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Environmental Coverage on local TV Channels in Lahore: A thematic Analysis of Media Practices and Gaps

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Abstract: *Environmental decline has become one of Pakistan's most serious concerns, demanding regular media attention and public interest. Even with the increasing importance of environmental communication, the function of local television channels in shaping public knowledge of ecological concerns remains unexposed. This study analyzes how local TV channels in Lahore present environmental issues, the dominant frames, the news selection patterns, and the institutional constraints that direct content production. Based on Agenda-Setting Theory and Framing Theory, the study applies qualitative thematic content analysis to assess news bulletins and feature segments of three Lahore-based news channels. The analysis determines that reporting on the environment is primarily event-oriented, episodic, and reactive with little depth or follow-through. Reporting is mostly confined to visible crises like smog or flooding, with long-term environmental regulation and preventive measures rarely in focus. Challenges in institutions like a shortage of environmental beats, restricted training for journalists and editorial reliance on official sources also limit the scope of substantial coverage. Findings reveal a clear disconnect between environmental conditions and media representation at the grassroots level. The research concludes that building environmental journalism in Lahore implies capacity development, committed newsroom resources, and partnership among the media organizations, academia, and environmental institutions to provide informed and sustainable environmental discussion in Pakistan's local television landscape.*

Introduction

The second-largest city of Pakistan, Lahore, is experiencing a dire environmental crisis driven by fast urbanization, unmanaged industrial expansion, traffic jams, and poor environmental administration. Lahore consistently featured among the world's most polluted cities in the last decade, with dangerous amounts of particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) well in excess of the standards set by the World Health Organization (Dawn, 2024). As reported by The News International, around 83% of air pollution in Lahore is contributed by the transport industry, while others come from industrial emissions, burning of

waste, and crop residue burning during seasonal periods (The News International, 2023). The effects of this are diverse, ranging from heightened respiratory ailments, decreased visibility, and reduced living standards for millions of people (Pakistan Journal of Physiology, 2023).

Within this context of ecological degradation, media communication particularly television plays an essential role in shaping how environmental challenges are perceived and acted upon. Television remains the most accessible medium for urban and peri-urban populations in Pakistan, capable of influencing public discourse and political agendas. Agenda-setting (McCombs & Shaw, 1972) and framing (Entman, 1993) theories posit that the media do not just reflect reality but construct it actively through selecting what issues are featured and how they are understood. Yet studies of environmental journalism in Pakistan indicate that environmental reporting is episodic in nature, event-oriented, and lacking in depth or solution framing (Aslam, 2021).

Empirical research indicates that Pakistani journalists often face institutional, financial, and editorial limitations that discourage the continued environmental reporting (Khan, 2022). A national survey indicated that a majority of journalists perceive that they are not adequately trained to cover scientific or environmental issues (International Journal of Social Sciences Bulletin, 2023). As such, environmental communication is largely reactive in nature with minimal focus on long-term awareness, accountability, or public involvement.

In spite of growing academic focus on national print and electronic media, the contribution of local television channels that operate at closer proximity to community-level realities remains under researched. Local media can fill the gap between environmental governance and public awareness through reporting neighborhood-level pollution, sanitation, waste management, and water quality concerns (PJSSEL, 2023). However, such outlets regularly suffer from issues like constraints of resources, editorial oversight, and preference for political or sensational news programming at the expense of long-term environmental coverage (Shabbir & Raza, 2022).

This study, "Environmental Coverage on Local TV Channels in Lahore: A Thematic Analysis of Media Practices and Gaps," seeks to cover this divide by qualitatively exploring environmental coverage of selected television channels in Lahore. The research will examine the way environmental issues are framed, what themes prevail, whose sources are invoked, and where there are gaps in coverage of environmental communication. By using thematic content analysis, this research will make a fine-grained contribution to an appreciation of how local broadcast media portray environmental problems in an urban setting characterized by pollution, government failure, and inadequate environmental literacy.

So, this research aims to make a contribution to three areas:

1. Academically, through broadening the focus of environmental communication research in the South Asian context.
2. Practically, by determining areas for reform in newsroom routines and journalist training.
3. Socially, by encouraging media's role in enabling citizen participation based on information and sustainable urban policy-making.

