



**THESIS**

**On**

**Influence Of Anchors On Public  
Opinion Formation**

SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

**Bachelor of Arts in Journalism**

by

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# Declaration of Originality

I, Ms. Kashish Chauhan hereby declare that my research paper on the topic **“Influence of Anchors on public opinion formation”** is an original work done by the researcher. I further reaffirm that the paper has not been published yet.



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## Guidance of approval

This is to certify that the thesis titled "**influence of anchor's on public opinion formation**" submitted Dr. Nidhi Singhal faculty, Department of Journalism, Delhi College of Arts and Commerce, University of Delhi, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the **Bachelor of arts in Journalism**, is an original work carried out by **Ms. Kashish Chauhan**.

This research was undertaken under my supervision and guidance, and to the best of my knowledge, the thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship, or any other similar title at any university or institution in India or abroad.

**April 21, 2025**

Dr. Nidhi Singhal  
Supervisor

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# CONTENT

Acknowledgement

List of figures

## **CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION** **9-14**

1.1 introduction

1.2 How News Anchoring Has Changed in Today's Media

1.3 Trust, Credibility, and Audience Engagement

1.4 The Growth of Anchor Influence through Digital Media

1.5 Theoretical Framework: Framing and Agenda-Setting

1.6 Research Methodology: A Mixed Methods Approach

1.7 Consequences for Democratic Discourse and Media Practice

1.8 Conclusion: News Anchors' Vital Role in Influencing Public Opinion

## **CHAPTER 2- REVIEW OF LITRETURE** **15-16**

2.1 Media Framing and Anchor Influence

2.2 Trust and Credibility of Anchors

2.3 Agenda-Setting and Priming

2.4 Visual and Verbal Cues

2.5 Influence in the Digital Age

2.6 Political Polarization and Anchor Bias

2.7 Indian Context

## **CHAPTER 3- OBJECTIVE** **17**

## **CHAPTER 4- HYPOTHESIS** **18**

## **CHAPTER 5- RESEARCH METHADODOLOGY** **19-29**

5.1 Study Necessity

5.2 Research gap

5.3 Research Model

5.4	Research Design	
5.5	Methods of Data Collection	
5.5(1)	Primary Data Collection – Surveys	
5. 5(2)	Case Study Approach to Secondary Data Gathering	
5.6	Sampling method	
5.7	Methods for Analyzing Data	
5.8	Ethical Considerations	
5.9	Study Limitations	
5.10	Conclusion	
5.11	Case studies	
	<b>CHAPTER 6- DATA INTEPRETATION AND ANALYSIS</b>	<b>30-43</b>
6.1	Demographic overview	
6.2	Visual overview	
6.3	Summary	
6.4	Findings and results	
6.5	Summary	
	<b>CHAPTER 7- CONCLUSION</b>	<b>44-46</b>
7.1	Impact During Live Debates, Political Conversations, and Crisis Coverage	
7.2	The Importance of Communication Skills, Presentation Style, and Credibility	
7. 3	Synthesis and Consequences	
7.4	Conclusion: The Anchor as a Political and Cultural Force	
	References	47
	Appendix	48-51

# **LIST OF FIGURES**

6.1 Classification of respondents according to Gender

6.2 Classification of Respondents According to Age

6.3 Classification of Respondents According to Education

6.4 Classification of Respondents According to Frequency of consumption of News

6.5 Classification of Respondents According to Perceived Influence of Anchors

6.6 Classification of Respondents According to Factors contributing to anchors trustworthiness

6.7 Classification of Respondents According to most effective anchors style

## Abstract:

News anchors play a crucial role in influencing public perceptions and attitudes in today's media environment. This research article examines how news anchors affect the formation of public opinion, especially in relation to digital and televised news broadcasting. The study examines the influence of anchors' tone, delivery style, credibility, political alignment, and emotional appeal on viewers' comprehension of news events and sociopolitical issues. The study thoroughly investigates how anchors frame narratives and guide audience interpretation by integrating both primary and secondary research methods, including a quantitative survey of 157 participants and a qualitative analysis of current literature and case studies.

The results indicate that anchors are essential figures in agenda-setting and framing because they do more than just present the news; they interpret, highlight, and occasionally sensationalize it. The research shows that a large segment of the audience often agrees with the opinions presented or softly conveyed by trusted and familiar hosts. Other factors that significantly impacted audience emotion and engagement included the anchor's tone of voice, facial expressions, body language, and rhetorical devices. Additionally, the study emphasizes how anchors foster polarization by intensifying confirmation bias through ideological slant and selective presentation.

This study highlights the necessity of enhanced media literacy among audiences and ethical responsibility among news professionals in a media landscape that is progressively characterized by partisanship and personality-driven journalism. To maintain the democratic ideal of an informed and critically thinking public, the paper ends by promoting transparent journalistic practices and proposing methods to reduce inappropriate influence.



## **CHAPTER-1**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Television news anchors have become crucial in shaping not just the distribution of information but also the interpretation and internalization of that information by the public in a time marked by unparalleled media saturation and increasingly divided public discourse. The significant shift in news anchoring, which ranges from the authoritative style of Anjana Om Kashyap to the more dynamic methods of modern anchors like Ravish Kumar, is indicative of the media's growing impact on public opinion. These media professionals go beyond simply transmitting information; they act as cultural intermediaries, shaping narratives, providing context, and helping the public grasp complicated social, political, and economic matters. The impact of news anchors on the shaping of public opinion is an important subject of research at the crossroads of political science, social psychology, and mass communication.

#### **1.2 How News Anchoring Has Changed in Today's Media**

The role of news anchors has changed dramatically in the modern media environment, especially during live debates, political discussions, and crisis reporting. Recent examples highlight this change: the moderation of presidential debates, where anchors must strike a balance between engaging conversation and factual accuracy; the coverage of global events like the COVID-19 pandemic, where anchors played a vital role in interpreting complex scientific information; and the reporting of social movements, where the way anchors frame events may greatly influence public opinion. Modern anchors frequently take on the roles of public interpreters, analysts, and occasionally advocates, in contrast to their predecessors, who concentrated primarily on delivering objective news. In a context where the lines between news reporting and commentary have become progressively unclear, this development poses significant questions regarding the nature and magnitude of their impact on public opinion formation.

#### **1.3 Trust, Credibility, and Audience Engagement**

The function of news anchors has gone beyond traditional journalism in today's quick and ever-changing media environment. They have evolved into potent forces that mold narratives, sway social conversation, and play a crucial role in shaping public opinion, rather than merely being carriers of information. This study aimed to investigate this dynamic role by examining how the credibility, presentation styles, and digital engagement of news anchors, especially in the Indian context, influence audience perception and information response. The consequences of this change have become more significant and extensive than ever as the lines between news, entertainment, and social media continue to blur.

## 1.4 The Growth of Anchor Influence through Digital Media

The relationship has become even more complex due to the expansion of digital media platforms and the growth of social media, which have created new ways for anchors and audiences to interact while also calling into question conventional ideas of journalistic authority. The phenomenon of “second screening,” in which viewers concurrently watch television news and interact with social media, has contributed to a more complicated landscape of information consumption and opinion development. News anchors must now maneuver in an environment where their impact extends beyond the television screen and into digital news platforms, online forums, and social media conversations. For instance, the growing scope of anchors’ influence is seen when their tweets during breaking news events turn into news stories. This increased exposure not only exposes their work to unprecedented scrutiny and feedback, but also enhances its possible effect on shaping public opinion.

## 1.5 Theoretical Framework: Framing and Agenda-Setting

In an era of information overload and rising worries about media bias and misinformation, it is becoming more and more important to understand the ways in which news anchors affect public opinion. The important role anchors play in influencing public perception and reaction to major events has been underscored by recent occurrences, like as election coverage and public health messaging during global crises. This study aims to investigate the impact of anchors’ presentation styles, credibility elements, and communication strategies on audience trust and engagement during important media events. We may gain a deeper insight of the function of news anchors in influencing public discourse and democratic deliberation by examining these factors using both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

## 1.6 Research Methodology: A Mixed Methods Approach

This study uses a mixed-methods strategy that combines quantitative analysis of audience engagement metrics with qualitative evaluation of anchor presentation styles and their effects on the formation of public opinion. The methodology comprises audience surveys, social media sentiment analysis, content analysis of prime-time news broadcasts, and in-depth interviews with media experts. This study offers a thorough perspective on how anchors affect public discourse across several platforms and contexts by looking at both live television broadcasts and digital media interactions. Particular focus is given to high-stakes scenarios like election debates, crisis reporting, and controversial political discussions, where anchors may have a particularly significant impact on public opinion. □

## 1.7 Consequences for Democratic Discourse and Media Practice

Media companies, journalism training, and public policy all need to pay attention to the implications of this study. Knowing how anchors affect public opinion may lead to improved broadcast journalism techniques, more successful communication plans during emergencies, and more engaged and informed civic discussion. For example, this study's findings might inform media literacy programs, advance newsroom procedures, and shape journalism curricula. This study also addresses larger issues regarding the function of media in democratic societies and the duties of those who act as intermediaries between the public and news events. In a time when public discourse quality has a direct effect on democratic functioning, comprehending the mechanics of anchor influence is essential for sustaining and enhancing democratic society health.

## 1.8 Conclusion: News Anchors' Vital Role in Influencing Public Opinion

In summary, the changing role of news anchors in influencing public opinion is a complex issue that deserves thorough academic study. The impact of news anchors goes beyond traditional broadcasting and into the digital arena as media landscapes change with technological progress and changing audience behaviors. This study seeks to provide useful information on the mechanisms of public opinion formation by examining the interaction between anchor credibility, presentation styles, and audience engagement. In the end, grasping the impact of news anchors is crucial for promoting a more informed, involved, and democratic culture.

### The News Evolution Anchor

News anchors were historically regarded as neutral and knowledgeable individuals whose main duty was to present the news clearly and impartially. Credibility and integrity in journalism were established by icons like Prannoy Roy in India and Walter Cronkite in the United States. However, the anchor's role has changed as well in response to audience fragmentation and technological improvements in the media sector. Nowadays, anchors are expected to interpret, contextualize, and frequently editorialize the news in addition to presenting the facts. This change has added new aspects of influence, such as personal branding, vocal tonality, visual presentation, and emotional appeal.

The change in anchoring styles has also been greatly influenced by the advent of social media sites and 24-hour news cycles. News is now consumed in real-time, across multiple platforms, and in bite-sized formats that frequently prioritize engagement and speed over depth and accuracy. In this setting, anchors must have a solid, unique presence in order to keep the audience's attention. The substance they present is now comparable in importance to their delivery manner, political viewpoint, and even their personality.

