



PERSONALITY TRAIT OF NEWS ANCHORS: A PERCEPTION STUDY ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN ASSAM

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ABSTRACT With the advancement of technology with a single click we can access to news in our cellular phone or computer. Nonetheless, the charm of viewing news in television screen is incomparable. While watching news in television screen the equally/most important part other than content of the news is the news anchor, the way he/she delivers the news. Targeting this weakness of the Indian viewers, the media market is being flooded with various news channels. This situation motivated the researcher to undertake the study in order to identify and comprehend the personality traits which should be present in a news anchor. For the present study few pertinent personality traits were identified from literature. Thereafter perception of the university students regarding personality traits of news anchors was recorded. 51 post graduate students of Mass Communication department were the sample respondents. The study used reliability test to find out the consistency of the responses received and later used non parametric Mann-Whitney test and Kruskal-Wallis test for testing of hypothesis. Later as per their response, the traits were ranked and in the later stage an attempt was made to find out whether there exist any significant difference between the respondents' demographic variables and their perception regarding personality traits of news anchor. Result of the study highlighted that personal skill related skills and language related skills were the most important personality traits considered by the respondents to be present in a news anchor. Findings of the study also stated that there is no significant difference among the male and female respondents on their perception about the different categories of personality traits of news anchor. However, there is significant difference between the respondents' perception on the basis of their frequency of watching television and their monthly family income in case of knowledge related traits.

KEYWORDS : News, Anchors, Personality Traits, Assam

1. INTRODUCTION

In a country like India where media has been given full or even substantial freedom to report and criticize whatever, of course within a given framework, there is generally found a multiplicity of media in all the forms, especially the TV channels. In order to face the competition in the media world the TV channels try to improve in all the respects to prove themselves better than their competitors. TV news programs, timings and duration of these programs, contents to be included in these programs, political inclination of the programs and the persons acting as TV anchors are the factors to name a few which are capable to influence the TRP and the popularity of TV news channels.

At times it has been realized that it is a TV news anchor which matters a lot in making such channels successful or otherwise. Keeping this in mind it was felt necessary to concentrate on the personality traits which could ideally be required to win the hearts and the minds of the news channels' viewers.

2. Background Of The Study

The shooting growth of news channels across the globe vis-à-vis India triggers a stiff completion for the news channels to sustain their business. Therefore, the need for identification of personality traits of an efficient news anchor is considered to be an integral part for the news channel owners in order to continue in the media market.

The idea of personality trait is considered to be as old as human language itself (Matthews et. al, 2003). During the mid 90's a behavioural scientist, Allport identified a list of seventeen thousand nine hundred and fifty three (17,953) human traits (Allport and Odbert, 1936). Later it was felt by the then researchers, doing research on the same theme, that this plethora of traits is nearly impossible to put in operations. As a result of which researchers picked up for further probe on one of the four broad categories divided by the Allport. This category entailed in it four thousand five hundred and four human traits. Researchers contemporary to Allport further squeezed down the list of four thousand plus human traits to the tune of one hundred seventy one. The screened list at this stage was divided into sixteen categories which were accepted as 'personality factors' (Matthews, G and et al., 2009). These factors put in to sixteen categories were further compressed in to five broad categories (Oliver, J.P and et al., 2008).

3. Conceptual Framework

In order to have better comprehension on the personality traits which

are considered important for efficient news anchor, few traits are identified and are described in this section.

1. Appearance:

Since a news anchor has to be presentable in order to attract the attention of viewers. His/her physical appearance, facial expression and gesture, body structure, dressing sense, confidence and energy of that anchor are few traits which are considered vital for a successful news anchor.

2. Knowledge:

Knowledge related traits of a news anchor hold an integral part in his/her success. General knowledge of an anchor, his/her experience, passion for the career, versatility, specialized knowledge, capacity to comprehend a matter and his/her mental stamina are the traits contributing to knowledge of a news anchor.

