



Contents list available <http://www.kinnaird.edu.pk/>

## Journal of Research & Reviews in Social Sciences Pakistan

Journal homepage: <http://journal.kinnaird.edu.pk>



### ANALYSIS OF VOA URDU WEB NEWS IN PAKISTAN PERSPECTIVE

Muhammad Saifullah Khan <sup>1\*</sup>, Saeed Masood Usmani<sup>2</sup>, Anum Naz<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> State Bank of Pakistan

<sup>2</sup>FUUAST, Karachi

#### Article Info

\*Corresponding Author

Email Id: [dasafkhan@gmail.com](mailto:dasafkhan@gmail.com)

#### Abstract

“After 9/11, the world took a new turn and the United States renewed its domestic and foreign policies and made structural changes, most notably the review of relations with Pakistan. Pakistan has paid the price for every first US contingent in the "war on terror". That was the time When Pakistani media was banned from reporting in the name of national security and people were relying on foreign media to keep abreast of the current situation. All of this needed time to be researched, not only from Pakistan's point of view, but also in the light of the news published in the Western media in general and in the light of the VOA in the United States. Voice of America is considered a powerful tool of communications of the US. Voice of America is the United States state-run international broadcaster that represents and regulates US government policies. Pakistani State Policy and Public Opinion on Voice of America, Pakistani Military and National Security Agencies' Concerns and Claims on its News The purpose is to present the analysis and results by verifying. In the light of this scenario, the study was conducted based on interviews and surveys with experts and people from all walks of life to analyze the claims of Voice of America Urdu Web Service and news regarding Pakistan.”

#### Keywords

VOA, 9/11, War on Terror, Urdu Web News

Pak-America Relations, US Government

Policies



## 1. Introduction

From the founding of Pakistan until now, the period of ups and downs of Pak-US relations has been about 72 years. How the defeat of Russia ended the Cold War. The world changed from bipolar to unipolar and America became the world's super power. However, relations between Pakistan and the United States took a new turn when the tragedy of the destruction of the Trade Tower occurred on September 11, 2001. The United States has declared al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, and demanded his extradition from Afghanistan, which the Taliban refused to accept. The United States and its allies have decided to take action against al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden and the Taliban who harbored them in the war on terror. The United States has threatened to throw Pakistan into the Stone Age if it does not support those responsible for the incident and the war on terror. As a result, Pakistan became a leading ally and ally of the United States in the war on terror. Pak-US relations became extremely tense when the US blamed ISI, military nuclear program, Pakistan's role in the war on terror and al-Qaeda's presence in Pakistan for US drone strikes, attack on Salalah check post, Abbottabad operation. Due to the policy of unequal relations, Pakistan's efforts began to be mistrusted and criticized. The United States began to reiterate do more's demands, considering the steps taken by Pakistan against terrorism to be insufficient. In the light of the Pak-US strategic relationship, Pakistan's mainstream media translates news from foreign international organizations and presents it to the public at an angle. Voice of America News The reason is called American conspiracy. During

this time, the term good and bad Taliban came into being which caused the Pakistani media to split into two factions. Understood. VOA headquartered is in Washington. It has 982 employees. Voice of America has a budget of 250 million. It provides news to 280.9 million viewers weekly through radio, TV, mobile and internet in 47 languages. For this reason, the Voice of America is considered a powerful communications tool of the United Nations. The Voice of America is a state-run international broadcaster of the United States of America that is also considered the mouthpiece of US government policies. Pakistani State Policy and Public Opinion on Voice of America, Pakistani Military and National Security Agencies' Concerns over, Its News the purpose is to verify and present the analysis and results. In the light of this scenario, the study was conducted based on interviews and surveys with experts and people from all walks of life to analyze the claims of Voice of America Urdu Web Service “ and news regarding Pakistan.