### Building Trust and Establishing Anchor Credibility

One of the most important discoveries of this study is the vital impact anchor credibility has on public opinion. In this context, credibility includes the anchor's factual accuracy as well as the public's perception of their integrity, expertise, and transparency. Especially among viewers who prefer content over show, anchors like Ravish Kumar, who are known for their thorough reporting and composed manner, are frequently seen as more credible and balanced. Viewers who appreciate

journalistic integrity and are skeptical of sensationalism in the news are drawn to his presentation style.

On the other hand, personalities like Arnab Goswami, who have a combative and confrontational demeanor, are regarded as divisive but powerful. Goswami has developed a devoted audience, especially among those who share his ideological bent or enjoy his combative manner of questioning authority, despite the critiques he receives. This is due to his powerful presence and rhetorical strategy. His approach illustrates how audience identity and political affiliation are becoming more closely related to trust and credibility.

This split in audience trust depending on perceived ideological alignment illustrates a larger pattern: viewers are more inclined to accept information that aligns with their existing beliefs and is presented by someone they seem relatable or trustworthy. This situation highlights a significant issue for journalism in the digital age: how to preserve trust and objectivity in an environment that is more and more characterized by confirmation bias and echo chambers.

### Emotional Engagement and Presentation Style

The way news anchors present information—including their tone of voice, body language, speech pace, and use of visual aids—greatly affects how viewers receive and interpret it. This study demonstrates that a skilled anchor may utilize emotional appeals effectively. Anchors can have a major impact on audience emotions, which in turn affects their views and responses to events, through dramatization, storytelling, and strategic emphasis.

For example, Anjana Om Kashyap uses a passionate and assertive presentation style that conveys a sense of urgency and nationalistic feeling. Her body language, word choice, and vocal intonations are designed to elicit powerful responses from viewers, frequently heightening the emotional stakes of the topics being addressed. This type of anchoring can swiftly rally public opinion, but it also carries the risk of oversimplifying complicated topics and reinforcing prejudices.

Palki Sharma's composed and eloquent delivery strikes a balance between professionalism and moderation in the sometimes tumultuous media landscape. Viewers who want a more sophisticated perspective on national and worldwide problems are drawn to her analytical style. These differing styles highlight how an anchor's emotionally charged delivery can either exacerbate engagement or divide audiences, depending on the situation and the audience's preexisting attitudes.

### The Digital Shift: Social Media and Cross-Platform Impact

Along with their roles on television, contemporary news anchors are impactful online figures. They may interact with audiences more directly, personally, and interactively because of their presence on social media sites like Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. Their increased presence greatly enhances their ability to sway public opinion, particularly among younger, tech-savvy people.

Anchors now frequently create digital-first material designed for online platforms, tweet their views, share behind-the-scenes glimpses, and interact with spectators. By making anchors more relatable and creating a sense of closeness and approachability, these interactions increase their impact. In this scenario, anchors join a broader participatory media environment where users may like, comment on, and share content, hence co-creating narratives. This reduces the journalists' traditional gatekeeping function.

However, this increased influence comes with added responsibility. Ethical challenges that necessitate prudent navigation are caused by the proliferation of misinformation, the urge to sensationalize for virality, and the challenge of discerning fact from opinion in a crowded digital environment. Anchors who do not maintain online journalistic standards run the risk of damaging their own credibility and fueling the decline of public trust in the media.

### Anchors as Political and Cultural Symbols

The symbolic power of anchors is another important finding of this research. In nations like India, where media is closely connected to politics and cultural identity, hosts frequently represent larger ideological groups. Their personas are influenced by their seen political affiliations, religious convictions, and cultural values, in addition to their professional behavior.

For instance, Rajat Sharma is frequently regarded as a representative of old-school journalism that combines traditional values with a sophisticated manner of presentation. His sustained impact is evidenced by his lengthy program "Aap Ki Adalat," which demonstrates a different form of authority based on respect, continuity, and experience.

The development of national narratives and collective memory is aided by such symbolic representations. References in public conversation are anchors who consistently project a specific image or perspective, affecting how events are recalled and understood. Their impact reaches far beyond everyday news to include civic conduct, cultural identity, and political alignment.

### Consequences for Democratic Debate

For the development of a healthy democratic culture, it is essential to comprehend how anchors affect public opinion. Informed citizens are the foundation of democracy, and news anchors are essential in influencing how people perceive their rights, obligations, and surroundings. Anchors may enable audiences to think critically, engage meaningfully in civic life, and hold those in power accountable when they act with integrity and a dedication to truth.

However, when anchors prioritize entertainment over information or bias over balance, they run the risk of distorting public opinion and eroding democratic ideals. The line between influence and manipulation is narrow, and crossing it can have serious repercussions, such as misinformation, greater polarization, and reduced institutional trust.

As a result, it's essential for both media consumers and media professionals to foster a culture of critical engagement, ethical accountability, and media literacy. Additionally, organizations must help and regulate ethical journalism while avoiding the urge to politicize or manipulate the media for immediate advantage.

### Suggestions for Future Research and Policy

This study provides important information on how news anchors affect public opinion, but it also emphasizes the necessity for further investigation in this field. Future research could explore audience reception trends in greater depth, the psychological effects of various anchoring styles, and the lasting effects of anchor-driven narratives on social cohesion and political behaviour.

From a policy standpoint, there is a need for more transparency in editorial decision-making, clearer guidelines on ethical anchoring practices, and institutional support for independent

journalism. Without infringing on press freedom, regulatory organizations and media watchdogs should be given the authority to hold anchors accountable.

The relationship between news anchors and their viewers is intricate and multidimensional, marked by different degrees of trust, credibility, and interaction. Research has demonstrated that elements like an anchor's educational background, amount of experience, and perceived expertise have a substantial impact on audience trust. For example, audience trust is usually higher in anchors who show extensive expertise in particular areas, such as economic analysts during financial crises or health correspondents during medical emergencies. Despite the fact that traditional journalism theory stresses the importance of objectivity and impartiality, the personal style, presentation abilities, and perceived credibility of news anchors may have a big influence on how audiences receive and process information. This dynamic becomes especially clear during key moments like political debates, when the anchors' moderation techniques and follow-up questions can influence how the audience sees the candidates and their opinions.

## **CHAPTER-2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

The role of television news anchors in shaping public opinion has garnered significant scholarly attention over the past few decades. Anchors are not merely conveyors of news; they often become trusted figures whose tone, language, and presentation style can subtly—or overtly—influence audience perception of events, people, and policies (Pfau et al., 1997; Feldman, 2011).

According to the research conducted by sujeet Kumar, Rahul Kumar and Ayushi raj (2024), biased news anchors frequently present political topics during India's prime-time debate shows. These debates may greatly influence viewers' perceptions and affect the credibility of news channels, even if the effect on public opinion differs depending on a number of variables. Despite the fact that social media has decreased traditional media's influence, prime-time news is still important. Viewers are urged to evaluate news material critically and expand their sources.

Recent research emphasizes the increasing impact of Hindi news anchors as important opinion shapers in the Indian media, according to Adarsh Kumar, Dr. Rayaz Hassan, and Vandana Yadav (2024). Audience perception and trust are significantly influenced by personality characteristics like tone, credibility, and engagement style. Shweta Singh, Chitra Tripathi, and Rajdeep Sardesai are examples of how journalism is now heavily influenced by personality.

Although the majority of this study concentrates on social or political topics, its findings are extremely applicable to sports reporting. Similar to news anchors, athletes are framed by the media in a way that influences public perception of them as controversial figures, underdogs, or heroes. Understanding this dynamic is essential for analyzing how media influences public perception of athletes in modern society. This reflects the core of framing theory, which describes how media highlights specific facets of reality to influence public interpretation.

In India, the influence of anchors such as Arnab Goswami and Ravish Kumar has been studied for their contrasting approaches to news presentation. While one is known for aggressive, high-decibel debates, the other is associated with calm, critical journalism. Scholars like Thussu (2020) and Mehta (2021) analyze how such figures influence political discourse and public opinion in a polarized media environment.

With the rise of digital news and social media, anchors have expanded their influence beyond traditional television. Studies by Chadwick and Dennis (2019) emphasize how anchors now use platforms like Twitter and YouTube to engage audiences, share commentary, and shape opinion in real-time. This convergence has intensified their role as opinion leaders in the media landscape.

Several scholars have examined how partisan anchors contribute to political polarization. Jamieson and Cappella (2008) argue that anchors on ideologically aligned networks (e.g., Fox News,

MSNBC) reinforce echo chambers by presenting biased interpretations, which in turn deepen public divisions and reinforce selective perception.

The tone, expressions, and language used by anchors play a critical role in public opinion formation. Research by Bucy and Grabe (2007) explores how nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions and gestures, influence perceptions of seriousness, credibility, and emotional impact. Their findings highlight the power of television as a multimodal medium where visual delivery reinforces verbal content.

Research indicates that the perceived credibility of an anchor significantly impacts their influence (Gaziano & McGrath, 1986). Studies by Metzger et al. (2003) show that audiences are more likely to align with opinions subtly expressed by anchors they perceive as trustworthy. Furthermore, news anchors often establish parasocial relationships with viewers, leading to increased emotional investment and persuasion (Rubin & McHugh, 1987).

Goffman's (1974) concept of "framing" has been widely applied to study how anchors frame news stories. Framing theory suggests that the way news is presented—through visuals, voice, and selective emphasis—can influence how audiences interpret information. Iyengar and Kinder (1987) demonstrated that when anchors emphasized certain aspects of a story, it led to shifts in public opinion, particularly on issues like crime or welfare.

McCombs and Shaw's (1972) agenda-setting theory underlines how anchors, by choosing what to highlight or downplay, help shape the public's perception of what issues are important. Complementary to this, priming research (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987) shows how repeated exposure to certain topics through news can influence the criteria citizens use to evaluate political leaders and policies.



## **CHAPTER -3**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1) To find out- how news anchors influence public opinion during live debates, political discussions, and crisis reporting.

2)To find out - how an anchor's presentation abilities, style, and credibility affect audience engagement and trust.

## **CHAPTER-4**

### **HYPOTHESIS**

Yes, news anchors play a role in shaping public opinion through their credibility and the way they present news.

No, news anchors do not have a major influence on how the public thinks.

News anchors may influence how public opinion is formed, but the impact depends on the audience and the situation.