3. Job Skills:

Degree of dedication for the profession which is reflected through certain traits like a news anchor's capability to control the audience, his/her sincerity, ability to present breaking news, his/her ability to present news skillfully, acuminant interview, news anchor's ability to remain unbiased and his/her ability to correlate and fragment the facts. Thus for a successful news anchor, nurturing the said traits are considered vital.

4. Personal Skill:

A successful news anchor needs to focus on his/her personal skill. Communication skill of an anchor, leadership quality, ability to connect with social media, time management, ability to manage stress, presence of mind and ability to decode are some such personal skills which are considered imperative for a successful news anchor.

5. Language:

Command over language is considered to be another important trait for a successful news anchor. Proper vocabulary, accurate pronunciation, appropriate tonal, accuracy of accentual, multilingual ability and appropriate volume are certain traits covered under 'language' which should be taken care in order to be a successful anchor.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Good number of studies has been made across the globe in various

aspects of personality traits. This section presents a brief review of the existing studies made around the area of personality traits.

Chatman. J (1989) conducted a study in order to identify specific criteria with which meaningful and useful interactional models could be constructed. The study was descriptive in nature. Result of the study highlighted that person-organizational fit model can identify discrepancies and similarities between people and organizations. Similar study was made by MacDonald. K (1995), where the researcher interprets the five-factor model as subsuming variation in normative, species-typical systems with adaptive functions in the human environment of evolutionary adaptiveness.

Krishnan. S & et. al (2010) made a study to identify the personality traits of people engaged in cyber-loafing. The study was empirical in nature and was conducted in Singapore. Survey method was adapted to interview 213 respondents. Findings of the study showed that agreeableness and extroversion significantly predicted time spent on cyber-loafing and consciousness interacted with extroversion in predicting cyber-loafing.

Robinson. J. W (1985) conducted a study in order to examine several areas relating to newscaster's physical characteristics and audience members. The study was conducted in Lubbock and Texas. Stratified random telephonic survey was used to interview 250 respondents. Multiple regression technique was used to analyze the results. Results of the study highlighted that some audience expressed greater preference for specific newscaster physical characteristics, voice and delivery, experience, personality and education were the top ranked characteristics of a newscaster as perceived by the respondents. Hull. A (2005) conducted a study in line of the previous author, here the author made an attempt to explore the impact of personality characteristics on audiences' use of movies, television and radio, later the study attempted to gauge the preferences within these media. The study was empirical in nature. Eysenck Personality Questionnaire was used to collect response from 175 respondents. Correlation technique was used to analyze the results. Major findings of the study highlighted that Extraversion was associated positively with in-home movie viewing and with listening to urban, jazz-classical, and pop-rock music. Neuroticism was associated positively with pop-rock music listening. Psychoticism was associated negatively with watching romance and comedy films. Alam. F & Riccardi. G (2013) made similar study where they presented a comparative analysis of personality traits of automatic speaker and speech corpora. Result of the study showed that performance of the system is greatly benefitted from feature selection and assemble methods across corpora.

The survey of existing literatures pointed out the fact that handful of studies have been conducted to address the personality traits of television personalities and the researcher could come across only one study that was conducted in order to identify the personality traits of newscaster. But no studies till date have been conducted to address the personality traits of Indian news anchor. Therefore the present study makes an attempt to address the present research gap and thus the study aims to attain the following research objectives:

1. To identify and rank the personality traits considered pertinent for a successful news anchor.
2. To analyze if there is any significant difference between the respondents' select demographic variables and their perception regarding the personality traits considered pertinent for a successful news anchor.

5. Methodology

- Type of research: The present study is both descriptive and empirical in nature.
- Data Source: The study is based on primary survey. Post Graduate students of Mass Communication studying in Assam University, Silchar were the respondents for the study.
- Sampling technique: Census method was adopted for the study. (Post Graduate students of Mass Communication studying in Assam University, Silchar who were 51 in number, each one of them were included for the study).
- Survey Instrument: Structured questionnaire was prepared to record the response of the respondents in a six point scale.
- Statistical Tools used: Average, Percentage method was used; Reliability test was done in order to validate the reliability of the responses received. Later Mann-Whitney Test and Kruskal-Wallis was used to find out the relationship between the respondents'

demographic variables and their perception about personality traits of news anchor.

