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Framing Practices: Analysis of Editorial Coverage of Post-Pulwama Indo-Pak conflicts

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Abstract

Pakistan and India have fought two wars over Kashmir, arguably. Since 1947, when the two adjacent countries were partitioned, the relationship between them has been hostile. In February of this year, Pakistan and India engaged in an armed battle. As a result of these confrontations, the media's role is more important than ever. This study examines Pakistan's print media framing practices following the Pulwama attack in February 2019 by using the several framing categories 1) Conflict, 2) Responsibility, 3) Morality, 4) Solution, 5) Human Interest, 6) Consequences, 7) Action, and four sub themes of Responsibility frames i) Individual Treatment Responsibility frames, ii) Societal/Government Action, iii) International Donor Intervention, iv) Others. Using a census approach, 282 opinions and editorials were gathered from a population of 1,321 published items on the Op-Ed pages of six English newspapers. Quantitative analysis approach is used in this study. The findings suggest no significant difference in the Mean of Consequences frames and Action frames, as well as in the Mean of Individual Treatment Responsibility frames and Societal/Government Action frames used to report the conflict.

Keywords: armed conflicts, framing, content analysis, print media, Indo-Pak conflicts, op-ed coverage

Introduction

The framing of conflict and violence is a key source for the public's knowledge of conflicts these days, and it frequently contributes to conflict growth. Consequently, understanding the news-making process during times of war is critical. The way the media covers topics and conflicts has a big impact on how people think about wars and conflicts. As a result, understanding how the media creates and reports conflicts is crucial. During conflicts and disasters, the media is occasionally seen caught in uncomfortable situations. Communication scholars argue that during the

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process of conflict news making, media is often seen highlighting governmental and political values and theories (Hoxha & Hanitzsch, 2018). The media can oversimplify an issue by stressing one aspect while ignoring others. The extent to which the media has emerged as a significant component in riots and conflicts is a fascinating part of researching the relationship between media and conflicts.

Studies conclude the presence of frames in conflict news deployed by governmental sources which oppose the journalistic norm of objectivity. During ongoing national and international crisis news coverage habitually encompasses narratives from the "us versus them" perspective (Mihelj et al., 2009; Pandit & Chattopadhyay, 2017). In war circumstances, the media is relied upon to either support the harmony cycle or to feature the contention and developing pressures between hostilities (Roluahpuia, 2016). The method of how the media develop news depends on the media outlets ethics and practices they follow but there is also an added pressure from external elements (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Scholars claim that other than following proficient news building process and bona fide news, a few columnists rely on for the most part on their inbuilt comprehension of the conflict and incorporates objectional approaches to social event news from questionable sources(Hoxha & Hanitzsch, 2018).

For decades, India and Pakistan have been at odds over the Muslim-majority region of Kashmir and this conflict has been examined through multiple viewpoints by communication and political researchers. The disagreement over the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir has been both a cause and a consequence of the two nations' growing hostility (Paul, 2009; Pegahi, 2020). The Pulwama Balakot incident heightened the contentions between two neighbours to the degree that the two nations almost came to the edge of atomic conflict. In February 2019, a resident of Jammu and Kashmir twenty-two years old Adil Ahmed targeted a convoy carrying CRPF soldiers. The attack was planned in the village in the Pulwama district (Hall, 2019). Something to be thankful for after Pulwama Balakot incident was that significant attention was given to the reason for India - Pakistan clashes; disputed land of Kashmir. Kashmir, as a potentially hazardous tipping point between the two nations, requires a genuine approach change for the rebuilding of harmony in South Asia and the economic advancement of India and Pakistan.

Considering the significance of the connection between news media and clashes, the current study targets at looking at the media frames used by Pakistani media while reporting Pulwama balakot crisis 2019

Media and Conflict

The state viewpoint of wars and conflicts depends greatly on how certain issues and conflicts are covered by the press. For this reason, the development and reporting of conflicts in the media are important to understand. The sole purpose of media in conflict duration is considered either to report how conflict is growing between two parties or to focus on aspects chanting for peace (Roluahpuia, 2016). News and media are an importance source of information for the audience, studies have shown that the media's involvement in promoting peace has a substantial influence on the public. This was evident in Bosnia and Rwanda (1990s) disputes where media promoted resolution of conflicts through discussion and dialogue (Schoemaker & Stremlau, 2014). However, there is not much evidence to these claims, the current literature present on the role of media in conflicts does not fully support the progressive role of media in conflict times and influencing audience behaviour. Scholars argue that studies focusing on the new dimensions of media's role should be conducted, given that the nature of conflicts has also been changed. Media method of gathering information about the conflict and disseminate conflict-related news have likewise evolved dramatically over the last era (Meyer et al., 2018). Throughout these years, the number of nations involved in globalised conflicts that cause devastation and clashes has increased enormously. Either it's the conflict of Ukraine deploying heavy military by Russia that begun from February 2014 (Meyer et al., 2018; Pettersson & Wallensteen, 2015) or the deadly Syrian war that has caused severe causalities and is a complex conflict with the evolvement of internal as well as external parties.