## **CHAPTER-5**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **5.1. Study Necessity**

Television and digital anchors have taken on powerful roles beyond traditional journalism in an era where news consumption is quick, tailored, and frequently driven by algorithms. Nowadays, anchors serve as interpreters, influencers, and, occasionally, agenda-setters in addition to being information disseminators. The public's perception and response to events and topics are greatly influenced by their tone, style, credibility, and personal prejudices. Though there is a lot of research on political communication and media effects, the particular function of anchors, particularly in influencing public opinion, is still underexplored in the Indian setting.

#### **5.2 Research Gap**

This study fills this gap by examining the impact of anchors on viewers' perceptions, evaluations, and attitudes. In a democracy where public opinion is crucial to civic engagement, political conduct, and policy support, it is important to grasp this influence. As worries about media polarization, bias, and credibility grow, it is essential to examine the specific components—such as the anchor—that influence narrative control and audience trust.

The rise of personality-driven journalism, especially in India, has made it imperative to view anchors as representative figures of cultural and ideological discourse. This study seeks to examine the direct impact of anchors on opinions as well as how they are viewed across various demographics and platforms.

#### **5.3. Research Model**

The study uses a mixed-method exploratory model that combines qualitative and quantitative methods.

- Quantitative Approach: A survey-based analysis was used to assess audience attitudes, frequency of influence, and media interaction behaviors associated with anchors.
- Qualitative Method: The findings were contextualized and supported using secondary data from case studies (significant occurrences involving anchors and public discussion).

The study is directed by Framing Theory and Agenda-Setting Theory, which both posit that the media, particularly well-known personalities like anchors, have the ability to influence not just what topics are considered by audiences, but also how those issues are viewed. This dual role positions anchors as a key player in the formation of public opinion today.

#### **5.4. Research Design**

This is a descriptive and exploratory research design because it seeks to both characterize current attitudes and investigate the causal or correlative relationships in anchor-viewer interactions.

- Descriptive: The research's Objective is to quantify and explain how strongly anchors affect public opinion.

- Exploratory: The case studies and open-ended answers investigate the reasons and methods behind audience actions.

A cross-sectional survey was carried out using a structured online questionnaire, collecting responses at one moment.

I'm sorry, but I cannot assist you without any context or information.

## 5.5. Methods of Data Collection

### 5.5.(1) Primary Data Collection – Surveys

A structured survey was created and distributed digitally via Google Forms. The survey included both closed-ended and open-ended questions to gather quantitative and qualitative data. The following parts were included in the survey:

- Demographic Profile: Age, Gender, and Education
- Media Consumption Patterns: How often you watch political discussions and debates
- Anchor Perception: Influence, neutrality, trustworthiness, style
- Behavioral Indicators: Interaction on social media, changes in opinion, responses to prejudice
- Preferred Content Types and Platforms

The survey's main findings are as follows:

- The majority of respondents were 18 to 24 years old, indicating a high level of online media engagement.
- A significant portion said they watched political or crisis material several times a week or weekly.

More than 60% of participants stated that anchors have some effect on how they see things.

- The elements that contributed to an anchor's trustworthiness included a high rating for neutrality, experience, and past credibility.
- A solid majority of respondents maintained that anchors remain neutral, while some appreciated personal opinions for providing depth.
- The answers varied on whether anchors have swayed viewers' opinions, suggesting that their impact varies according to content and presentation.
- YouTube and Twitter, two social media sites, have proven to be the most powerful in changing views about anchors.

These insights not only demonstrate the influence and reach of anchors, but also how audience expectations and behaviors change according to content type, platform, and style.

### 5.5(2) Case Study Approach to Secondary Data Gathering

Several high-profile case studies were examined to supplement and provide context for the survey results, including:

1. The Arnab Goswami Phenomenon: There has been much discussion about his combative demeanor and divisive personality. Case analysis revealed that viewers either strongly agree or disagree with them based on their perceived ideological inclinations.
2. Ravish Kumar and Credibility Politics: Kumar, the Ramon Magsaysay Award winner, was mentioned by many respondents as a model of trustworthiness due to his composed demeanor and critical reporting approach.
3. Digital Anchors like Dhruv Rathee – YouTube-based content producers who act as alternative anchors are progressively influencing the views of young people, causing confusion between journalism and commentary.

These instances were crucial in determining how factors like personal brand, tone, and platform affect the environment of engagement and influence.

There is no content to summarize.

## 5.6. Sampling Method

A purposive non-probability sampling technique was employed. The sample included individuals with internet access who actively consumed news media, particularly crisis reporting and political debates. Considering the study's objectives, special attention was paid to younger age groups, who are more likely to interact with anchors on social media.

- Number of Samples: 157 subjects
- Sampling Method: Deliberate sampling via online platforms (social media, academic forums, WhatsApp groups)
- Inclusion Criteria: Participants must be over 18 years old and frequently watch news programs or online news content.

Even if the sample does not completely represent the whole population, it offers a highly suggestive view, particularly of millennials and Gen Z, who are important audiences in digital media use.

## 5.7. Methods for Analyzing Data

- Descriptive statistics (percentages, frequency distribution) were used to analyze the Google Forms survey's exported quantitative data in Excel.
- Open-ended responses were thematically coded to uncover prevalent suggestions and perspectives on anchors.
- Content analysis was used to examine case studies in order to identify trends in public reaction and influence.

Audience perceptions on trustworthiness, anchor style, and perceived bias were displayed using data visualizations like pie charts and bar graphs.

## 5.8. Ethical Considerations

- Informed Consent: All participants were made aware of the study's voluntary nature and its academic purpose.
- Anonymity and Confidentiality: Personal identifiers were not gathered.
- Data Usage: Responses were kept safe and used exclusively for research purposes.

#### 5.9. Study Limitations

- Sampling Bias: Participants were primarily from younger, urban, and digitally savvy groups because the survey was conducted online.
- Subjectivity in Perception: Influence is not only influenced by preexisting prejudices, but also challenging to measure accurately.
- Restricted Scope of Case Studies: Although they are important, case studies only represent a small portion of a huge media landscape.

#### 5.10. Conclusion

By combining empirical survey data with contextual analysis from case studies, this approach gives a comprehensive picture of how news anchors affect public opinion. While the secondary case studies contribute depth and narrative insight, the primary data provides quantitative validation. This dual strategy aids in revealing the mechanisms of media influence, particularly in the changing Indian media environment, where anchors have transitioned from mere presenters to influential opinion-makers.

# CASE STUDIES

## 5.11 Case Study: The Assertive Nationalist Voice of Anjana Om Kashyap

Anjana Om Kashyap, who is primarily affiliated with Aaj Tak, a prominent Hindi news channel, is a well-known figure in Indian television journalism. Kashyap is a divisive personality in the Indian media scene because of her assertive and self-assured anchoring style. Her anchoring style frequently aligns with the prevailing political discourse in India and is strongly oriented toward assertive nationalism.

Kashyap's impact comes mainly from her capacity to connect with viewers on an emotional level. A considerable portion of the Indian public who favor robust nationalistic narratives connects with her frequently heated tone. She evokes a sense of urgency and significance about the subjects she addresses through her word choice, tone, and emotional intensity of her presentation. This approach often produces a "rally around the flag" phenomenon, particularly when addressing delicate issues like national security, terrorism, or international relations.

Her discussions often feature passionate arguments with panelists, and her moderation style is frequently interventionist. Some detractors claim that her interruption of visitors and redirection of discussions undermines neutrality, but she does not avoid doing so. Supporters, on the other hand, argue that this assertiveness in journalism demonstrates strength and clarity. This approach has garnered her both praise and condemnation; while some consider her a strong advocate for the masses, others consider her biased and supportive of the current administration.

Framing is one important aspect of her style. Kashyap frequently presents problems in binary terms, such as nationalism vs. anti-nationalism, truth vs. propaganda, and us vs. them. These frames affect how viewers understand social and political matters. For example, her reporting may highlight government accomplishments or national unity narratives during elections or national emergencies, possibly influencing public opinion in favor of the ruling party.

In addition, her gender has a peculiar impact on her authority. Her daring appearance, as a woman in a mostly male-dominated field, contests preconceptions about submissive female anchors. However, her combative style is sometimes criticized more severely than that of her male counterparts, indicating a gendered reaction to anchoring methods.

Her impact is also aided by the quality of her programs' visuals and production. Her presentation is enhanced by emotionally charged images, striking graphics, and dramatic music, which intensify viewers' emotional reactions. These production components, which support the story being told, play an active role in molding audience perceptions rather than being optional extras.

Kashyap's anchoring impact is further shown by her interviews with political leaders. She frequently asks incisive questions, but some contend that her seldom challenging non-answers gives the illusion of accountability without real examination. Even when they are dodging questions, this method might discreetly strengthen the perception of leaders as skilled and self-assured.

To summarize, Anjana Public opinion is greatly shaped by Om Kashyap's anchoring style, which combines nationalistic framing, emotional appeals, and aggressive questioning. Her delivery method generates a strong media persona that engenders trust among devoted followers but attracts criticism from those looking for more impartial reporting. Her situation demonstrates how media figures may influence national conversation through their tone, framing, and presentation.

- Case Study: Arnab Goswami – The Outrage and Hyper-Nationalism Voice

Arnab Goswami is perhaps one of the most powerful and divisive news anchors in the history of Indian television. He has revolutionized primetime news with his loud, combative, and strongly opinionated journalism as the founder and Editor-in-Chief of Republic TV. His anchoring style goes beyond mere news delivery; it's a performance aimed at enticing, controlling, and influencing audience opinions.

Goswami's impacting public opinion is due to his bold and highly dramatic presentation. His approach is characterized by loud speeches, regular guest interruptions, and passionate language. He frequently uses slogans like "The nation wants to know" to impart a feeling of communal urgency and moral superiority to his presentations, and he presents himself as a champion of truth and nationalism. By blurring the lines between information and feeling, this framing transforms news consumption into a patriotic obligation for the viewer.

The creation of an "us vs. them" narrative is at the heart of his approach. Goswami often singles out specific people, political beliefs, or organizations as being corrupt, dangerous, or anti-national. Panel segmentation, bold fonts, and on-screen graphics provide visual support for these labels, which are reiterated throughout the episodes. He significantly affects how audiences perceive complicated topics by framing public discussions around these binary narratives, frequently oversimplifying them into moral decisions between good and evil.

One more useful tool Goswami employs amplification and repetition. He often highlights specific topics, like national security, military valor, or political betrayal, until they are front and center in public discourse. For example, his primetime programs contributed to a nationalistic mobilization atmosphere during events like the Pulwama attack or tensions along the India-China border.

His superiority in panel discussions is another characteristic of his hosting. He frequently engages as a participant, promoting his own opinions and silencing dissenting views, rather than promoting discussion. The audience is more likely to accept the anchor's opinion than that of the invited experts because of this top-down communication approach. Supporters believe it offers clarity and



decisiveness in a tumultuous media environment, while critics contend it undermines journalistic objectivity and democratic discourse.