### 1.1 Voice of America History

In the dark days leading up to World War II, the US government decided to set up its own media outlet to respond to Nazi propaganda by providing accurate and unbiased news and information to the world. Thus, the Voice of America was formed on February 1, 1942, and the first fifteen-minute program in German was broadcast on February 24. It was stated in this broadcast that; "This is the Voice of America. We will address you at the same time every day, providing information about the United States and the war. Good or bad news, we will tell you the truth. “Prior to the Japanese invasion of Pearl Harbor in World War II, although the US

Department of Information and Communication volunteered to provide news, the need for an American broadcaster as an official spokesperson was acutely felt. On February 1, 1942, a voice echoed in the air: "We welcome you to the Voice of America." Increased, it was the voice of William Harlem Hale (1), whose release added a new chapter to the history of international media. Before the formal establishment of the Voice of America News Agency, The Foreign Information Service was founded by US President Franklin D. Roosevelt and later became part of the Voice of America Foreign Information Service. The spirits were Colonel William Donorin and Robert Sherwood. By the end of World War II, Voice of America was broadcast in 40 languages with 39 transmitters. From 1942 to 1945, he was part of the Voice of America's agencies. From 1945 to 1953, he worked under the State Department. VOA has fired Former President Herbert Hoover from the State Department. The United States Information Foundation was founded on August 1, 1953, after which the Voice of America began organizing it. (2) In 1953, Voice of America launched its Urdu service, aimed at conveying the message to the Urdu-speaking population of the subcontinent. For decades, the service was limited to radio. In 1960, George Allen, the director of the United Information Agency, approved the Code of Conduct for the Voice of America. Voice of America provides its listeners with news, information, information and culture through internet, mobile, social media, radio and TV. From the beginning, VOA has opened its window to let the world know about American life. The fact is that the

Probate of America is legally required to broadcast accurate, objective and detailed news, to provide a balanced and complete reflection of American ideologies and institutions, as well as to present American policies. On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the VOA, then-President John F. Kennedy said that the job of the Voice of America is to inform the world about the United States "This is a very difficult and delicate task. On the one hand, you are the handmaiden of the government and you are the handmaiden of the nation. Be the best reflection. "On the other hand, as a freedom fighter, it is your duty to tell our story truthfully, as Oliver Cromwell said of his portrait: "You paint our picture with nail pimples and blemishes, those things. You add that may not be immediately appealing. "On July 20, 1969, 65 million people worldwide listened to VOA's historic broadcast when the first rain landed on the lunar surface. That was a record number of listeners. The State Department said in a tweet on the occasion that VOA, speaking to the audience in its first broadcast, said, "Whether the news is good or bad, we will tell you the truth." From that time until today, VOA has engaged people around the world in providing information in support of freedom and democracy. In 1976, US President Gerald Ford passed a law giving Voice of America the status of a permanently credible and authoritative news source. A Statement from VOA Director Amanda Bennett "One of the big differences between publicly funded independent media, like the Voice of America, and state-controlled media is that we are free to show all sides of an issue and are actually mandated to do so by law as stated in

the VOA Charter signed by President Gerald Ford in 1976.” In 1985, Congress, by special approval, established a service in Cuba called Radio Marty. The editorial policy of Radio Marty was specifically guided by the Voice of America Code of Conduct. (4) In 1993, following the Clinton administration's proposal to reduce radio-free service to the International Broadcasting Act, it was stated that a Broadcasting Board of Governors would be created. (5) Which will also control other matters such as Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty funding from the International Broadcasting Board. Later, President Clinton signed the International Broadcasting Act into practice. The Voice of America Urdu Website was founded in 2000. (6) Later, the Urdu Website was created in view of the right of every section to know the current situation, politics, science, arts, sports, human rights, inventions, women, and youth. News began to be presented on all topics of importance. Voice of America Urdu Service adapted the website with modern T-Media platform for better news coverage. Earlier, Municipal Committee and multimedia software were used. Significant changes have taken place since the partnership and the website, especially the multimedia platform since 2012. (7) With innovative changes in the Vehicle of Information, communication and technical equipment, Voice of America Urdu Web Service provides information to its listeners around the world, including Pakistan, through interview tweets and photos. In addition to this, he launched a weekly 'Weekly Live Chat' on Facebook every Thursday entitled 'Face to Face' for a moment

in connection with the progress in the field of interactive journalism. - Widely influenced news is also being presented on Facebook. On the recommendation of the intelligence agency of Pakistan's Interior Ministry, Deva Radio is continuously broadcasting such programs, which are projecting a negative image of Pakistan. This radio station is busy inciting provincial bigotry and special nations against the state of Pakistan. The radio is broadcasting programs that are against the interests of Pakistan and are in line with the propaganda of the enemy intelligence agency.