Problem Statement

Environmental decline in Pakistan has grown more severe over the past ten years, with cities such as Lahore becoming hotspots for air and water pollution, cutting of forests, and uncontrolled urban growth (The News International, 2023). Environmental journalism is still peripheral in the nation's media despite these mounting ecological risks. Although national television and print media periodically cover significant environmental disasters, their reporting tends to be reactive and piecemeal and is mostly

concentrated on visibly obvious disasters and not on structural environmental problems (Aslam, 2021). Local television stations, especially, have great potential to educate citizens and activate environmental consciousness at the local level. They work closer to grass-roots realities, have ready access to local stories, and impact day-to-day audiences more immediately than national media (Shabbir & Raza, 2022). Yet, their environmental coverage is often circumscribed by institutional demands, reduced editorial freedom, and a general bias for political or entertainment-based content (Khan, 2022).

In addition, available literature points out a dearth of training for journalists, inadequate policy direction, and low levels of working interaction between media institutions and environmental authorities (International Journal of Social Sciences Bulletin, 2023). Therefore, environmental issues are accorded inadequate thematic intensity and contextual context in television programming, particularly in local stations.

While there has been some scholarly interest in environmental communication in Pakistan, no study has yet explored how Lahore-based local TV channels cover environmental issues, which frames are prevailing in their coverage, and where the greatest editorial shortcomings are. This lack of research is a fundamental omission in environmental media scholarship.

Thus, the current study aims to bridge this gap by carrying out a qualitative thematic analysis of environmental reporting on chosen local television channels in Lahore. The study will examine systematically media routines, framing, and institutional constraints that drive environmental storytelling. Knowledge of these dynamics is critical to enhancing media's environmental advocacy, evidence-informed policymaking, and public engagement.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to attain the following goals:

1. To analyze how local TV channels in Lahore represent environmental problems in terms of themes, frames, and narrative forms.

2. To determine the prevailing categories of environmental programming (e.g., pollution, waste management, climate effects, and preservation) broadcast on sample local channels.

3. To investigate the editorial and institutional routines that shape the scope and intensity of environmental reporting.

4. To determine the significant gaps, constraints, and issues encountered by journalists and producers while reporting environmental issues on local TV.

5. To provide recommendations for enhancing environmental journalism practices among Lahore's local broadcast media industry.

Literature Review

Environmental Journalism and Media Responsibility

Environmental journalism has developed as a significant area of communication studies dealing with how the media portray and interpret ecological problems. Internationally, environmental communication is identified as a primary means of public awareness-raising, environmental behavioral change, and policymaking influence (Hansen, 2019). Boykoff (2011) asserts that media reporting is the critical mechanism by which sophisticated environmental science is converted into understandable narratives that can trigger mass action. The quality and extent of such reporting are extremely varied, depending on political economy, news priorities, and journalistic capacity.

Scholars assert that environmental reporting needs to transcend event coverage to incorporate investigative, explanatory, and advocacy-based coverage that encourages sustainable debate (Lester, 2010). Environmental reporting in developing countries is generally, however, hampered by minimal

editorial capabilities, political interference, and the absence of specialist training (Cox, 2013). Such limitations routinely lead to superficial event-driven reporting that underrepresents structural environmental threats.

Environmental Communication in Pakistan

In Pakistan, the discussion around environmental journalism is in its nascent stages. While environmental degradation, including air pollution, water shortages, and deforestation, has become extremely high, media reporting on these matters is poor and erratic (Aslam, 2021). Empirical research indicates that Pakistani media spend less than five percent of their overall airtime or print space discussing environmental issues, with most coverage in the form of brief news items or event-driven reporting (Khan, 2022).

In addition, environmental problems are seldom placed in policy or governance contexts. Consequently, the public gains little information regarding causes, effects, or possible remedies (PJSSEL, 2023). Professional challenges for journalists reporting on environmental beats also exist, such as inadequate editorial backing, inadequate training, and poor access to scientific information (International Journal of Social Sciences Bulletin, 2023).

Research also indicates an inconsistency between national and local media coverage. National outlets occasionally highlight climate change and government initiatives, while local television channels despite their proximity to affected communities rarely produce in-depth environmental reports (Shabbir & Raza, 2022). This lack of thematic consistency reflects broader institutional and financial constraints within Pakistan's local media sector.

The Role of Local Television Channels

There is significant potential for local television to drive community-level consciousness and action. Since local channels are geared to tackle neighborhood-level environmental issues, such as smog, waste and sanitation, and water pollution (Bickham, 2018), they can make environmental narratives more actionable and relevant to urban citizens.