The regulation of conflict information and broadcasting has also been influenced by technological advancements and the introduction of new mediums. This shift in platforms has not only increased the speed with which conflict information is disseminated, but it has also called into question the actors involved in disseminating conflict information (Meyer et al., 2018; Rid, 2019). Beforehand, constructing information and providing developments during conflict scenarios was attributed as the job of news media and journalists. However, with the advancement in technology and access to every platform now conflict news is formed and

regulated by multiple individuals (content creators, organizations, and citizens) from various fields. This flow of information from multiple platforms disturbs the controlled stream of conflict news through government-approved channels and questioned the legitimacy of news content prompting adjustments in military policies of gathering information. The news that is constructed varies from journalist to journalist and their method of gathering conflict information. Scholars have seen a common tradition of building news based on the personal understanding of the conflict and considering untrustworthy sources (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996) (Hoxha & Hanitzsch, 2018).

Hoxha & Hanitzsch revealed a difference in the conflict reporting by the experienced and relatively new journalist in the field. While the new journalist is more inclined towards retrieving information through unreliable resources; social media sites etc the later is more focused on gathering content through well established and trust worthy sources. Scholars are concerned that this disparity in conflict reporting ignores the complex and troubling facts that emerge from conflicts. Another revelation that was made from studies conducted on the role of media in conflict was the difference in conflict reporting from international and local media houses. Researchers concluded that there is a striking difference in the way conflict is given coverage by local media and international media (Hoxha & Hanitzsch, 2018). However, scholars argue that more studies must be conducted in this aspect to examine differences in conflict reporting by different media outlets. Emphasizing on media biases and politicized content while constructing news during conflicts as deliberated in the earlier section of literature, it was examined that journalist actively tries to inculcate government sources in news content to so that these sources are considered more believable and explicit during conflicts and wars (Bennett, 2006). By inculcating governmental sources in conflict reporting, journalists develop loyalties to them. Including news content promoting the affiliated parties shows correspondent dishonesty with the journalist norms.(Hoxha & Hanitzsch, 2018; Zandberg & Neiger, 2005). Including news content promoting the affiliated parties shows correspondent dishonesty with the journalist norms. McLaughlin in his research, put emphasis on the editorial relationship with chose components and impartiality while reporting conflict news. Due to this relationship, journalism rules and norms are neglected.(McLaughlin, 2016).

Theoretical framework

Framing theory provides a strong base for analysing media content. The point of the current study is to inspect the frames used by Pakistani print media while reporting Pulwama Balakot crisis 2019. To do the examination, investigation of the frames utilized by Pakistani print media was considered the satisfactory route. Frames are concepts, a part of the framing method through which audience drive meaning of the content that is being presented to them. Through frames audience make sense of the societal context and both parties; senders are receivers are elements of the cycle (Vossen et al., 2017). The process of framing is a complex one where journalist mould information accoridng to their pre built knowledge of the topic to tranform audiance beliefs accordingly. Frames have the power to modify the percipients concepts and opinions. Scholars argue that framing specific frames have the impact on the audience to the extent that it can alter their opinions about the surroundings. (Brüggemann, 2014; Ireri et al., 2019). Frames have the power to modify the percipients concepts and opinions. Scholars argue that framing specific frames have the impact on the audience to the extent that it can alter their opinions about the surroundings. (Tolley, 2013). According to Goffman framing process includes labelling of "schemata of interpretation" which in turn gives the audience the ability "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" (Goffman, 1986; Mallouli & Sweeney, 2019).

In the current study, we have selected treatment responsibility and consequences frame to analysis the framing process adopted by Pakistani print media after Pulwama balakot crisis 2019.

Both the frames are backed by Galtung peace and war journalism theory. In 1986 Johan Galtung introduced a model characterising two contrasting methods of news coverage in respect to the conflict reporting (Hussain, 2020). Galtung presented peace journalism and war journalism as two opposing methods of reporting conflict news. According to him, while reporting conflicts media often takes these two routes of journalism that focuses on either the resolution of the dispute through dialogues and discussion or stating the devastation caused by the conflict.(Galtung, 2003). Galtung argues that during conflicts media is often seen emphasizing on the violence that conflict cause to counter this practice he stressed on promoting peace journalism that focuses on the resolution of war and conflicts (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005; Siraj, 2016).