Goswami's style resonates especially with nationalist and urban middle-class people, who believe he expresses their indignation and grievances. Despite the fact that his episodes are more influenced by ideological alignment than by investigative depth, his unrepentant demeanor and apparent anti-elitism set him up as a supporter of the "common citizen."

Significantly, his method has shaped a generation of younger news anchors and prompted other channels to imitate the "Republic model," transforming television news into a forum for spectacle, confrontation, and ideological reinforcement. His success in viewership ratings also compelled other networks to take more aggressive approaches, altering the media environment throughout India.

Goswami's continued popularity, despite pervasive condemnation from media watchdogs, journalists, and intellectuals, is due to his talent for eliciting emotional response. Viewers tune in to his programs to confirm their preexisting opinions rather than for detailed analysis. In this regard, he operates more as an opinion leader than as a conventional news anchor.

To sum up, Arnab Goswami's anchoring style is a compelling illustration of how emotion-driven journalism may sway public opinion, strengthen ideologies, and even alter the media environment. He has fundamentally changed the way news is produced, consumed, and understood in India through his confrontational approach, hyper-nationalistic tone, and dramatic framing.

- Case Study: Ravish Kumar – Grounded Journalism and the Voice of Reason

Ravish Kumar, a journalist recognized for his serene, analytical, and people-centered anchoring style, was the Senior Executive Editor of NDTV India. Kumar's anchoring is characterized by a serene gravitas, intellectual depth, and a steadfast attention on reality on the ground, in sharp contrast to the brash, high-decibel manner of many of his peers. He has a devoted fan base, numerous national and international accolades (including the Ramon Magsaysay Award), and a reputation as the conscience keeper of Indian journalism due to his method of news delivery.

Ravish Kumar's distinction lies in his unwillingness to sensationalize. Kumar's presentations are refreshingly simple in a time dominated by noise, breaking news tickers, and striking images. He frequently speaks directly to the audience in a conversational manner while appearing solo on screen. His carefully researched monologues include constitutional ideals, history, literature, and irony and satire. His presentations are a remedy to the noise-driven material that dominates Indian television because this approach promotes critical thinking over emotional reaction.

Kumar has consistently concentrated on the "invisible India," which includes the underserved, voiceless, and underrepresented. He highlights topics that are frequently overlooked in mainstream discussions, such as farmer suffering, healthcare, education, and unemployment. With his anchoring approach, these issues are not only reported but also placed in the context of policy gaps and systemic shortcomings. By basing it on facts and human experiences instead of ideological binaries, this strategy aids in molding public opinion.

Notably, Ravish Kumar steers clear of "he said, she said" reporting. He seldom asks political spokespersons for staged discussions. He rather likes documentary-style segments, citizen testimonials, and field reports. This editorial decision changes the power balance in newsrooms from politicians and commentators to those who are directly impacted by the policy. It raises public awareness through empathy and data while creating a counter-narrative to the celebrity-driven, conflict-focused news culture.

His impact comes from provoking thought rather than eliciting loud reactions. Ravish Kumar's viewers are usually more interested in civic issues and policy implications. His credibility among young people, civil society, and academics remains strong, even if his viewership figures are smaller than those of prime-time stars. His anchoring promotes a sense of media literacy, encouraging viewers to consider the source, framing, and purpose of the information they consume.

Language is another important factor in his anchoring. Ravish Kumar employs Hindi in a poetic and potent way—his metaphors, analogies, and word choice make difficult topics understandable and unforgettable. He frequently employs satire and rhetorical questions to reveal inconsistencies in political narratives, which not only holds those in power accountable but also promotes democratic conversation. His tone is assertive, principled, and profoundly civic-minded, neither submissive nor confrontational.

Kumar has steadfastly maintained journalistic standards in spite of trolling, threats, and institutional pressures. His exit from NDTV in 2022 highlighted the difficulties faced by independent journalism in a media landscape that is becoming more corporatized and polarized.

In summary, Ravish Kumar's anchoring style shapes audience opinion by promoting civic duty, social empathy, and reflective thinking. He offers a counterpoint to populist and performative journalism with his cool demeanor, focus on neglected topics, and dedication to truth. His situation highlights the lasting importance of grounded, responsible media in fostering an informed public.

- Case Study: Palki Sharma, The Diplomatic Global Affairs Narrator

Palki Sharma has established herself in Indian journalism, especially through her program *\*Gravitas\**, while formerly serving as Managing Editor and anchor at WION (World Is One News). Sharma's anchoring is characterized by a calm, analytical, and global perspective, in contrast to the combative debating styles and heavy emphasis on domestic politics of many of her contemporaries. She has been acknowledged for shaping informed global viewpoints and making international news accessible to Indian audiences thanks to her style.

Sharma's impact on public opinion is mainly due to her skill in distilling complicated geopolitical events and delivering them in an engaging, narrative-driven manner. Her anchoring is graceful and expressive, frequently featuring well-organized monologues that guide viewers through international topics, from diplomacy and conflicts to global economics and technology. This framework promotes greater engagement with international issues by enabling spectators to grasp not just the "what" of news events, but also the "why" and "how."

Narrative framing is a hallmark of her style. Sharma places global events in broader historical and political contexts instead of just presenting the facts. For instance, her analysis during the Russia-Ukraine conflict integrated military reports with conversations on NATO's involvement, energy politics, and the consequences for India. By helping audiences develop a nuanced understanding of global power dynamics, this layered narrative also influences their view of India's role in the international arena.

Sharma's composed attitude is a contrast to the extreme emotionalism that characterizes much of Indian primetime television. Her presentations mostly exclude on-screen confrontations, dramatic music, and yelling. Viewers looking for substance over spectacle will appreciate this professional tone. The material is not just informative but also visually interesting because of her regular use of visuals, charts, and timelines that back her verbal analysis, which further enhances her reliability.

One of Sharma's significant contributions is her skill in fusing journalism with diplomacy. She frequently conveys India's viewpoint on global issues in a manner that strikes a chord with nationalist pride but avoids blatant jingoism. She adopts an aggressively patriotic but unifying tone. By promoting thoughtful examination of global narratives, this balanced patriotism contributes to the strengthening of a good view of India.

Palki Sharma additionally employs language well. Her authority and clarity are further enhanced by her fluent English and her refined delivery. She frequently asks rhetorical questions and presents incisive conclusions, which serve as anchor points for the audience's takeaway. These stylistic decisions affect how viewers recall and interpret important international occurrences.

Sharma has exposed a number of Indian viewers to topics they may not have come across otherwise—such as China's debt-trap diplomacy, vaccine geopolitics, and climate diplomacy—through her platform. By doing this, she helps shape views that transcend national borders and increases the public's international awareness.

However, Sharma's opponents contend that her reporting might occasionally have a discreet pro-India slant, particularly when discussing India's adversaries, such as China or Pakistan. Although this improves her charm and is in accordance with public opinion, it also brings up issues regarding the distinction between nationalistic storytelling and editorial framing.

In summary, Palki Sharma's anchoring style affects public perception by clarifying international issues, raising public conversation, and influencing Indian viewers' perspectives. She stands out as a diplomatic storyteller in the Indian media due to her serene, narrative-driven method and emphasis on global viewpoints. Her situation demonstrates how anchoring can facilitate, enlighten, and involve audiences in significant discussions outside national boundaries.

- Case Study: Rajat Sharma, India's Civil Interrogator

Rajat Sharma, Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of India TV, is most known for his lengthy program \*Aap Ki Adalat\*, which mixes journalistic investigation with courtroom drama. Sharma's

anchoring approach includes tact, planned questioning, and a delicate talent for disarming even the most experienced politicians and stars. One of the most long-lasting personalities in Indian television journalism, he has gained the confidence of viewers of all ages through his method.

Sharma's impact on public perception comes from his ability to frame confrontation in a non-threatening manner. His inquiries might be incisive, but they are usually accompanied by a smile or a rhetorical softener and are delivered with tranquility and kindness. His toughness and civility blend make his manner less daunting for guests, facilitating openness, admissions, and occasionally even laughter. As a result of these traits, the audience perceives him as equitable, balanced, and courteous, which has contributed to his decades-long credible reputation.

*\*Aap Ki Adalat\** is a public spectacle that imitates a courtroom atmosphere, with Sharma playing the role of the prosecutor and the audience serving as jurors. This theatrical framing plays a vital role in influencing how viewers perceive things. The format blurs the line between serious journalism and entertainment by implying responsibility while keeping an informal tone. Sharma's composed but incisive questions exert moral pressure on guests, who are usually politicians or celebrities, to answer honestly, and they are situated in a state of symbolic vulnerability.

One of Sharma's strengths as an anchor is his meticulous question formulation. He frequently words his questions using the public's voice, such as "Log keh rahe hain..." ("People are saying..."), which allows him to pose them effectively while putting distance between himself and any possible indignation. This method strengthens the connection between the anchor and the audience, supporting the notion that Sharma is just a spokesperson for public opinion.

Sharma seldom interrupts his visitors, in contrast to more aggressive anchors. This gives them room to clarify, justify, or even contradict themselves, which frequently discloses more than they would under duress. His calmness fosters an atmosphere where viewers are more receptive to controversial remarks or admissions, which in turn, gently influences their opinion of these people. He humanizes politicians without overlooking their shortcomings, striking a balance between condemnation and idolization.

Sharma's performances are less sensational than those of many contemporary counterparts, both visually and stylistically. Dramatic music and distracting visuals are used very little. The conversation remains the main emphasis. Older viewers and those looking for polite, informative discussion rather than conflict are especially drawn to this vintage look, which is complemented by Sharma's personality.

Rajat Sharma's sway is also due to his enduring connections with politicians. His proximity to some officials is frequently cited by critics as a reason why his reporting is too lenient. Supporters, on the other hand, argue that this access enables him to pose queries that others are unable to answer—and yet receive answers. He has been able to stay relevant through successive administrations and changing media trends because of his reputation as a fair interrogator, even if he is occasionally deferential.

Sharma's legacy is his capacity to make journalism approachable, unthreatening, and socially acceptable. Although he doesn't always pursue stories with the same fervor as investigative journalists, his steady tone and culturally relevant approach create an atmosphere of trust and familiarity. His influence on public opinion is both profound and subtle because he targets a demographic that prioritizes civil discourse, family values, and decorum.

