication, [which] is a multi-sectoral process of information sharing about development agendas and planned actions. It links planners, beneficiaries and implementers of development action, including the donor community” (2001). The literature emphasizes on the power of the mass media for the advancement of political agendas, political goals and the role of the leadership in socioeconomic development in the newly developed countries. The western world and their developmental agencies view the media as channels for developmental communication and, in this regard, for politicizing performance of the local classes: common men, elite, or the political powers or parties (Barnard, 2000, pp. 5-8). The study used this literature to examine socioeconomic development in Central Punjab through live radio programs and by radio listeners, covering program policies, style (developmental announcements, interviews, expert opinions, calls/queries by listeners, as communicated by duty officers and program producers), and the role of the leadership through policy formation and guidance for creating specific content.

The qualitative study was derived from the thematic analysis of the in-depth interviews of the respondents. It assessed perceptions of the programmers and producers about the role of Radio Pakistan in socioeconomic development in Central Punjab from 2008 to 2013. It did not find particularly low values for the variable under discussion, which was well represented by the various development factors. The analysis shows Radio Pakistan plays a substantial role in the social and economic spheres under the main indicator of infrastructure development. Radio is a diplomatic instrument for governments to speak to foreign and local audience. Its localization and regionalization in the shape of local community radio at the three stations revokes power of the government, and hands over public administration to local communities which have been kept out of the scene for too long.

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