Hypotheses

Objectives of the study is to identify the frames used by Pakistani newspapers while reporting Indo-Pak armed conflicts after the Pulwama attack in February 2019, following are the hypotheses.

H1: Consequences frames dominate most on the editorial pages of the respective newspapers than Action frames.

H2: Individual Treatment Responsibility frames dominate most on the editorial pages of the respective newspapers than Societal/Government Action frames.

Methodology

Several frame analysis methods have been developed throughout the years can be divided into two categories: deductive and inductive (Matthes & Kohring, 2008). Deductive investigations examine data for the presence of frames generated from the previous study on the same or related issue (Galtung, 1986). This method has the advantage of revealing frame usage frequency, but it also runs the risk of missing content-specific frames by relying on a predefined list (Matthes & Kohring, 2008). The inductive method detects frames with an open perspective, reducing the likelihood of frames being overlooked. Its main advantages are the ability to discover new frames and the ability to describe frames in depth based on limited samples. Inductive, qualitative investigations that describe frames can be used as a starting point for a further quantitative study.

This study used a deductive approach by applying quantitative content analysis of Op-Ed section of six newspapers: *The News, Express Tribune, The Nation, Dawn, Daily Times, and Pakistan Today*. The core aim of the study is to recognize the framing process that Pakistani print media adopted after Pulwama Balakot Crisis 2019.For sampling purpose, in the current study, a census approach was employed. Through census method we collected a subset of data from the total population. Based on the keywords; Indo-Pak relations, armed conflicts, aircraft and tensions or equivalents to content pieces 282 were selected from $N =1321$ published editorials and opinions. In the current study six Pakistani English newspapers were selected due the popularity of the language in the urban sector of the country

Inter-Coder Reliability

Interceding reliability of 50 data items was achieved through two active media person coders who were also given coding training before starting sampling of the data for reliability in the coding sheet. To be more precise of the results an inter coder reliability test was also conducted by the researcher. This was done to improve data coding consistency; intercoder reliability demonstrated fair agreement between their coding (see Table 1).

Table 1
Inter-Coder Reliability

	Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Measure of Agreement Kappa	.889	.018	35.989	.000

Results

Results from the analysis revealed that Pakistani print media used conflict frame immensely excluding *Dawn*. Dawn was more focused toward responsibility reporting. Dawn published five items using the conflict frame, *The News* published 17 items, *Express Tribune*, *The Nation*, and *Daily Times* published 18 items each using the conflict frames, and Pakistan Today used the conflict frame in 10 items (see Table 2).

Table 2
Frequency of Frames Used by Newspapers

Frames	Newspaper						Total
	Dawn	The News	Express Tribune	The Nation	Daily Times	Pakistan Today	
Conflict	1.80%	6.00%	6.30%	6.30%	6.30%	3.60%	86
Responsibility	3.60%	2.90%	2.40%	3.90%	4.60%	2.40%	56
Morality	2.10%	1.40%	2.40%	2.80%	3.90%	3.10%	45
Solution	3.10%	4.60%	3.50%	5.30%	4.20%	2.80%	67
Human interest	1.40%	1.80%	1.00%	1.80%	1.80%	2.10%	28
N	34	47	45	57	59	40	282

Frequency analysis of Treatment Responsibility Frames shows that 154 items were coded in none-category. Newspapers published more items using None-Treatment Responsibility Frames than others. 47 items were coded in the Individual Responsibility Frame, 43 were published using the Societal/Governmental Responsibility Frame and 26 were published using the International Donor Intervention frames. The remaining 12 items were coded as others (see Table 3).

Table 3
Frequency of Responsibility Frames

	Frequency	Percent
Individual responsibility	47	16.70%
Societal/Government Action	43	15.20%
International Donor Intervention	26	9.20%
Others	12	4.30%
None	154	54.60%
N	282	100%

H1*: Consequences frames dominate most on the editorial pages of the respective newspapers than Action frames.*

Table 4
t-test Results of H1

	Consequences	Action	*t*	sig
Mean	3.625	3.698	.241	.103
N	104	43		

H1 was tested by comparing means of Consequences frames ($N = 104$, Mean = 3.625) and action frames ($N = 43$, Mean = 3.698). Significance value (.103) suggests that there is no statistically significant difference between means of the two framing categories, so the H1 was not supported by the results (see Table 4).