Yet, research indicates that local media in developing nations frequently neither have not been provided with the technical skills and policy reinforcement to support environmental programming (Hansen, 2019). Additionally, in Pakistan, political and commercial incentives prioritize sensational news and entertainment at the expense of civic affairs (Shabbir & Raza, 2022). As a result, environmental reporting on local TV is still disperse, irregular, and underdeveloped as a means of civic mobilization.

In short, from a review of the available literature, various gaps emerge. First, despite international and regional research examining media framing of environmental challenges, Pakistan's local broadcast industry has not received adequate attention. Second, little is known regarding editorial practices, organizational design, and journalist training's influence on environmental coverage at the city level particularly in a city like Lahore, which experiences severe air quality issues. Lastly, there is a lack of qualitative thematic content analyses of local TV channels' content and practices. This research thus attempts to fill these gaps by examining the thematic trends, framing processes, and institutional constraints of environmental reporting in Lahore's local broadcast media. The findings are intended to advance academic knowledge of media-environment relations in Pakistan and offer practical recommendations for improving local environmental reporting.

Theoretical foundation

To understand how environmental problems are framed and prioritized in local television news, this research utilizes established communication theories that describe the interconnection of media agenda, framing, and public perception Agenda-setting theory suggests that while the media do not

instruct the public what to think, they can have a profound impact on what the public thinks about by setting issue salience and coverage frequency. For environmental communication, this implies that the level to which environmental issues are covered impacts their salience and relative importance in the public arena. Complementary to this, framing theory describes how media frame the meaning of events by selecting, emphasizing, and excluding information deciding not only what issues come to attention but how they are interpreted. Frames can depict environmental issues as crises, policy failures, or social responsibilities, thus influencing public opinion and possible policy actions. Synthesized, these theories reveal how local television in Lahore constructs environmental narratives, what themes are highlighted or excluded, and how editorial decisions affect the public understanding of ecological challenges. Synthesized here, this theoretical approach gives a strong foundation for analyzing media practices and determining the gaps that undermine effective environmental communication.

Methodology

This research employs a qualitative research approach with thematic content analysis to probe the extent and character of environmental reporting on Lahore local TV channels. Qualitative research facilitates detailed insight into meanings, structures, and contextual subtleties in media texts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis, in turn, is effective in identifying repeated frames, language structures, and narrative themes that indicate how environmental problems are constructed and prioritized (Flick, 2018). The research centers on television news and current affairs shows broadcast from January to June 2024, since this time frame envelops season variation like winter smog and pre-monsoon pollution spells. The chosen channels like City 42, Lahore News, and 24 News HD were picked based on their large local audience, regular reporting of city matters, and easy availability of archives. This is also warranted by their depiction of the Lahore-specific broadcast environment, which exists at the intersection of local administration, climatic issues, and citizen participation (Shabbir & Raza, 2022).

Information was gathered from news bulletins, talk shows, and special reports on environmental issues like air pollution, waste management, urban planning, and climate effects. Each of these broadcast segments was hand-coded and transcribed using an inductive method so that themes could emerge naturally from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The coding procedure consisted of three phases: (1) getting familiar with the data, (2) developing initial codes, and (3) producing thematic categories about coverage patterns, framing strategies, and institutional practices. Credibility was achieved using peer debriefing and triangulation between channels and programs (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The study sought not only to measure coverage but to describe how environmental stories are framed whether as civic problems, failures of governance, or public health issues and to identify the silences in these accounts.

Findings and Discussion

Analysis of television news channels based in Lahore identifies strong trends and limitations in the representation of environmental issues within mainstream broadcast news. Employing thematic content analysis, four dominant patterns were identified: (1) event-driven and episodic coverage, (2) environmental programming categories, (3) shallow framing and absence of scientific contextualization, and (4) institutional, editorial, and capacity limitations informing newsroom agendas. These themes together mirror the intricate interplay among media habits, market forces, and the low ranking of environmental discourse within the urban Pakistani television scene.