### *1.2 Pak-America Relations*

Pak-US relations were laid before the formation of Pakistan. Before the partition of India, the President of the Muslim League Muhammad Ali Jinnah was in touch with the ambassadors of different countries. In this regard, Muhammad Ali Jinnah met the American guests, after which he told the American journalist in an interview that Pakistan does not need the United States but the United States needs Pakistan. Pak-US relations have been in turmoil for almost 72 years. The collapse of 9/11 shook the whole world. Countries in general and Pak-US relations in particular have been viewed with suspicion. The question that needs to be investigated is to what extent VOA's coverage of Pakistan is based on facts rather than transparency and propaganda - Pakistan has played a leading role in the global war on terror. Along with doing so, he offered not only financial but also life sacrifices. Comparisons and differences between Pakistan-US relations have been compared as following:

پاک امریکہ تعلقات کا تقابلی

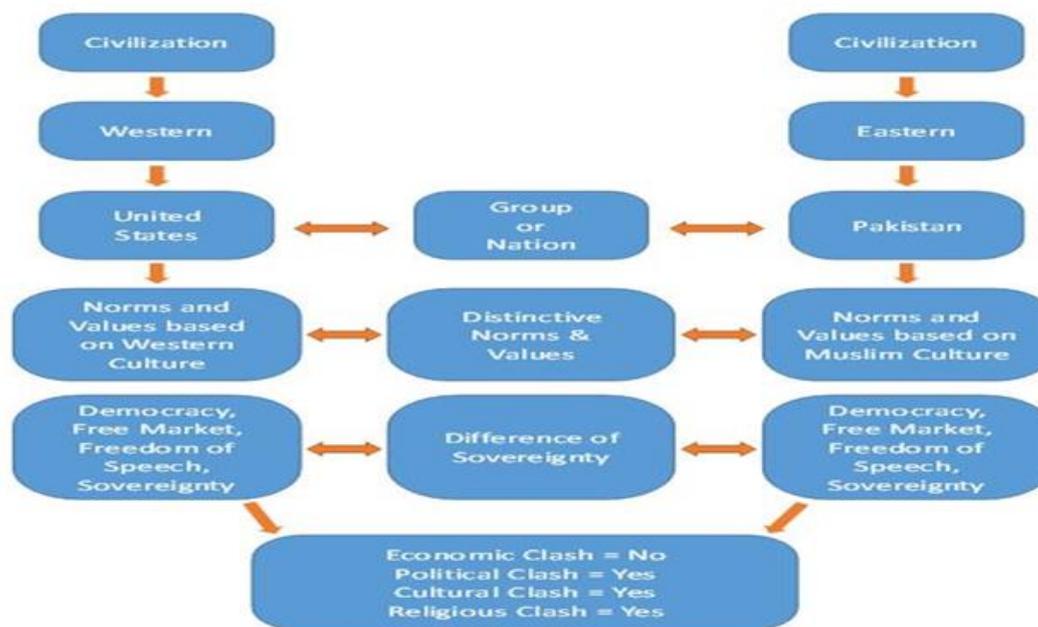


Figure 1: Comparisons and differences between Pakistan-US relations

Historical Background of Pak-US Relations before Pakistan came into being; Muhammad Ali Jinnah had mapped out the road map of the State of Pakistan. Welcomed the guests were Raymond A. Hayer, the State Department's head of South Asian affairs, and Thomas E. Wells, the second secretary at the US Embassy in India. (8) Quaid-e-Azam told him that because the Muslims were determined to establish Pakistan, he would not accept the idea of a united India in any way. Muhammad Ali Jinnah told an American journalist in an interview that Pakistan does not need America but America needs Pakistan. He demanded 2 billion \$ in financial aid from the United States. This is the story of the days when the slogan of a separate country, Pakistan, was about to take shape. The government decided that there was no substitute for distribution. In a cabinet meeting on August 11, 1947, Jinnah said that Pakistan was a democratic country and communism could not flourish in Islamic