H2: Individual Treatment Responsibility frames dominate most on the editorial pages of the respective newspapers than Societal/Government Action frames.

Table 5

t-test Results of H2

	Individual	Societal/Government Action	t	sig
Mean	3.872	3.581	.850	.210
N	47	43		

H2 was tested by comparing means of Individual Treatment Responsibility frames (N =47, Mean = 3.872) and Societal/Government Action frames (N = 43, Mean = 3.581). Significance value (.210) suggests that there is no statistically significant difference between means of the two framing categories, so the H2 is not supported by the results (see Table 5).

Discussion

Media has a direct impact on shaping the viewers' perspective thus influencing how conflicts are handled. As a result, the media may play a significant role in analysing and identifying the causes of disagreement and conflict between parties, as well as proposing potential conflict resolution solutions. Through this process of framing, media outlines audience speculations about who should be blamed for the cause and treatment of an issue or conflict.

When it comes to resolving disputes between national and international issues, each aspect of the situation must be given due coverage, in the current study while investigating framing techniques used by Pakistani newspapers, coverage frames that were used in items published in the editorial section were evaluated. Results from this analysis indicated that the consequences coverage frame dominates the rest frames in items published by Pakistani newspapers (refer to table 1). Calling attention to the consequences that would be faced by the nations engaged in military actions leading to nuclear war is an important aspect of conflict reporting. High-frequency coverage given to consequences frame explains that the newspaper publications rather than beating war drums and creating frenzy against the Indian military, emphasized the impacts that would be faced by not only India and Pakistan, but globally because of nuclear war. It was observed that Pakistani media analysed the diverse impact of the conflict; economic, political, human lives, environmental and social as indicated by pieces below:

However, the real danger to the world at large, from the nuclear power of both countries, is that there would be nuclear winter. A US academic calculation posited that the smoke from a nuclear conflict between the two would cover the earth in two weeks. It would also rise to a level where there was no rainfall, and thus would remain there for years…

Soldiers and the average citizen on both sides are on whom the costs of war would fall first, and disproportionately so Policymakers and the war architects must never be allowed to forget that reality…

Imagine the convulsions to the regular course of life in India when a full-blown conventional war erupts. How many multinationals would halt or cancel investment plans? The cancelled projects would be worth more than $11 billion. Besides, retail activities worth $51 billion would be shuttered indefinitely. Around $50 billion worth of-of foreign investments will be drawn out…

Journalists' activities must be carried out with objectivity and without bias which is considered an essential feature of journalism. More often journalists are seen taking part in the framing of conflicts scenarios following their political and national affiliation to gather maximum support. However, after observing the items published during conflicts after the Pulwama attack which were stressing on the consequences of the nuclear war, it is evident that Pakistani journalists and analysts were fully aware of their responsibility. Moreover, the journalists integrated the content, power to draw attention towards the catastrophic impacts that the world would face if India and Pakistan indulge in a full-blown nuclear war.

Perhaps the most unexpected finding during the analysis of the frames used in the reporting of conflicts between India and Pakistan after the Pulwama attack was the Frequency Results of the treatment responsibility frame. The treatment responsibility frame's frequency analysis found that the journalists critically analysing the conflict scenarios, no one took the responsibility of easing out tensions between the two nuclear countries (see table 4). When examining the conflicts, media can explicitly answer apprehensions regarding conflicts by framing problems, defining causes, and proposing solutions, thereby influencing public opinions on who is responsible for causing and addressing problems. Although a massive percentage of the number of items were found to be in the non-category of treatment responsibility frame, a balance was found in the use of individual

and societal responsibility frame in the items published in the editorial section of Pakistani newspapers. Prime minister Imran Khan and his government were given worldwide appreciation for handling the conflict with statesmanship and maturity. While reiterating the faith in the armed forces of Pakistan in protecting against any combat with India, the need for peace dialogues was highlighted by PM and his cabinet throughout contention between the two counties. Pakistani media also acknowledged the steps taken by Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan and his government in resolving the issues and conflict between two nuclear-armed countries through peaceful dialogue and emphasizing the consequences of nuclear war on both sides of the border.

> DEFT handling of the recent crisis by the Pakistani leadership may have helped de-escalate tensions with India. But it is not all over yet. The stakes for Pakistan are still high even though it has made India pull back, there is little doubt that PM Imran Khan's unexpected but timely announcement regarding the release of the captured Indian air force pilot was instrumental in deescalating the latest, full-blown, and nerve-wracking standoff between the sub-continental neighbours, and PM Imran Khan, in a speech which we hope heralds the return to the realm of good sense in the region, once again made a call to India to join Pakistan in dialogue instead of opting for war and conflict.