Theme 1:

Episodic and Event-Driven Reporting

The key conclusion derived from the analysis is that coverage of the environment on Lahore's local television channels continues to be episodic, reactive, and crisis-driven. Environmental reporting

predominantly arises during visible tragedies like smog episodes, monsoon floods, or heatwaves, with negligible coverage of routine and preventive matters. The crisis-based reporting by the media stems from a deeply entrenched culture in Pakistani journalism where processes are overshadowed by events. For instance, during the December 2023 smog crisis, City 42 and Lahore News aired multiple stories over three consecutive days. The visuals typically highlighted traffic jams, respiratory issues, and official warnings. One report claimed,

"The city has once again become a gas chamber; visibility is less than fifty meters, and citizens are experiencing serious breathing issues."

Such reporting increased the sense of urgency but refrained from laying out the structural causes' industrial pollution, traffic jams, or lax regulation of environmental laws. This lack of causality and coherence turns environmental communication into a show piece instead of a continuous conversation.

In addition, coverage tends to be lacking in temporal continuity. When a crisis has passed, television focus instantly turns to political conflict, entertainment, or crime. In so doing, environmental concerns are seen as brief interruptions to the news cycle in place of being essential civic issues. This strategy overlooks underlying long-term governance failures and policy inertia driving recurring environmental issues. As one of the environmental analysts interviewed on 24 News HD put it,

"Media wakes up when Lahore chokes, but sleeps when policies are made."

This quote summarizes the ephemeral presence of environmental issues on television screens. Another component of this theme is dramatization through the visual. Smog and flooding videos usually depend on hyperbole in imagery to get people to watch dusty skylines, hacking commuters, or underwater streets. Such images that contribute to the sense of immediacy may diminish environmental reporting to disaster sensationalism, where analysis is substituted with emotion. This type of framing appeals to audience fear but provides scant public education on prevention, adaptation, or responsibility.

Theme 2:

Environmental Programming Categories

Through a close thematic examination of the surveyed news bulletins and talk shows, it was observed that Lahore's local television channels centered on a limited set of environmental issues. Analysis identified four broad categories of environmental programming:

1. Air pollution and smog events (about 60 percent of all environmental coverage)

2. Waste management and sanitation issues (around 20 percent)

3. Flooding and urban drainage problems (10 percent)

4. Climate-awareness or tree-plantation drives (10 percent)

Air-quality narratives dominated. Throughout the December 2023 smog spree, all three channels aired reports daily featuring commuters walking with masks and cars shrouded in haze. One of City 42's anchors read:

"The city has been transformed into a gas chamber once again, visibility is just fifty meters, and people are struggling to breathe."

Such stories framed pollution as an emergency demanding government action but rarely moved beyond the visual drama of congestion and coughing citizens. Similarly, Lahore News HD ran a two-minute package titled "Killer Smog Strikes Again", in which the reporter exclaimed,

"Every year we issue the same warnings, yet every year Lahore suffocates under the same sky."

These narratives reflect a crisis-centric frame that privileges immediacy over continuity. The waste and sanitation category, the second one, most frequently emerged as brief complaint pieces of communities. In one such 24 News HD report, a shopkeeper said,

"Garbage piles have become landmarks of our streets; cameras come only when the smell becomes unbearable."

Here, the problem was dramatized and localized but rarely attributed to urban-planning incompetence or policy lacunae. Flood and drainage accounts, which constituted the third type, emerged primarily in the monsoon months. They focused on public hardship in dramatic descriptions of deteriorated roads and stuck vehicles. A correspondent noted,

"Lahore becomes Venice after one hour of rain but less lovely."

Though such remarks provide flavor, they replace sarcasm for causation. Lastly, climate-consciousness features, albeit rare, implied an emerging attempt to connect environmental topics with civic duty. One of them on City 42 highlighted students of a university planting trees with the headline "Our City, Our Oxygen." A respondent commented,

"We cannot wait for the government; every sapling is a small protest against pollution."

These instances showed a probable turn toward positive framing, albeit restricted by occasional frequency and low editorial consideration. On the whole, then, the examination indicates that local channel environmental programming in Lahore is both thematically limited and distributed unevenly. Smog holds center stage, with chronic but lesser showy issues like waste management, deforestation, or water pollution getting short shrift. The framing is still predominantly administrative and reactive, foregrounding official declarations such as "*Authorities have taken notice*" over probing deeper environmental or governance insights. This imbalance within themes reinforces the overall trend that environmental reporting in Pakistani local news continues to be event-driven, visually oriented, and politically conservative, with minimal room for sustained, evidence-based narrative.