countries. Prior to the formation of Pakistan, Mr. Jinnah had persuaded the United States that Pakistan would seek assistance from the US Government for a period of five years in order to acquire more weapons for the three armed forces, but could not be in his lifetime. Under Liaquat Ali Khan's rule, Pakistan was invited by both the Russia and the United States in the Cold War, but Liaquat Ali Khan faced resistance from the bureaucracy. In foreign policy-making bodies, the entire civil and military bureaucracy had raised to concerns about the military's economic and technical assistance to Russia. (9) In 1950, Pakistan's first Prime Minister Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan paid a 23-day visit to the United States at the invitation of US President Truman. Under Ayyub Khan, relations between Pakistan and the United States were good. Then in the 1965 war, Pakistan used weapons against India, which were provided by the United States, but the United States forbade the use of these

weapons had gone against India, resultantly, US aid was cut off. Pakistan joins the South Asia Treaty Organization with the United States. In 1955, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and the United Kingdom joined an organization called the Baghdad Pact, which was later renamed Santo. (10) Pakistan joins SEATO and CENTO. President Ayub Khan believed that the people of Pakistan were not yet aware enough to give them the right to vote but he laid the foundation of basic democracies by holding local body elections. In the 1971 Pakistan-India war, the United States did not help Pakistan, so Pakistan broke the SATO and SENTO agreements with the US. The nuclear program was laid in Pakistan under Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. When the Arab-Israeli war broke out in 1973, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto sent a Pakistan Air Force pilot to help the Arabs. The United States turned against Bhutto. (11) Under General Zia-ul-Haq, when Ronald Reagan was elected President of the United States, aid was released to Pakistan and all economic sanctions were lifted. The reason was to get help and facilitation from Pakistan in the war against Russia in Afghanistan. General John tried to convince the United States that without Pakistan, they would not be in a position to assert their right to an inch of the entire region. In the 1980s, Jihad-e-Afghanistan was responsible for preparing jihadi material through madrassas, recruiting and training people for jihad during the war to smooth public opinion. The purpose of participating in this war was to convince General Zia-ul-Haq that Russia wanted access to Pakistan's Gwadar port through Afghanistan and to strengthen the

impression that Russia wanted access to hot water. The United States and Saudi Arabia were financing the war and providing arms to all Muslim countries. The last year of General Zia's rule ended with the death of Bahawalpur in a plane crash. Thus democracy was restored in Pakistan and Benazir Bhutto was elected Prime Minister. During this period, Pakistan conducted missile tests in which it was successful. Benazir Bhutto assured the United States that Pakistan would not pursue its nuclear program in order to avoid economic sanctions. President Ghulam Ishaq Khan toppled Benazir Bhutto's government on charges of corruption, incompetence and extra-constitutional measures, thus bringing Nawaz Sharif to power. Nawaz Sharif's government has sought to forge closer ties with the United States, but to no avail. During Benazir Bhutto's second term, he urged the United States to lift the sanctions imposed on Pakistan through the Pressler Amendment, as well as to refund the F-16s. "We have kept our promise to the United States and we want the United States to keep its promise to us," Benazir Bhutto said in her speech at the Johns Hopkins International Studies. Therefore, the United States did not like this and Pakistan was banned because the United States was against the reason for concerns over Pakistan's nuclear program. (12) After the 9/11 attacks, the United States declared war on Afghanistan or what became known as the War on Terror, known as the War on Terror. After 9/11, the US President threatened to push Pakistan into the Stone Age and asked it to join the war on terror, as a result, General Pervez Musharraf decided to side with

the US. Because of this decision, full support from the Collision Support Fund was not extended to the promise made by the United States. Pakistan suffered significant losses in terms of both life and property. Pakistan's services in the war on terror were not recognized at any level, but Do more was demanded. Drone strikes have been launched in Pakistan boundaries, accusing it of being a safe haven for terrorists and their backing. The aim was to kill al-Qaeda and its ally Taliban terrorists, but thousands of Pakistanis have also been killed in these strikes. By 2018, 409 drone strikes in which 13 in General Musharraf, 340 in PPP, 61 in PMLN government were carried out, in which more than two thousand people were killed. Because of these strikes, terrorism has increased in Pakistan. (13) A new turning point in the history of Pakistan-US relations came in May 2011 when the US conducted an operation in the Pakistani city of Abbottabad in which the US killed Osama bin Laden (14). This operation was against the national security of Pakistan. Dr. Shakeel Afridi arrested for facilitating this operation. Thus Pakistan's relations with the United States could not be established on a pleasant basis but Pakistan's difficulties increased. During the PPP era, the gulf between Pak-US relations once again widened when several Pakistani soldiers were martyred in an attack by coalition forces on the Pakistani check post Salala on the border. (15) Disagreements between Pak-US escalated and supply was cut off for six months. Due to lack of access to private media in the tribal areas, locals used Voice of America Urdu, Azad Radio Mashal and Diva (Voice of America)