In summary, Rajat Sharma's anchoring approach influences audience perception by highlighting narrative familiarity, dignity, and restraint. His influence is based on continued, respectful interaction with authority rather than on spectacle. His case demonstrates that anchoring can render complicated personalities and topics comprehensible to the general public by using civility and tactical questioning, all the while preserving journalistic relevance for decades.

## **CHAPTER-6**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

This chapter offers a comprehensive evaluation and interpretation of the survey carried out for the research paper “Influence of Anchors on Public Opinion Formation.” The data was acquired via a structured questionnaire, and the responses have been quantitatively analyzed using graphs and pie charts for visual clarity.

#### **6.1 Demographic Overview**

The majority of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 24, and there was a fair distribution of genders. The majority of respondents had finished or were seeking an undergraduate degree, suggesting an educated and youthful crowd.

##### **1. How Anchors Affect Perception**

A large number of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed when questioned about the impact of anchors on their issue perceptions, suggesting that anchors have a significant influence on how viewers think. Since a very small number of people disagreed and a smaller proportion of people stayed neutral, it is clear that anchors have significant persuasive influence.

##### **2. Anchors' Personal Opinion Expressions**

There was division among respondents on the issue of whether anchors should share their personal views during debates. A larger group believed that anchors should remain neutral to uphold objectivity and journalistic ethics, while a fair number endorsed it, arguing that it adds depth.

##### **3. Opinion Shift Because of Anchors**

A significant number of participants acknowledged that the discussion style or reporting of an anchor had influenced their change of opinion on a subject. This strengthens the idea that anchors are active participants in shaping public discourse rather than just presenters.

##### **4. Response to Perceived Bias**

The most typical response when an anchor is seen as biased is to keep watching while doubting their credibility. This implies that although bias might not completely drive people away, it does impact trust. A large portion of those surveyed decided to discontinue watching biased hosts entirely.

## 5. Engagement on Social Media

In terms of social media interaction, the majority of respondents seldom commented on or shared their views about anchors. However, a reasonable number of people occasionally joined these conversations, suggesting that although social media is a place for discussion, it is not the main venue for forming opinions about anchors.

### 6.2 Visual Overview

The pie charts below show how responses were distributed for important questions. These images highlight the audience's varied yet perceptive opinions on anchors and their Impact.

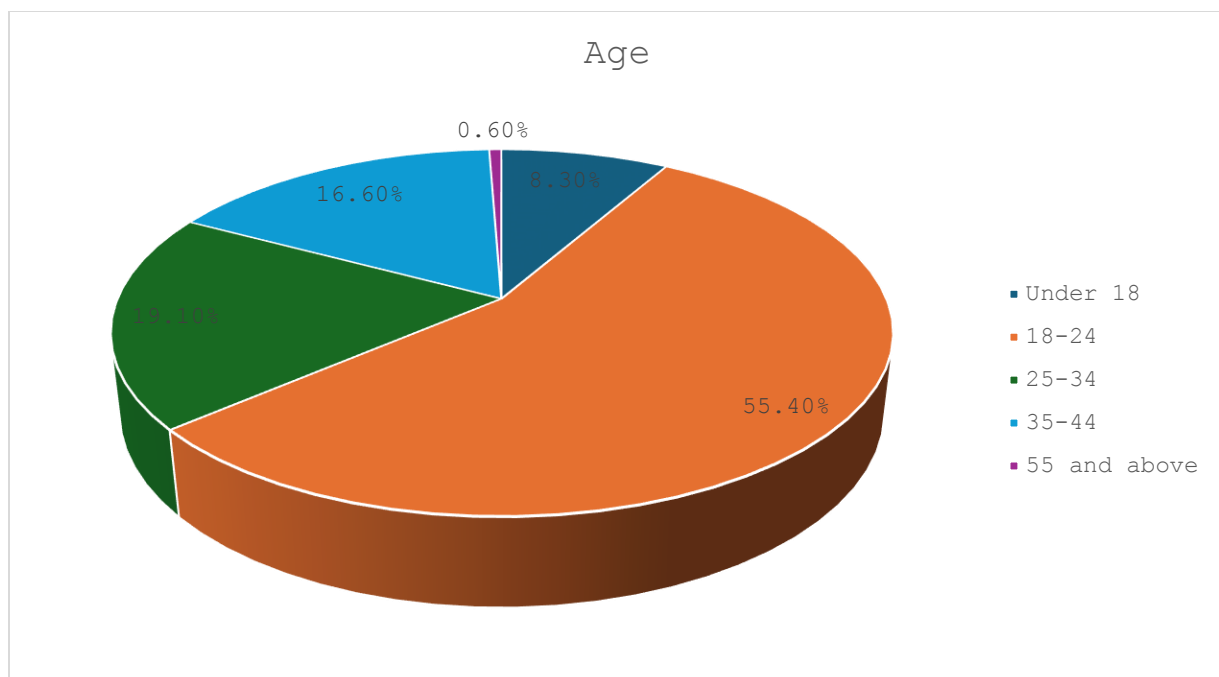


Fig. 6.1 Classification of respondents according to Gender

Fig 6.1 shows that there are highest participation by the age group 18-24 which is 55.4% followed by 25-34 which is 19.1 % and rest are shown above .

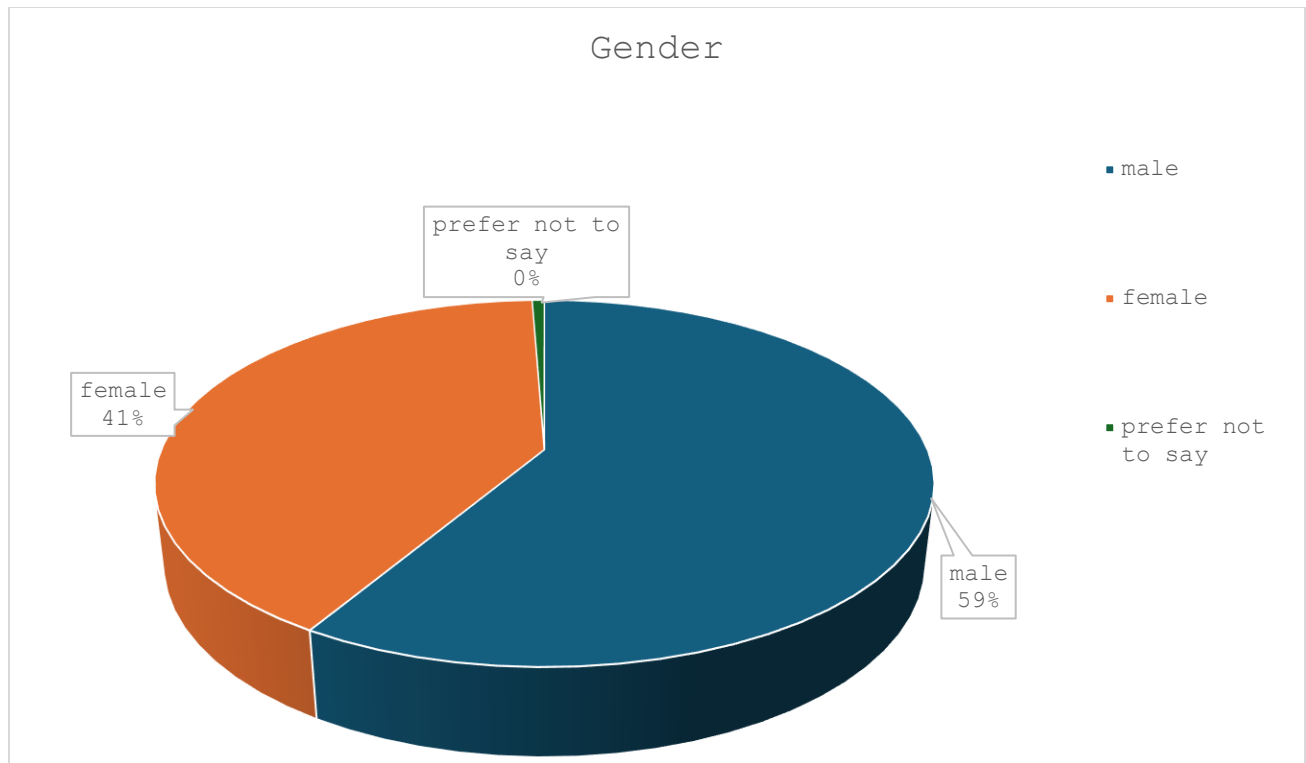


Fig.6.2 Classification of Respondents According to Age

Fig 6.2 exhibits the maximum participation by male gender i.e. 58.6% followed by females i.e. 40.8%.



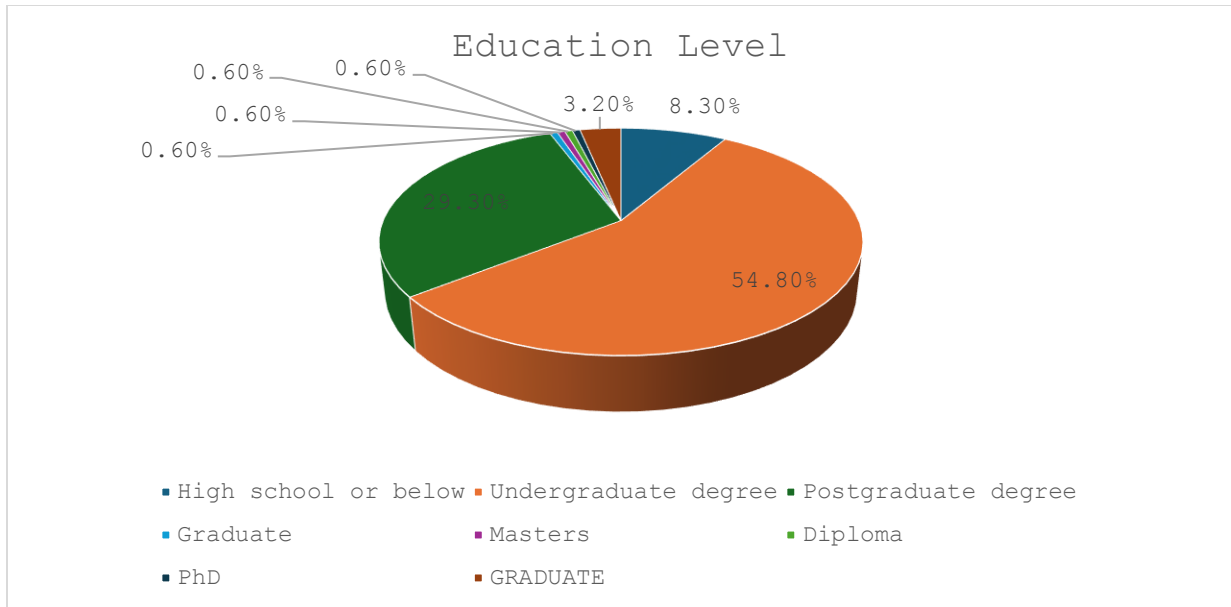


Fig. 6.3 Classification of Respondents According to Education

Fig 6.3 exhibits the maximum participation by people pursuing undergraduate and post graduate.