As shown in the passages above, it is evident that while evaluating the Indo-Pak conflicts that heightened the possibility of a full-fledged battle, journalists also concentrated on highlighting the steps taken by the Pakistani Prime minister and his government and recognized their efforts who acted sensibly for peaceful and mature resolution of the conflict.

Conclusion

A free and unregulated flow of knowledge and ideas from which the public can make educated choices is of critical importance. In the circulation of this information, the mainstream media and journalists play a prominent part. Although there are diverse viewpoints regarding how media should present information, journalists play a critical part in the news sharing process to collect and present content for readers. Researchers have argued about news content and subject matter to be influenced by organizational pressures and policies. Media provide a wider understanding and interpretation of the news and topics that include expert opinions so that

the review of news content on conflict issues is of vital importance as these approaches used in news media are significant in establishing the views of the audience.

Analysing the conflicts and issues of such scale which involves multiple individuals and countries requires great journalistic skills. The goal of this research was to look into the function and effectiveness of the media during times of war. The focused element in this dissertation is how the media framed two Pulwama Balakot armed crisis in 2019. The importance accorded by Pakistani publications to both armed wars in their reporting indicates that journalists were aware of their role in conflict reporting and they vigorously transmit their content making power in their opinions and editorials so that audience is aware of the conflict. Keeping in mind the conflict framing process, Pakistani media set forth their best analysis of conflict events using conflict frame, causal interpretation of the conflict, and solution-oriented reporting.

National and worldwide concerns, as well as their causes and remedies, are given a platform, identified, and challenged in the news media. The media may properly handle responsibility attribution through a restrictive technique of framing; defining situations, identifying causes, and offering remedies, establishing public judgments about who should be held accountable for originating and dealing with difficulties (Kim et al., 2002; Zhang et al., 2016). Despite the fact stated earlier that promoting solutions for the resolution of conflict is also vital in conflict reporting, our findings didn't support this notion. In framing analysis of Indo-Pak armed conflict by Pakistani media it was observed that treatment responsibility framing was comparatively used in less weightage. Yet, there was some portion of content that focused on emphasizing the elements responsible for promoting potential solutions for the ongoing conflict. It was noted that a minor section of journalists inculcated individual treatment responsibility frame in their content and appreciated the Pakistani prime minister and his cabinet for timely and effective handling of the situation and providing every possible platform for the resolution of issues between two countries. This rather variation in the use of problem-solving angle in framing portrays journalistic practices in selecting which aspect of issue and conflict is to be made more salient in front of the audience while making other less visible and inconsequential.

These conclusions help to increase the body of knowledge in the field of framing as a theory, the significance of the media in disputes, and the application of frame analysis in conflict contexts. Studies have been performed to look at framing strategies in adversarial democratic, political, and economic conflicts, such as those of (Post et al., 2018) examination of the frames used in newspapers in industrialized and developing economies to frame global warming. Although there are studies conducted to examine the influence of human affect and conflict framing in the news on political information, analysis of framing practises implemented in broadcasting US drone attacks, The study of framing patterns in violent conflicts is not more common., particularly in Pakistani conflict (Hamza & Fair, 2016).

Insights from this dissertation may help future researchers fascinated in examining frames used by media journalists during conflicts of national and international interest. With the shift in audience interest from print to digital media, new studies on framing effects are frequently conducted in the fields of digital and social media. The current study's findings will encourage researchers to thoroughly examine and constructively comprehend the role of print media and framing in shaping public opinion and emphasizing specific issues and events.

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Abstract

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Keywords: Armed conflicts, Framing, Content Analysis, Print Media, Indo-Pak Conflicts, Op-Ed Coverage.

Introduction

The framing of conflict and violence is a key source for the public's knowledge of conflicts these days, and it frequently contributes to conflict growth. Consequently, understanding the news-making process during times of war is critical. The way the media covers topics and conflicts has a big impact on how people think about wars and conflicts. As a result, understanding how the media creates and reports conflicts is crucial. During conflicts and disasters, the media is occasionally seen caught in uncomfortable situations. Communication scholars argue that during the process of conflict news making, media is often seen highlighting governmental and political values and theories (Hoxha & Hanitzsch, 2018). The media can oversimplify an issue by stressing one aspect while ignoring others. The extent to which the

media has emerged as a significant component in riots and conflicts is a fascinating part of researching the relationship between media and conflicts.