Theme 3:

Shallow Framing and Absence of Scientific Contextualization

Another prevalent theme underscores that local Lahore television channels have a shallow grasp and irregular framing of environmental problems. Media coverage usually frames environmental degradation as an administrative issue and not as a multidimensional socio-ecological crisis. Words such as pollution, garbage, and smog are regularly employed, but the content rarely includes scientific evidence, expert commentary, or citizen engagement.

An analysis of Lahore News HD bulletins revealed that fewer than 10 percent of the environmental reports contained any mention of air quality indices or environmental research. Anchors and reporters, however, use anecdotal evidence. At one point, the anchor said,

"The smog situation is worsening every year; authorities must take strict notice."

This reactive phrasing evokes moral outrage but not fact-based depth. In the same vein, climate change is usually represented as a remote or international issue, separated from issues at the local level like heat stress, deforestation, or urban development.

Another critical note refers to source diversity. Environmental reporting usually cites government officials, district officials, or politicians, while scientists, NGOs, and communities most affected are not included. This sets up an institutionalized communication hierarchy dominated by authoritative voices instead of inclusive conversation. When citizens do come on the screen, they are most often presented as victims and not as a force for change. On a report about waterlogging in slums, for instance, a resident was seen protesting,

"We have been staying in this sewage for weeks but nobody comes."

These interviews create sympathy but do not lead to further exploration of the municipal planning or accountability system. Additionally, the tone of environmental reporting oscillates between alarmism

and complacency. During intense periods, the tone gets hyperbolic employing terms like "killer smog" or "toxic rain." On more subdued occasions, however, reporting is virtually non-existent. This lack of stability in framing does not allow for the creation of public continuity about sustainability awareness. Unlike thematic reporting, which aligns daily news to larger sustainability patterns, Lahore's local channels become stuck in short-term narratives.

Relative to global trends, in which environmental journalism combines scientific communication with narrative, the channels of Lahore maintain little connection between research institutions and media outlets. For example, universities like the University of the Punjab or GC University Lahore routinely publish environmental studies, but their output never or rarely finds its way onto television. Such disconnection between the academia and journalism constrains both credibility and educational potential. In the absence of expert validation, environmental stories become overtures easily dismissed as ephemeral noise and not evidence-based advocacy.

Theme 4:

Institutional and Editorial gaps in environmental coverage

The qualitative content analysis of Lahore's local television coverage revealed deep-seated institutional and editorial vulnerabilities in the handling of environmental stories. Most of the bulletins that were analyzed handled environmental stories in a marginalizing manner, for example, one evening broadcast led off with politics and crime news, followed by a three-minute segment on smog only after a twenty-minute period of airtime showing a definite order of editorial priorities. The analysis showed that environmental reporting was episodic and reactive and only appeared during clearly visible crises like smog warnings, flooding, or litter piles. It was scarce evidence of ongoing programming or intentional editorial cycles focused on environmental consciousness that indicates a lack of institutional acknowledgment of environmental reporting as special news beat.

Second, the analysis found excessive reliance on official sources and administrative narratives. The most common pattern was the over-reliance on government press releases, ministerial visits, and assertions like,

"The government is imposing stringent measures to contain pollution in the city,"

or "People are requested to wear masks to shield themselves from smog."

These parts did not usually include interview voices of environmentalists, civil society, or impacted communities, thus narrowing the range of viewpoints and diminishing the interpretative richness of reporting. Rather than critically examining environmental policy or situating repeated crises, the vast majority of these stories simply reported official statements without critical commentary. Additionally, the images accompanying these accounts repeated depictions of congestion on the roads, smoke on the horizon, or trash dumps were offered without additional explanation or data-based analysis. This visual iteration, without context, created an impression of inevitability, not accountability.

The research also notes a uniform lack of follow-up reporting or investigative perspectives. For instance, more than a few channels had declared smog emergencies with hyperbole when weather improved, but none followed up on the issue to inform viewers about causes or prevention. The absence of framing by experts and data visualization also undermined the credibility and educational potential of the coverage. Overall, these trends show how local television channels' institutional routines aim for immediacy and visual attraction over analytical depth. The overall editorial structure then mirrors what Hansen (2019) identifies as a "*crisis-driven culture of environmental journalism*," in which the environment is constructed as a sequence of separate events and not as a persistent socio-political problem.