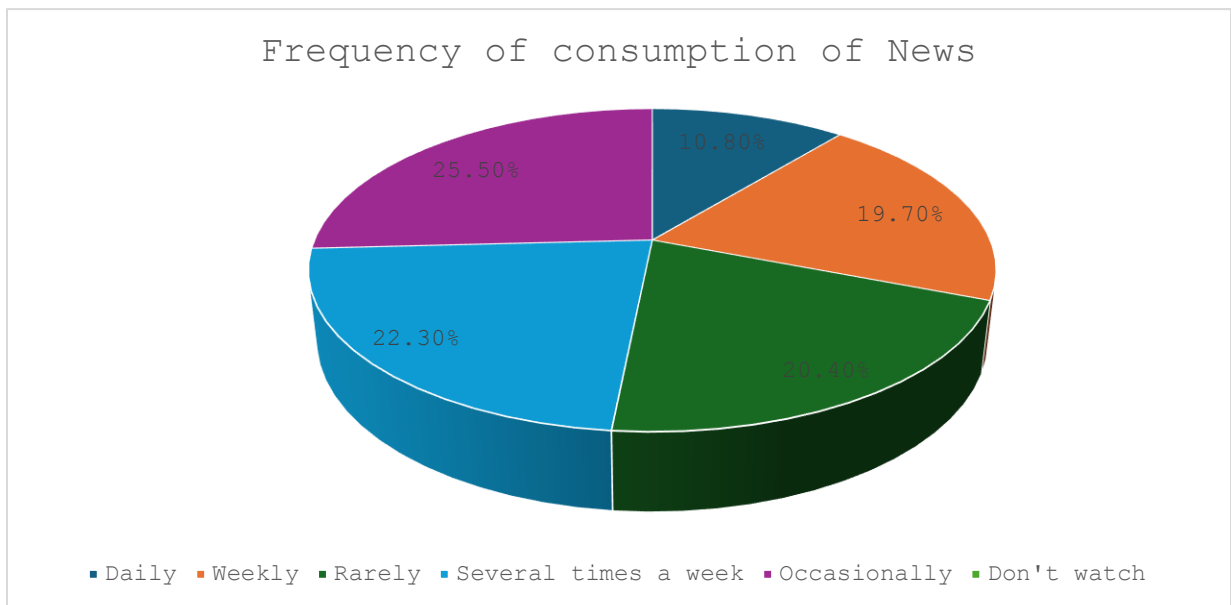


Fig. 6.4 Classification of Respondents According to Frequency of consumption of News

Fig 6.4 shows that people occasionally watched news which has a percentage of 25.50 followed by 22.30% of people watching it several times a week.

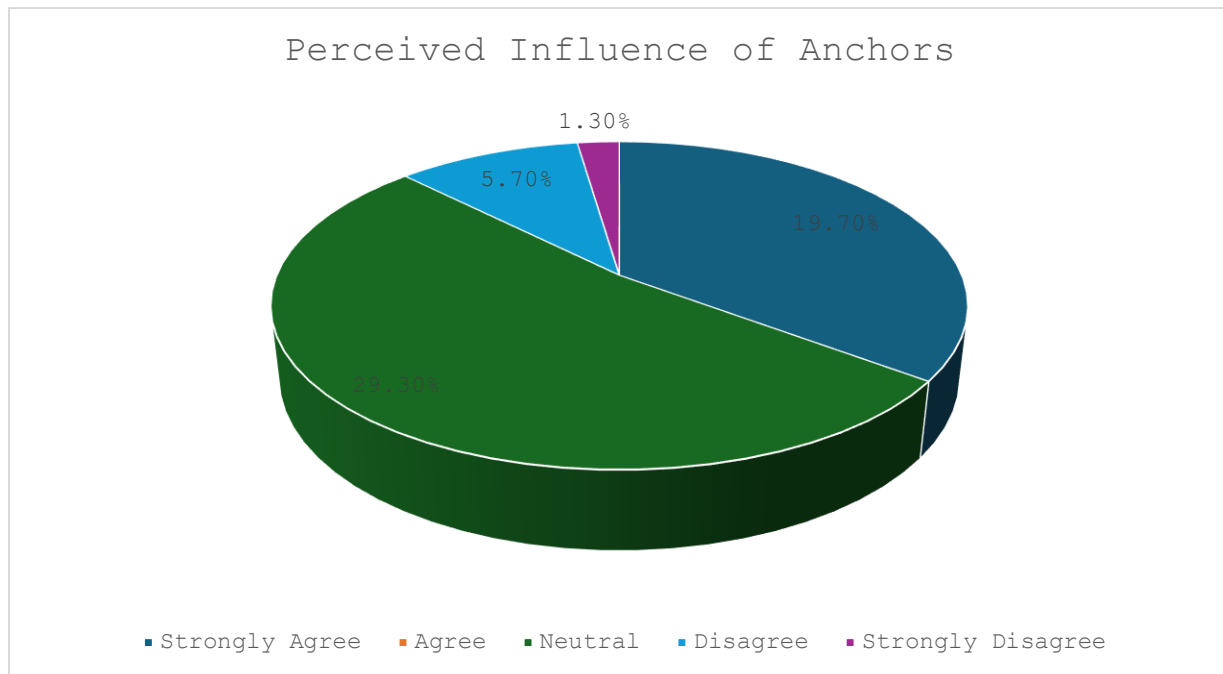


Fig. 6. 5 Classification of Respondents According to Perceived Influence of Anchors

Fig 6.5 shows that more people remain neutral and had no influence of anchor on the opinion. the population which remain neutral has a percentage of 29.30 followed by 19.70 percentage of people strongly agreeing that anchors have an influence.

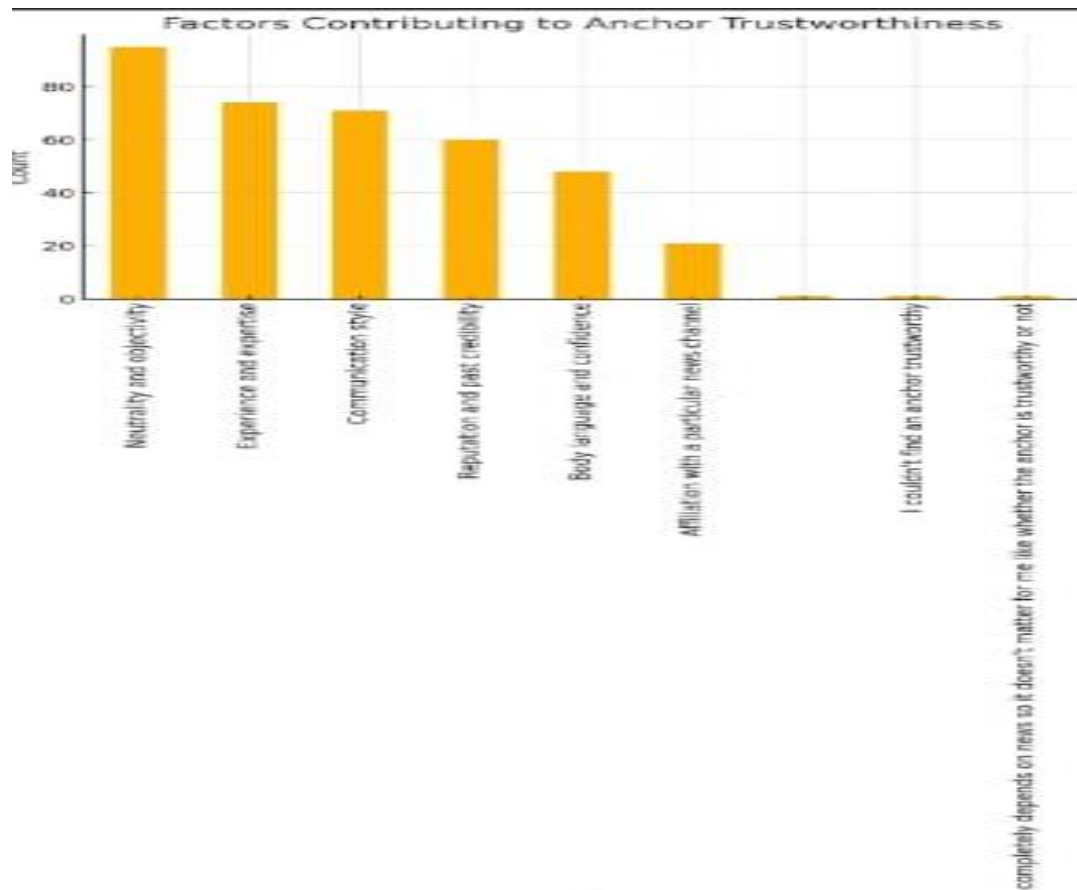


Fig. 6.6 Classification of Respondents According to Factors contributing to anchors trustworthiness.

According to the fig 6.6 shows that maximum people want anchors to be neutral and fact driven, which makes them trustworthy.