Studies conclude the presence of frames in conflict news deployed by governmental sources which oppose the journalistic norm of objectivity. During ongoing national and international crisis news coverage habitually encompasses narratives from the "us versus them" perspective (Mihelj et al., 2009; Pandit & Chattopadhyay, 2017). In war circumstances, the media is relied upon to either support the harmony cycle or to feature the contention and developing pressures between hostilities (Roluahpuia, 2016). The method of how the media develop news depends on the media outlets ethics and practices they follow but there is also an added pressure from external elements (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Scholars claim that other than following proficient news building process and bona fide news, a few columnists rely on for the most part on their inbuilt comprehension of the conflict and incorporates objectional approaches to social event news from questionable sources(Hoxha & Hanitzsch, 2018).

For decades, India and Pakistan have been at odds over the Muslim-majority region of Kashmir and this conflict has been examined through multiple viewpoints by communication and political researchers. The disagreement over the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir has been both a cause and a consequence of the two nations' growing hostility (Paul, 2009; Pegahi, 2020). The Pulwama Balakot incident heightened the contentions between two neighbours to the degree that the two nations almost came to the edge of atomic conflict. In February 2019, a resident of Jammu and Kashmir twenty-two years old Adil Ahmed targeted a convoy carrying CRPF soldiers. The attack was planned in the village in the Pulwama district (Hall, 2019). Something to be thankful for after Pulwama Balakot incident was that significant attention was given to the reason for India – Pakistan clashes; disputed land of Kashmir. Kashmir, as a potentially hazardous tipping point between the two nations, requires a genuine approach change for the rebuilding of harmony in South Asia and the economic advancement of India and Pakistan.

Considering the significance of the connection between news media and clashes, the current study targets at looking at the media frames used by Pakistani media while reporting Pulwama balakot crisis 2019

Media and Conflict

The state viewpoint of wars and conflicts depends greatly on how certain issues and conflicts are covered by the press. For this reason, the development and reporting of conflicts in the

media are important to understand. The sole purpose of media in conflict duration is considered either to report how conflict is growing between two parties or to focus on aspects chanting for peace (Roluahpuia, 2016). News and media are an importance source of information for the audience, studies have shown that the media's involvement in promoting peace has a substantial influence on the public. This was evident in Bosnia and Rwanda (1990s) disputes where media promoted resolution of conflicts through discussion and dialogue (Schoemaker & Stremlau, 2014). However, there is not much evidence to these claims, the current literature present on the role of media in conflicts does not fully support the progressive role of media in conflict times and influencing audience behaviour. Scholars argue that studies focusing on the new dimensions of media's role should be conducted, given that the nature of conflicts has also been changed. Media method of gathering information about the conflict and disseminate conflict-related news have likewise evolved dramatically over the last era (Meyer et al., 2018). Throughout these years, the number of nations involved in globalised conflicts that cause devastation and clashes has increased enormously. Either it's the conflict of Ukraine deploying heavy military by Russia that begun from February 2014 (Meyer et al., 2018; Pettersson & Wallensteen, 2015) or the deadly Syrian war that has caused severe causalities and is a complex conflict with the evolvement of internal as well as external parties.

The regulation of conflict information and broadcasting has also been influenced by technological advancements and the introduction of new mediums. This shift in platforms has not only increased the speed with which conflict information is disseminated, but it has also called into question the actors involved in disseminating conflict information (Meyer et al., 2018; Rid, 2019). Beforehand, constructing information and providing developments during conflict scenarios was attributed as the job of news media and journalists. However, with the advancement in technology and access to every platform now conflict news is formed and regulated by multiple individuals (content creators, organizations, and citizens) from various fields. This flow of information from multiple platforms disturbs the controlled stream of conflict news through government-approved channels and questioned the legitimacy of news content prompting adjustments in military policies of gathering information. The news that is constructed varies from journalist to journalist and their method of gathering conflict information. Scholars have seen a common tradition of building news based on the personal understanding of the conflict and considering untrustworthy sources (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996) (Hoxha & Hanitzsch, 2018). Hoxha & Hanitzsch revealed a difference in the conflict reporting by the experienced and relatively new journalist in the field. While the new journalist