6. RESULTS

Firstly, reliability test is done in order to estimate the consistency of the scales. Table 1 highlighted that for the present study Cronbach's Alpha is estimated to be 0.90 for 51 observations. Mohd Salleh and Zaidatun and Kroz et al, stated that the Cronbach's alpha value for questionnaire should be more than 0.65 (Kar & Pandiya, 2017). Therefore, it can be stated that throughout the study, the reliability analysis result which is 0.90 indicates internal consistencies of the scales.

Table 1 Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	No of observations
0.8974	51

Source: Own calculation using Gstat

6.1 Profile of the Respondents

For the present study, three demographic variables are chosen: gender, frequency of their watching television and their monthly family income. Table 2 shows that around 57 percent of the respondents were female. Another interesting fact shown in the table is that among the respondents, 49 percent of the respondents are such who watches television almost daily and 22 percent of the respondents hardly watch television. However, 14 percent, 6 percent and 10 percent of the respondents watch television twice a week, thrice a week and once a week respectively. Lastly, the table shows that 73 percent of the respondents' monthly family income is above Rs. 20,000.

Table 2 Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variables		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	22	43.14
	Female	29	56.86
Frequency of watching Television	Almost Daily	25	49.02
	Almost twice a week	7	13.73
	Almost thrice a week	3	5.88
	Almost once a week	5	9.80
	Seldom	11	21.57
Monthly Family Income	Rs 20,000 or less	14	27.45
	More than Rs. 20000	37	72.55

Source: Own calculation

6.2 Ranking of the Traits

Table 3 depicted that the traits under the categories Personal skill related traits and Language related traits were ranked first with mean score of both being 4.27. The traits under the category Job skill related traits was ranked 3rd with a mean score of 4.16 and the traits under the category Knowledge related traits were ranked 4th with a mean score of 4.41. The last rank i.e., the 5th was secured by the category of traits 'Looks appearance related traits' with a mean score of 3.82.

Table 3 Ranking of the categories of traits

Categories of traits	Mean	Rank
Looks/Appearance related traits	3.82	5 th
Knowledge related traits	4.07	4 th
Job skill related traits	4.16	3 rd
Personal skill related traits	4.27	1 st
Language related traits	4.27	1 st

Source: Field Survey

Table 4 indicated that out of the 5 broad categories of traits, in the top ranked traits, i.e., personal skill related traits and language related traits, presence of mind and pronunciation are the traits which are ranked first respectively. While the trait 'confident' is ranked first among the Appearance related traits, 'mental stamina' is ranked first among the Knowledge related traits and 'presentation skill' is ranked first among the Job skill related traits. However, traits such as 'photogenic', 'comprehension', 'capability to control the audience', 'leadership' and 'appropriate volume' are perceived to be relatively least important among Appearance related, Knowledge related, Job skill related, Personal Skill related and Language related traits respectively.

Table 4 Ranking of Traits under each category

Appearance related traits	Traits	Mean Score	Rank
Appearance related traits	Photogenic	3.412	7 th
	Facial expression	4.137	5 th
	Bodily structure	3.824	6 th
	Vestry (Dressing sense)	4.216	4 th
	Confident	4.902	1 st
	Energetic	4.627	2 nd
	Gesture	4.510	3 rd
Knowledge related traits	General Knowledge	4.157	4 th
	Experience	4.059	6 th
	Passionate	4.255	3 rd
	Versatile	4.098	5 th
	Specialized knowledge	4.294	2 nd
	Comprehension	3.980	7 th
	Mental stamina	4.647	1 st
Job Skill related traits	Capable to control the audience	4.333	3 rd
	Sincere	4.275	4 th
	Able to present breaking news	4.471	2 nd
	Presentational Skill	4.667	1 st
	Acuminate Interview	4.157	6 th
	Neutral	4.176	
	Able to correlate and fragment	4.000	5 th
	Capable to control the audience	4.510	7 th
Personal Skill related traits	Communicative Skill	4.020	2 nd
	Leadership	4.353	7 th
	Able to connect with social media	4.275	4 th
	Time management	4.451	6 th
	Able to manage stress	4.667	3 rd
	Presence of mind	4.333	1 st
	Able to decode	4.471	5 th
Language related traits	Able to command over language	4.471	2 nd
	Vocabulary	4.784	2 nd
	Pronunciation	4.412	1 st
	Tonal	4.275	4 th
	Accentual	4.275	5 th
	Multilingual ability	4.255	5 th
	Appropriate volume	3.412	7 th