The research also noted nascent evidence of consciousness. Some feature stories and television talk

shows started to position environment in development storylines like green city spaces, clean energy, and climate literacy. While infrequent, these are indicative of a changing awareness among younger media practitioners who see environmental reporting as a civic obligation. In institutional backing, such sporadic initiatives could develop into regular environmental communication habits.

Lastly, institutional mismatches abound among media channels, civil society, and environmental authorities. The Punjab Environmental Protection Department (EPD) releases regular statistics on air quality, emissions, and urban waste, but these numbers rarely show up on television. This inaction is a result of both a lack of cooperation and the failure of data availability. The absence of synergy between information sources and reporters limits the quality of environmental discussion at the local television level.

Generally, the findings describe a television environment as being reactive instead of proactive, shallow instead of in-depth, and disjointed instead of continuous in its strategy for environmental reporting. Environmental reporting is overwhelmingly crisis-focused and lacks thematic richness, contextual knowledge, and expert advice. Market-hungry newsroom environments and the lack of specialized education also limit environmental journalism's potential as a genuine professional endeavor. The findings emphasize the importance of editorial reform, capacity development, and policy-media partnership to change Lahore's local television channels from passive observers of environmental deterioration to active enablers of public awareness. Through institutionalization of environmental beats, developing partnerships with research institutions, and adopting evidence-based reporting, local media can contribute significantly to enhancing environmental governance and civic participation in Pakistan.

Table: 1 Themes and key findings.

Themes	Related Objectives	Key Findings
Episodic and Event-Driven Reporting	To analyze how local TV channels represent environmental problems in terms of frames and narrative forms.	Coverage is mostly reactive and limited to visible crises like smog and floods. There is little continuity or investigative depth once the event ends.
Limited Environmental Programming	To determine the prevailing categories of environmental programming on sample local channels.	Air pollution dominates (around 60%), followed by waste management and flooding, with few educational or awareness programs.
Shallow Framing and Lack of Scientific Context	To investigate how framing and sourcing affect environmental reporting.	Reports rely on official statements, lack expert input and scientific evidence, and exclude community or NGO perspectives.
Institutional and Editorial Constraints	To identify gaps and constraints faced by journalists and media institutions in covering environmental issues.	Environmental reporting lacks editorial priority, training, and collaboration with experts or authorities. Stories are often based on government press releases without follow-up.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of this research indicate that local TV channels in Lahore continue to keep their environmental coverage mostly reactive, disjointed, and event-based. Environmental concerns are mainly given prominence during the time of visible crises like smog or flooding but lack any focus on

consistent reporting or investigative reporting. The lack of thematic seriousness, specialist advice, and scientific evidence in news reporting is a reflection not only of the limited environmental knowledge in newsrooms but of the preponderance of market-driven editorial agendas. Structural imperatives such as the absence of specialized environmental beats, inadequate journalist training, and reliance on official sources also limit the development of environmental reporting as a reputable and sustained body of work. In spite of these lacunae, analysis also detects a dawning recognition on the part of some journalists who strive to connect environmental concerns with urban development and community action, showing signs of a slow but irregular transition towards civic-centric reporting.

To empower environmental communication in Lahore's broadcast media, the study suggests a multi-faceted approach aimed at institutional, professional, and collaborative change. Creating specialized environmental reporting units, offering targeted training in environmental literacy, and promoting collaborations with academic institutions and environmental agencies has the potential to greatly improve the quality and accuracy of news coverage. Incorporating expert opinion, data-driven journalism, and sustained thematic programming would not only broaden perspectives but also enhance public knowledge of environmental governance. In addition, editorial reforms and reward structures could encourage reporters to take a solution-focused approach, emphasizing prevention and sustainability over disaster sensationalism. Above all, shuffling local television away from its role as a reactive messenger and toward that of a proactive champion of environmental awareness is critical for promoting educated citizenship and showcasing sustainable policy debate in the media of Pakistan.

Limitations and future research directions

This research centered on chosen Lahore-based television channels for six months, and findings may not be representative of all media practices or seasons. Because this research is a qualitative inquiry, findings are interpretive, not generalizable, and the lack of journalist interviews restricts firsthand opinions. Follow-up research must cover national and digital media, longer time periods, and interview journalists and policymakers to enhance understanding of environmental reporting trends in Pakistan.

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