is more inclined towards retrieving information through unreliable resources; social media sites etc the later is more focused on gathering content through well established and trust worthy sources. Scholars are concerned that this disparity in conflict reporting ignores the complex and troubling facts that emerge from conflicts. Another revelation that was made from studies conducted on the role of media in conflict was the difference in conflict reporting from international and local media houses. Researchers concluded that there is a striking difference in the way conflict is given coverage by local media and international media (Hoxha & Hanitzsch, 2018). However, scholars argue that more studies must be conducted in this aspect to examine differences in conflict reporting by different media outlets. Emphasizing on media biases and politicized content while constructing news during conflicts as deliberated in the earlier section of literature, it was examined that journalist actively tries to inculcate government sources in news content to so that these sources are considered more believable and explicit during conflicts and wars (Bennett, 2006). By inculcating governmental sources in conflict reporting, journalists develop loyalties to them. Including news content promoting the affiliated parties shows correspondent dishonesty with the journalist norms.(Hoxha & Hanitzsch, 2018; Zandberg & Neiger, 2005). Including news content promoting the affiliated parties shows correspondent dishonesty with the journalist norms. McLaughlin in his research, put emphasis on the editorial relationship with chose components and impartiality while reporting conflict news. Due to this relationship, journalism rules and norms are neglected.(McLaughlin, 2016).

Theoretical framework

Framing theory provides a strong base for analysing media content. The point of the current study is to inspect the frames used by Pakistani print media while reporting Pulwama Balakot crisis 2019. To do the examination, investigation of the frames utilized by Pakistani print media was considered the satisfactory route. Frames are concepts, a part of the framing method through which audience drive meaning of the content that is being presented to them. Through frames audience make sense of the societal context and both parties; senders are receivers are elements of the cycle (Vossen et al., 2017). The process of framing is a complex one where journalist mould information accoridng to their pre built knowledge of the topic to tranform audiance beliefs accordingly. Frames have the power to modify the percipients concepts and opinions. Scholars argue that framing specific frames have the impact on the audience to the extent that it can alter their opinions about the surroundings. (Brüggemann, 2014; Ireri et al., 2019). Frames have the power to modify the percipients concepts and opinions. Scholars argue

that framing specific frames have the impact on the audience to the extent that it can alter their opinions about the surroundings. (Tolley, 2013). According to Goffman framing process includes labelling of "schemata of interpretation" which in turn gives the audience the ability "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" (Goffman 1986; Mallouli & Sweeney, 2019).

In the current study, we have selected treatment responsibility and consequences frame to analysis the framing process adopted by Pakistani print media after Pulwama balakot crisis 2019.

Both the frames are backed by Galtung peace and war journalism theory. In 1986 Johan Galtung introduced a model characterising two contrasting methods of news coverage in respect to the conflict reporting (Hussain, 2020). Galtung presented peace journalism and war journalism as two opposing methods of reporting conflict news. According to him, while reporting conflicts media often takes these two routes of journalism that focuses on either the resolution of the dispute through dialogues and discussion or stating the devastation caused by the conflict.(Galtung, 2003). Galtung argues that during conflicts media is often seen emphasizing on the violence that conflict cause to counter this practice he stressed on promoting peace journalism that focuses on the resolution of war and conflicts (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005; Siraj, 2016).

Hypotheses

Objectives of the study is to identify the frames used by Pakistani newspapers while reporting Indo-Pak armed conflicts after the Pulwama attack in February 2019, following are the hypotheses.

H1: Consequences frames dominate most on the editorial pages of the respective newspapers than Action frames.

H2: Individual Treatment Responsibility frames dominate most on the editorial pages of the respective newspapers than Societal/Government Action frames.

Methodology

Several frame analysis methods have been developed throughout the years can be divided into two categories: deductive and inductive (Matthes & Kohring, 2008). Deductive investigations examine data for the presence of frames generated from the previous study on the same or related issue (Galtung, 1986). This method has the advantage of revealing frame usage

frequency, but it also runs the risk of missing content-specific frames by relying on a predefined list (Matthes & Kohring, 2008). The inductive method detects frames with an open perspective, reducing the likelihood of frames being overlooked. Its main advantages are the ability to discover new frames and the ability to describe frames in depth based on limited samples (Matthes & Kohring, 2008). Inductive, qualitative investigations that describe frames can be used as a starting point for a further quantitative study.

This study used a deductive approach by applying quantitative content analysis of Op-Ed section of six newspapers: *The News, Express Tribune, The Nation, Dawn, Daily Times, and Pakistan Today*. The core aim of the study is to recognize the framing process that Pakistani print media adopted after Pulwama Balakot Crisis 2019. For sampling purpose, in the current study, a census approach was employed. Through census method we collected a subset of data from the total population. Based on the keywords; Indo-Pak relations, armed conflicts, aircraft and tensions or equivalents to content pieces 282 were selected from N=1321 published editorials and opinions. In the current study six Pakistani English newspapers were selected due the popularity of the language in the urban sector of the country

Inter-Coder Reliability

Interceding reliability of 50 data items was achieved through two active media person coders who were also given coding training before starting sampling of the data for reliability in the coding sheet. To be more precise of the results an inter coder reliability test was also conducted by the researcher. This was done to improve data coding consistency; intercoder reliability demonstrated fair agreement between their coding (see Table 1).