Pushto service for daily information and current affairs. The two radio stations are American-based. Diva is head quartered in Washington, DC, while Mashal Radio's policy maker is based in Prague (Czech Republic). The Pakistani Interior Ministry has closed the offices of Radio Mashal on a tip-off from the intelligence agency. He termed Pakistan as a center of terrorism and gave the impression that the state of Pakistan had failed to provide security to Pashtuns and minorities. These media outlets are inciting the residents of Pakhtunkhwa, FATA and Baluchistan against the state (16).

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

Voice of America Urdu Web news regarding Pakistan is to be filtered under agenda setting and propaganda theories and analyzed by confirming VOA's claim that "we are the Voice of America, not the US Government." Intended to present results.

## **3. Research Methodology**

Voice of America is a manifestation of US policies based on broad scope and influence. Voice of America Urdu Web Service's news coverage of Pakistan was chosen because Voice of America is considered a tool of US foreign policy. The researcher chose the qualitative method for the research.

The research design in the research chooses the analysis of the contents under the classification of the data in the light of the essential conditions of the research, the statements. There is way, from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2015, VOA's news items about Pakistan was taken as the study universe. VOA published the following news items during the

proposed study: Taliban and Al Qaeda (Moment of Islamic Militancy), War on Terror, Zardari Administration, Role of ISI, Pakistan's Armed Forces, Nuclear Issues of Pakistan, Pak US Relations, Religion and Politics, Financial Aid for Coalition, US Strategy, Afghan Insurgency, Pakistan Army, Human Rights, Militancy, Suicide Bombers Attacks. News were divided into 15 categories out of 13902 regarding Pakistan, including Terrorism, War on Terror, Human Rights News, Education News, Economy News, Politics News, Sports News, Global Relations News, Judicial News, Religious News, and Miscellaneous News. Instead of relying on sampling to make the results reliable and credible, all the news has been scrutinized under Agenda-Setting, Framing and Propaganda filters. Recommendations were made based on the results obtained in percentage terms.

#### **4. Research Objectives**

The United States is considered the largest power in the world and its decisions, policies affect all the countries of the world in general and Pakistan in particular. The purpose of this study is to substantiate the claims of Voice of America Urdu Web based on Pak-US relations and VOA's objectivity in the light of news regarding Pakistan.

#### **5. Universe of Research**

The research includes news from Voice of America Urdu Web Service regarding Pakistan, divided into 15 categories, which is the universe of this research.

#### **6. Hypothesis**

- 1- Pakistani Peoples think that VOA news regarding Pakistan are based on

propaganda because Voice of America is a controlled organization of the United States of America.

- 2- In Pakistan, people have negative attitudes towards the news of Voice of America.

#### **7. Research Tools**

For the research, media experts, editors, journalists, political workers, public representatives were included in the open-air Q&A interview to check Pakistan's news with reference to VOA so that every aspect could be discussed in detail. 15 media professionals, politicians, teachers, senior journalists were interviewed about the news of Voice of America Urdu Web Service regarding Pakistan and it was asked firstly, is VOA news based on credibility and objectivity? Secondly, does Voice of America set propaganda, framing and agenda in the news regarding Pakistan?

#### **8. Interview results**

80% percent of those interviewed said that Voice of America's news is based on credibility and objectivity, while 20% said that global media outlets present their interests in propaganda, framing news under agenda setting, and Voice of America. The United States also, to some extent, represents the government's position.