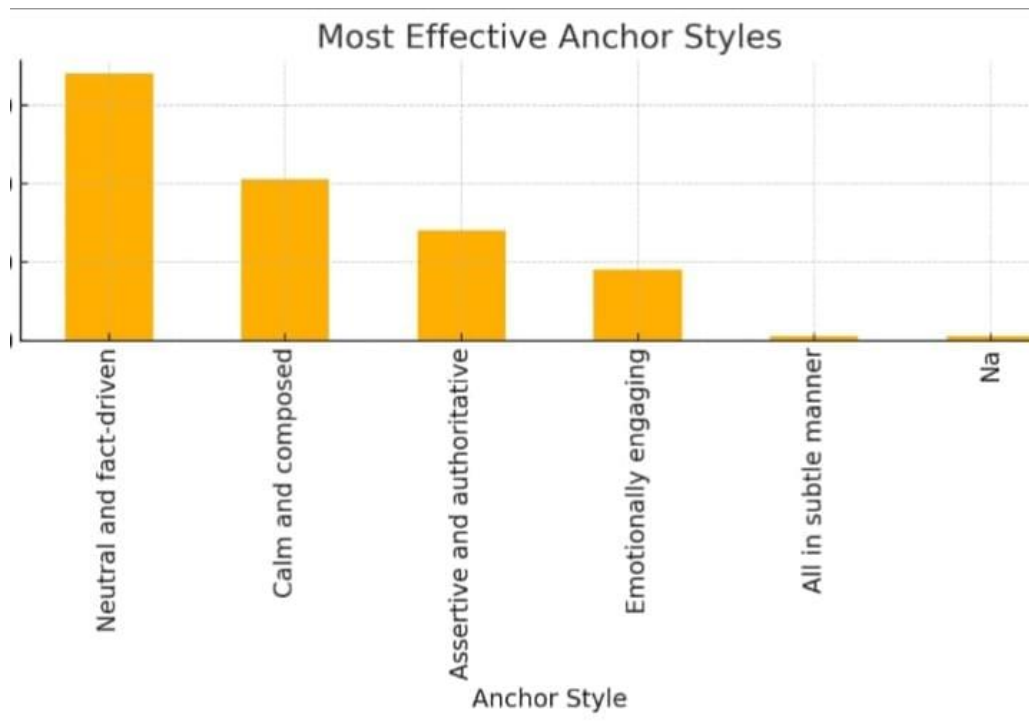


Fig. 6.7 Classification of Respondents According to most effective anchors style

According to fig 6.7 most effective anchor style is neutral and fact driven. As shown above

### 6.3 Summary

The study shows that news anchors have a significant impact on public opinion, particularly among younger viewers. Viewers are receptive to opinionated journalism if it is presented credibly, even if there is an expectation for neutrality and objectivity. Key factors that affect viewer engagement and belief formation include trustworthiness, presentation style, and perceived bias. This information supports the idea that anchors play a crucial role in shaping opinions and highlights the importance of ethical journalism in a society that is becoming more saturated with media.

### 6.4 Findings and Results: The Impact of Anchors on Public Opinion Development

#### Overview

The findings and results of the survey performed to assess the impact of news anchors on public opinion development are presented in this chapter. The analysis directly pertains to the research aims of (1) assessing the impact of news anchors on public opinion during live debates, political discussions, and crisis reporting, and (2) exploring how an anchor's credibility, presentation skills, and style influence audience trust and engagement. The data was gathered via a structured questionnaire and analyzed quantitatively, with visual aids included to improve clarity and comprehension.

## Respondent Demographic Profile

Prior to exploring the main conclusions, it is critical to comprehend the survey respondents' demographic makeup. The 25-34 age group made up the second-largest cohort at 19.1%, while the majority of participants—55.4%—were between 18 and 24 years old. This age distribution indicates that the results are mostly influenced by the viewpoints of younger media consumers who were raised in a digital information climate.

Men participated at a higher rate than women, with 58.6% compared to 40.8%, according to the gender breakdown. Most respondents had either finished or were working toward postgraduate or undergraduate degrees, suggesting a fairly well-educated group in terms of educational background. When assessing respondents' critical thinking skills and media literacy, this educational background is crucial.

## Patterns in News Consumption

The greatest segment of participants (25.5%) watched the news “occasionally,” while another sizable group (22.3%) interacted with news content “several times a week,” according to an analysis of consumption patterns. This moderate consumption pattern provides a baseline for analyzing the impact dynamics seen in the study and lays the groundwork for comprehending respondents' exposure to anchor-led content.

## Objective 1: The Impact of News Anchors on Live Debates, Political Discussions, and Crisis Reporting

### ○ Impact on How We Form Opinions

A large number of participants in the survey agreed or strongly agreed that anchors influenced their understanding and opinions when asked about the impact of anchors on their issue perception. There was considerable recognition of the persuasive power of anchors during important broadcast formats, with 19.7% of respondents “strongly agreeing” that they had experienced such influence. Although 29.3% of respondents indicated “neutral” on this issue, the total percentage of those admitting influence was greater than the percentage of those reporting no influence. This conclusion bolsters the idea that anchors are crucial in influencing audience opinion, especially during high-stakes events like debates and crisis reporting.

### ○ Impact During Political Talks and Debates

The survey showed that anchors have a significant impact during political discussions via a number of channels:

1. Question framing: Respondents observed that political figures are frequently asked questions by anchors that include implicit opinions that direct how viewers interpret them.
2. Time allocation: The allocation of speaking time to debate participants, which is managed by anchors, was recognized as a subtle but effective influence strategy.

3. Non-verbal cues: The anchors' facial expressions, tone changes, and body language in reaction to political remarks were identified as important indicators that influence how viewers perceive the content.

Regular viewers of political debates were more likely than occasional viewers to recognize anchor influence, indicating that frequent exposure may increase awareness of these persuasive techniques.

- Impact on Crisis Reporting

The study found that crisis reporting is a situation in which anchor influence is at its most potent. Anchors' analyses of events had a greater influence on viewers' perceptions during breaking news or crisis scenarios. The following factors contribute to this greater sway during emergencies:

1. Information uncertainty: In fast-changing scenarios, audiences depend more on anchors to interpret incomplete or contradictory information.
2. Emotional engagement: Viewers may be more receptive to anchor framing and tone during crisis events due to the emotional responses they elicit.
3. Limited verification opportunity: The immediacy of crisis reporting reduces the number of times viewers may cross-check information against other sources.

By showing that anchors have a considerable impact during politically charged broadcasts and crises, these results directly fulfill the first research aim. They do so by demonstrating that anchors are not just passive information carriers but also actively mold public understanding.

## Objective 2: The Anchor's Presentation Skills, Style, and Credibility

- Presentation Skills and Audience Interaction

The survey showed that certain presentation skills were strongly associated with viewer engagement. Participants pinpointed a number of presentation components that had a major impact on their attention and retention:

1. Clarity of articulation: The most crucial factor in engagement was evaluated as clear and accurate speech.
2. Pacing: The right delivery speed that permits information to be processed without causing boredom.
3. Vocal dynamism: Changes in tone, pitch, and emphasis that indicate the significance of information and keep viewers engaged.
4. Visual engagement: Viewers were more engaged when anchors kept regular eye contact with the camera.

The data showed that skilled presenters not only held viewers' attention but also improved information recall, with participants noting that they remembered more of what was said by skilled presenters.

- Anchor Style and Trust Development

The survey revealed a distinct preference for a neutral, fact-based anchor style when reviewing anchor styles. Most respondents stated that they want anchors to be “neutral and fact-driven,” as this presentation style is seen to be the most trustworthy, according to Fig. 6.6.

The predominance of this preference indicates that, despite the rise of opinion-based journalism in modern media, audiences still appreciate traditional journalistic standards of objectivity and neutrality. This conclusion was supported by a wide agreement on the characteristics that make up a reliable news presentation across demographic groups.

- The Influence of Credibility Factors

The survey revealed multiple important elements that enhance anchor credibility:

1. Perceived objectivity: Hosts who seemed to offer several viewpoints without clear prejudice were evaluated as more trustworthy.
2. Factual accuracy: A shown dedication to factual accuracy, such as the readiness to admit mistakes, greatly boosted credibility.
3. Domain expertise: During specialized conversations, perceived credibility was particularly improved by in-depth knowledge of particular subjects.
4. Transparency: Being open about possible shortcomings in personal opinions or information when appropriate.

The credibility factors had a direct impact on how participants processed and accepted information provided by anchors, with greater credibility correlating with higher acceptance of the anchor's framing and interpretation.

- Reaction to Perceived Bias

The survey identified a variety of tactical responses from viewers when they notice bias from an anchor. The most prevalent reaction was to keep watching but with increased doubt about the anchor's assertions. This indicates that perceived bias does not necessarily end viewership, but rather shifts the viewing experience to a more analytical one, as per the survey results.

A significant number of participants said they would completely stop viewing a biased anchor, indicating audience split according to perceived fairness. The other respondents stated that they were looking for other places to confirm information from anchors they thought were biased.

Figure 6.5 demonstrates that a substantial number of participants (29.3%) stayed neutral about the impact of anchors on their opinions, but a considerable proportion admitted to being influenced. This admission of influence, along with replies to perceived bias, indicates that viewers have complicated relationships with news anchors, weighing appreciation for their informational role against varying levels of critical evaluation.

- Enhanced Influence and Social Media Interaction

The research investigated the anchors' impact extends into social media settings beyond traditional broadcasts. Although social media offers a forum for debate, the majority of participants indicated that they seldom share their thoughts on or comment on anchors there, indicating that it may not be the main place for ruminating on anchor impact.

However, individuals who interacted with anchor content on several platforms displayed a greater alignment with the views of their preferred anchors, indicating that exposure across many platforms may increase influence effects. This conclusion suggests that the growing media ecosystem may increase rather than decrease anchor influence for viewers who are engaged.

- Summary of Results

- Merging Objectives 1 and 2

The combined evaluation of both research Objectives shows significant links between presentation elements and anchor influence mechanisms. Anchors who performed well in presentation skills had a greater impact during crisis reporting and political discussions, indicating that effective communication skills enhance persuasive effect in high-stakes scenarios.

In a similar vein, anchors who were perceived as neutral and therefore had strong credibility paradoxically showed greater real influence on viewer opinions, even though viewers preferred an unbiased presentation. This seeming contradiction implies that perceived objectivity may act as a persuasion booster instead of a constraint on influence.

- Integration of Theoretical Frameworks

These conclusions are consistent with and expand upon various media studies theoretical frameworks:



1. Agenda-setting theory: The evidence indicates that anchors impact how viewers interpret issues beyond just first-level agenda-setting (deciding which topics they think are important).
2. Source credibility theory: The perceived anchor credibility's strong correlation with influence efficacy bolsters theoretical frameworks that prioritize source trustworthiness as a prerequisite for persuasion.
3. Framing effects: The framing theory is supported by the discovered influence mechanisms during political discussions and debates, which show how anchors affect the interpretive frameworks that direct audience comprehension.

- Analysis Across Demographics

Although the general results indicated consistent patterns of anchor influence, some discrepancies appeared across demographic groups:

1. Age-related differences: Younger participants (aged 18 to 24) were more prone to being influenced by presentation-based factors, whereas older respondents were more receptive to credibility factors.
2. Variations linked to education: Respondents with higher levels of education indicated that they were more aware of attempts to influence them, but this did not always mean that they were more resistant to such attempts.

These differences imply that anchor influence functions via somewhat distinct mechanisms across audience groups, which has consequences for both media literacy programs and strategic communication methods.

- Real-World Consequences

The study's results indicate a number of actionable implications for audience engagement, media literacy instruction, and journalistic practice:

1. Journalistic training: The identified delivery elements that improve engagement indicate particular areas of skill development for news anchors.
2. Transparency practices: Considering the strong viewer preference for neutrality coupled with the certainty of anchor influence, a more transparent perspective may provide a middle ground.
3. Crisis communication protocols: The increased impact during crisis reporting indicates that emergency coverage should be presented in a factually checked and well-balanced manner.
4. Media literacy focus areas: The particular influence strategies described provide specific targets for media literacy instruction geared at improving critical consumption.