Source: Field Survey

6.3 Relation of Demographic variables of the Respondents and their Perception

This section focuses on comprehending the effect of respondents' demographic variables over their perception of personality traits of news anchors. Considering the fact that data is not normally distributed, nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test has been used to deter-

mine whether there exist any statistically significant differences between the independent variable on the dependent variable.

The independent variables used for the study includes respondents' gender, their frequency of watching television and their monthly family income.

Table 5 presents the hypo theses for the study.

Table 5 Hypotheses for the Study

Sl. No	Hypotheses
1	There is no significant difference between Respondents gender on their perception for the different categories of personality traits of news anchor.
2	There is no significant difference between Respondents frequency of watching television on their perception for the different categories of personality traits of news anchor.
3	There is no significant difference between Respondents monthly family income on their perception for the different categories of personality traits of news anchor.

Result of hypotheses test is presented in table 6. In order to test the hypotheses Mann-Whitney Test is conducted for the first grouping variable and Kruskal-Wallis test is conducted for rest of the two grouping variables. The table highlighted that in case of the first grouping variable, i.e., gender of the respondents, there is no significant difference among the respondents' perception in case of any category of trait. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted. However in case of the second and third grouping variable, i.e., in case of Respondents' frequency of watching television and Respondents' monthly family income respectively, respondents' perception significantly differs in Knowledge related traits in both the cases. Thus in case of the grouping variable Respondents' frequency of watching television null hypothesis is rejected and so is the case with the grouping variable Respondents' monthly family income.

Table 6 Result of Hypotheses Test

Grouping Variables	Test		F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	Decision
Gender	Mann-Whitney	Z	-0.04	-0.32	1.77	0.65	-0.22	Accepted
		Prob> z	0.97	0.75	0.08	0.52	0.83	

Frequency of watching Television	<i>Kruskal-Wallis</i>	Chi-Square	4.92	9.28	6.11	4.58	5.97	Rejected (in case of F2)
		P-value	0.30	0.05	0.19	0.33	0.20	
Monthly Family Income	<i>Kruskal-Wallis</i>	Chi-Square	3.37	7.21	1.57	4.26	2.96	Rejected (in case of F2)
		P-value	0.19	0.03	0.46	0.12	0.23	

Source: Own calculation using Stata 11.0 N.B.

F1= Appearance related traits

F2= Knowledge related traits

F3= Job Skill related traits

F4= Personal Skill related traits

F5= Language related traits

7. Summary of findings, limitations of the study and scope for future research

The study focused on the perception of youths regarding the relative importance of various personal traits of news anchors. Findings of the study put forward certain interesting facts such as personal skill related traits and language related traits were given more importance than looks/appearance related traits. Similarly, among the traits included in the category of looks/appearance related traits 'photogenic' trait is considered to be the least important factor for a news anchor.

The study further explains that there is no significant difference among the male and female respondents on their perception about the different categories of personality traits of news anchor. However, there is significant difference between the respondents' perception on the basis of their frequency of watching television and their monthly family income in case of knowledge related traits.

The study incorporates only 51 respondents that too from only the department of Mass Communication. Had the sample size been bigger and responses could be gathered from varied departments, the study would have been more fruitful. Moreover, the study fails to address the source for which significant difference arises between the respondents' perception on the basis of their frequency of watching television and their monthly family income in case of knowledge related traits which could be scope for future research.

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