#### **9. Survey**

A survey was also conducted to know the public opinion, which is based on the four provinces of Pakistan and the autonomous region of Gilgit-Baltistan. People from all occupations were included in it. In this survey, open and closed ended questions were asked to know public opinion for VOA Urdu News

regarding Pakistan. Voice of America Urdu Web Service reports from Pakistan on various walks of life including political workers, students, lawyers, businessmen, doctors, religious and social leaders, journalists, poets, writers and 100 people from each province. Was included in the survey. They belonged to KPK, Balochistan, Punjab, Sindh and Baltistan from independent Gilgit. Questionnaires were sent to 500 people via email, WhatsApp, in return for which 443 participants response received, 57 people could not answered. The survey received the following answers to the questions asked:

- In response to how you like reading, listening, watching information, 59% said they watch news & reports, 25% analysis while 16% of people use all kinds of content.
- Is Voice of America Urdu web news are reliable, in response 68% said yes, while 32% said Voice of America is not a reliable source.
- Regarding whether VOA Urdu web News are based on facts and objectivity, 69% said yes, VOA news is based on facts, 18% said no, while 13% reacted varied by saying that it is mixed.
- How does VOA report on Pakistan? 69% of respondents said that news is based on objectivity, 31% rated VOA's coverage of Pakistan as biased.

## **10. Findings and Discussion**

The assumptions made for the research were examined through interviews and surveys in the context of the Voice of America Urdu Web

Service. According to the results obtained, the first hypothesis is that the news of Voice of America Urdu Service quoting Pakistan is based on propaganda because Voice of America is a United States controlled organization while the second hypothesis, Voice of America among Pakistani people in Pakistan. There are negative trends against the news. Both assumptions were rejected. Voice of America Urdu Web Service has the distinction of presenting objective and factual news. It is true that the image of Pakistan in the western world is not good but there are many positive things in this country, which are not promoted, in the western media. As a result of unilateral reporting, people in Western countries know only about the aspect of Pakistan that is linked to terrorism and extremism. Ordinary people in Western countries know that al-Qaeda or Taliban leaders are present in the border areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan or FATA but very few of them are aware of the sacrifices made by the Pakistani people during this war on terror. Nor do they know how much trouble we are facing in trying to save the world from terrorism. People in the West do not know how passionate civil society exists in Pakistan or whether such a young generation lives here. Who like liberal values and the principle of living together with the people of other countries of the world? On the question of how the current image of Pakistan in the world can be changed, the facts are that Pakistan is taking all the steps that are its good image in the world. Are required for, he said that the world needs to understand that the people of Pakistan are like the people of

Western countries. He wants to live in peace and good relations with the rest of the world. The main duty of journalism is to convey impartial and objective facts to the people and many journalists lost their lives in war on terror during duty.

### **11. Conclusion**

The Pakistani public and the skepticism about VOA's post-9/11 service reporting that VOA uses tactics such as anticipation, propaganda and agenda setting regarding Pakistan. To end this trend, it is important that VOA Urdu Web's coverage of Pakistan be based on solid facts, real historical experiences, knowledge and research on the intentions and agendas of world powers, and honest and prudent assessments and transparency. Should be offered according to the standard. Since nothing is final, there is room for improvement in VOA Urdu Web Reporting. In this regard, the following recommendations are being made to Pakistan and VOA so that local media and VOA Under the standards of objectivity and truthfulness, new lines can be established which will emerge as an authoritative and reliable means of communication not only in Pakistan but also globally.

### **12. Recommendation**

The government should lift restrictions on local media so that the media can get out of the current severe economic crisis and provide parallel news to foreign media, which will bring transparency in the news. To protect the people of Pakistan and the international community against them, journalists should be given full protection and freedom from repression during their professional activities so that journalists in

Pakistan are safe, freedom of press and promotion of public right to know will be possible. The media in Pakistan did not have such a situation even during the martial law era. Circumstances demand that in order to protect the freedom of journalists in Pakistan, the government, political parties and civil society work together to bring the media out of the current crisis. VOA Pakistan Provide (internship) opportunities. Circumstances demand that in order to protect the freedom of journalists in Pakistan, the government, political parties and civil society work together to bring the media out of the current crisis. VOA Pakistan (Internship) opportunities. Conduct seminar workshops in collaboration with foreign media so that VOA's approach to working journalists and students in Pakistan can be better understood. The Voice of America should be given full access to news, which will not only provide the public with knowledge, freedom of expression, but also healthy comparative information. This will promote democratic values and bring stability to the country. Voice of America should work on public issues like culture, politics, education, health in Pakistan but this is possible only when the restrictions on it are lifted. Article 19 of the UNO and the Constitution of Pakistan guarantee the right of expression and the right of the people to know, which will promote development, stability and democratic values in the country.

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