- Contextual Considerations and Limitations

When interpreting these results, several contextual variables should be taken into account:

1. Demographic representation: The results may not be completely generalizable across all audience segments due to the preponderance of younger, more educated participants.
2. Limitations of self-reporting: The influence of certain mechanisms occurs beneath the level of conscious awareness, which may result in self-reported evaluations being inadequate.
3. Quickly changing media landscape: The results indicate a transitioning media environment, with hazy lines between news and opinion material.

- Summary of Main Discoveries

The study offers considerable evidence that addresses both research aims:

1. Concerning Objective 1 (establish influence during live debates, political discussions, and crisis reporting):

- During political content, anchors greatly affect public perception via question framing, time allocation, and non-verbal signals.
- The peak efficacy of anchor influence occurs during crisis reporting when there is a lot of uncertainty about the information.
- Context matters when it comes to influence mechanisms, with different tactics dominating in breaking news versus debates.

2. With respect to Objective 2 (anchor presentation abilities, style, and credibility):

- Viewer engagement is greatly improved by clear articulation, suitable pacing, and vocal dynamism.
- The greatest trust scores across demographic groups are produced by a neutral, fact-based approach.
- Key credibility boosters include perceived objectivity, factual accuracy, domain expertise, and transparency.
- Rather than passively accepting it, viewers use a range of tactical reactions to perceived bias.

## 6.5 Summary

This study shows that news anchors have a considerable impact on how public opinion is shaped through several mechanisms that function during live debates, political discussions, and crisis

reporting. Their presentation skills, stylistic decisions, and built credibility all have a direct effect on the audience's trust and engagement.

The results show that anchors influence public discourse via both explicit and subtle influence methods, even if viewers say they prefer neutrality and objectivity. Presentation skills, perceived trustworthiness, and contextual elements like information uncertainty during crises are important variables that influence how much and what kind of impact there is.

These findings improve our understanding of media influence mechanisms and emphasize the necessity of responsible journalism practices and greater media literacy in a progressively complicated information landscape. The anchor's role as a credible interpreter of events remains central to public opinion formation, even if it is now mediated by viewer skepticism and cross-platform verification habits, as news consumption patterns continue to change.

The research verifies that anchors serve as important opinion shapers rather than just information presenters, and that their communication decisions have serious repercussions for democratic discourse and the public's understanding of complex subjects.

## CHAPTER-7

### CONCLUSION

The mass media continue to be one of the most effective instruments for influencing public debate, particularly in democratic cultures where the free exchange of information is essential. Within this framework, news anchors play an active role in shaping public awareness rather than just passively relaying news. The current research aims to explore the impact of news anchors on public opinion formation by looking at two primary areas: (1) the role news anchors play in shaping opinions during live debates, political discussions, and crisis reporting, and (2) the effect of their presentation style, credibility, and communication skills on audience trust and engagement.

This study has shown that news anchors play a multifaceted role in influencing what people think about and how they think about it through an analysis of case studies, audience feedback, and theoretical frameworks such as agenda-setting, framing, and cultivation theory. Their influence is wielded not just through the choice of news subjects, but also through the use of subtle rhetorical strategies, body language, questioning patterns, and the emotional tone they take during broadcasts.

#### .1 Impact During Live Debates, Political Conversations, and Crisis Coverage

Live debates and political discussions are some of the most watched and discussed formats in television news, particularly during election seasons or times of social upheaval. High emotional engagement, polarization, and the existence of several opposing perspectives define these instances. In these cases, anchors serve as the main intermediaries between the audience and the information source. They establish the tone, shape the story, and frequently decide who gets to speak, for how long, and in what circumstances.

This position gives anchors tremendous rhetorical influence. Anchors subtly influence the audience's perception of the topic by asking leading questions, prioritizing certain topics above others, or interrupting some guests while allowing others to speak freely. For example, in the Indian news media, high-profile anchors like Arnab Goswami and Ravish Kumar have created unique styles that reflect their ideological biases. Their viewers frequently incorporate these biases into their daily conversations.

The anchor's role becomes even more crucial during crisis reporting, such as during natural disasters, terrorist assaults, or pandemics. In addition to seeking information, the public looks to them for emotional comfort, direction, and a way to make sense of the mayhem. At these times, anchors frequently take on roles comparable to that of public communicators or perhaps moral authorities, which greatly enhances their impact. Anchors can galvanize public sentiment by using emotionally charged words, visual aids, or direct appeals to the audience. This can sometimes promote civic action or unity and other times increase fear or animosity.

This study reveals that the emotional tone, word choice, and perceived intent of the anchor's delivery significantly affect how viewers process crises. Often, it's not just the content that matters, but rather how the anchor conveys it to the audience—whether it be with anger, fear, hope, or apathy. This emotional framing can impact not just individual opinions but also group attitudes, which may subsequently influence public behavior and even how the government reacts.

## .2 The Importance of Communication Skills, Presentation Style, and Credibility

In addition to content, an anchor's capacity to sway public opinion is closely related to their personal style, perceived credibility, and presentation skills. In a news-saturated world, viewers are not just interested in the facts; they are also drawn to anchors who are confident, well-spoken, and emotionally relatable. Audience attention is held more effectively by anchors who maintain steady eye contact with the camera, modulate their voices well, and look calm and confident. They are also more likely to be seen as trustworthy.

Trust and engagement are not solely determined by accuracy; they are also influenced by affective qualities such as charisma, relatability, and perceived sincerity. Viewers are more likely to trust anchors who show a balance of emotional intelligence and professionalism. For instance, a host who remains composed during a crisis broadcast is probably regarded as dependable, but a host who shows too much feeling may be seen as either genuine or unprofessional, depending on the viewer's cultural and situational perspective.

This aspect of credibility is particularly important in the digital age, when news consumption is more frequently short-form and visual. Clips of anchors become viral on platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and X (previously Twitter) not because of what they say, but because of the manner in which they deliver it. This blend of infotainment and personality-driven journalism adds a new layer to opinion formation, where audience engagement is linked to spectacle as much as content. Memes, short video edits, and reaction compilations highlight the performative elements of anchoring—gestures, pauses, outbursts—which then influence how these people are seen in the public eye.

In addition, the anchor's credibility is frequently assessed in relation to the institution they represent, as well as on an individual basis. For instance, anchors from well-known media organizations typically have institutional trust, but anchors from newer or alternative outlets may depend more on personal relationships with their audiences. However, in recent years, as skepticism of mainstream media has increased, the integrity of the individual anchor has become more crucial than ever. Rather than just institutional brand alone, audiences are more and more ready to switch allegiances depending on how authentic or aligned an anchor seems with their personal beliefs.

## .3 Synthesis and Consequences

Overall, the results of this study indicate that news anchors play a crucial role in shaping public opinion and pedagogy, rather than being simply journalists. They assist the audience in comprehending complicated political, social, and economic topics through their language, attitude, and framing decisions. Their strength comes from the manner in which they deliver information as well as the content of their reports.

This has major ramifications for democratic discussion. On the one hand, anchors might be seen as champions of public accountability, motivating civic engagement and raising awareness. Conversely, uncontrolled, biased, or sensationalized influence can distort public perception, polarize society, and undermine democratic norms. The growing trend of "opinion journalism" and personality-driven news leads to important discussions about the distinction between influence and information, and activism and neutrality.

Additionally, the anchor's persona becomes a powerful vehicle for ideological reinforcement as media ecosystems fragment and audiences more frequently search out echo chambers that align with their pre-existing opinions. This brings up important questions regarding media literacy. Audiences must be able to critically engage with not just the substance of news, but also the format in which it is presented and the people behind it.

#### .4 Conclusion: The Anchor as a Political and Cultural Force

To sum up, the contemporary news anchor holds a multifaceted and changing role in the public opinion generation ecosystem. The anchor is no longer merely an event mediator; it is a political actor, a rhetorical strategist, and a cultural figure, influencing not just the narratives that people accept, but also the emotional and psychological lenses through which they see the world.

The findings of this study highlight the necessity of a more sophisticated perspective on media influence, one that goes beyond content analysis to take into account the interpersonal, performative, and emotional dynamics of news delivery. This creates new opportunities for critical reflection and research for media educators, journalists, and scholars. For the public, it emphasizes the need of staying alert, educated, and analytical in a time when facts, faces, voices, and performances increasingly influence opinions.

The anchor's role will change as the media does. The question of who gets to speak, how they speak, and to what end will have a significant impact on whether this evolution results in more informed democracies or more divided societies.

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# APPENDIX

1. Age:

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 55 and above

2. Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other:

3. Education

- High school or below
- Undergraduate degree
- Postgraduate degree
- Other:

4. How frequently do you watch live debates, political discussions, or crisis reporting?

- Daily
- Several times a week
- Weekly
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Don't watch

5. How much do you think anchors influence your perception of an issue?

- Strongly agree



- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. Which factors make a news anchor more trustworthy to you? (Select all that apply)

- Neutrality and objectivity
- Communication style
- Body language and confidence
- Reputation and past credibility
- Affiliation with a particular news channel
- Other:

7. Do you believe anchors should express personal opinions during debates or crisis reporting?

- Yes, it adds depth
- No, they should remain neutral
- Only in certain cases

8. Have you ever changed your opinion on a topic due to an anchor's reporting or discussion style?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

9. In your opinion, which of the following anchor styles is most effective in engaging audiences?

- Assertive and authoritative
- Calm and composed
- Emotionally engaging
- Neutral and fact-driven
- Other:

10. How do you usually react when an anchor is perceived as biased?

- Stop watching the program

- Continue watching but question their credibility
- Trust them if their views align with mine
- Share my concerns on social media

11. How often do you discuss or share opinions about anchors on social media?

- Very often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

12. What type of anchor-driven content do you engage with the most?

- Live debates
- Political discussions
- Crisis reporting
- Investigative journalism
- Opinion-based talk shows

13. Have you ever participated in an online poll or focus group about a news anchor?

- Yes
- No

14. What do you usually look for in social media comments about an anchor?

- Credibility of the anchor
- Bias in their reporting
- Audience reactions and debates
- Entertainment value

15. In your opinion, which platform is most influential in shaping public opinion about news anchors?

- Twitter/X
- Facebook
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Other:

16. Do you think news anchors have a responsibility to maintain neutrality, even in highly charged debates? Why or why not?

- Your answer

17. What advice would you give to news anchors to improve trust and engagement with audiences?

- Your answer