Table 1. Inter-coder Reliability

	Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Measure of Agreement Kappa	.889	.018	35.989	.000
N of Valid Cases	446			

Results

Results from the analysis revealed that Pakistani print media used conflict frame immensely excluding *Dawn*. Dawn was more focused toward responsibility reporting. Dawn published five items using the conflict frame, *The News* published 17 items, *Express Tribune*, *The Nation*, and *Daily Times* published 18 items each using the conflict frames, and Pakistan Today used the conflict frame in 10 items (see Table 2).

Table 2: Frequency of frames used by newspapers

Frames	Dawn	The News	Express Tribune	The Nation	Daily Times	Pakistan Today	Total
Conflict	1.80%	6.00%	6.30%	6.30%	6.30%	3.60%	86
Responsibility	3.60%	2.90%	2.40%	3.90%	4.60%	2.40%	56
Morality	2.10%	1.40%	2.40%	2.80%	3.90%	3.10%	45
Solution	3.10%	4.60%	3.50%	5.30%	4.20%	2.80%	67
Human interest	1.40%	1.80%	1.00%	1.80%	1.80%	2.10%	28
N	34	47	45	57	59	40	282

Frequency analysis of Treatment Responsibility Frames shows that 154 items were coded in none-category. Newspapers published more items using None-Treatment Responsibility Frames than others. 47 items were coded in the Individual Responsibility Frame, 43 were published using the Societal/Governmental Responsibility Frame and 26 were published using the International Donor Intervention frames. The remaining 12 items were coded as others (see Table 3).

Table 3: Frequency of Responsibility Frames

	Frequency	Percent
Individual responsibility	47	16.70%
Societal/Government Action	43	15.20%
International Donor Intervention	26	9.20%
Others	12	4.30%
None	154	54.60%
N	282	100%

H1: Consequences frames dominate most on the editorial pages of the respective newspapers than Action frames.

Table 4: T-test Results of H1

	Consequences	Action	t	sig
Mean	3.625	3.698	.241	.103
N	104	43		

H_1 was tested by comparing means of Consequences frames (N=104, Mean=3.625) and action frames (N=43, Mean=3.698). Significance value (.103) suggests that there is no statistically significant difference between means of the two framing categories, so the H1 was not supported by the results (see Table 4).

H2: Individual Treatment Responsibility frames dominate most on the editorial pages of the respective newspapers than Societal/Government Action frames.

Table 5: T-test Results of H2

	Individual	Societal/Government Action	t	sig
Mean	3.872	3.581	.850	.210
N	47	43		

H_2 was tested by comparing means of Individual Treatment Responsibility frames (N=47, Mean=3.872) and Societal/Government Action frames (N=43, Mean=3.581). Significance value (.210) suggests that there is no statistically significant difference between means of the two framing categories, so the H2 is not supported by the results (see Table 5).

Discussion

Media has a direct impact on shaping the viewers' perspective thus influencing how conflicts are handled. As a result, the media may play a significant role in analysing and identifying the causes of disagreement and conflict between parties, as well as proposing potential conflict resolution solutions. Through this process of framing, media outlines audience speculations about who should be blamed for the cause and treatment of an issue or conflict.

When it comes to resolving disputes between national and international issues, each aspect of the situation must be given due coverage, in the current study while investigating framing techniques used by Pakistani newspapers, coverage frames that were used in items published in the editorial section were evaluated. Results from this analysis indicated that the consequences coverage frame dominates the rest frames in items published by Pakistani newspapers (refer to table 1). Calling attention to the consequences that would be faced by the nations engaged in military actions leading to nuclear war is an important aspect of conflict reporting. High-frequency coverage given to consequences frame explains that the newspaper publications rather than beating war drums and creating frenzy against the Indian military, emphasized the impacts that would be faced by not only India and Pakistan, but globally because of nuclear war. It was observed that Pakistani media analysed the diverse impact of

the conflict; economic, political, human lives, environmental and social as indicated by pieces below:

> *"However, the real danger to the world at large, from the nuclear power of both countries, is that there would be nuclear winter. A US academic calculation posited that the smoke from a nuclear conflict between the two would cover the earth in two weeks. It would also rise to a level where there was no rainfall, and thus would remain there for years..."*

> *"Soldiers and the average citizen on both sides are on whom the costs of war would fall first, and disproportionately so Policymakers and the war architects must never be allowed to forget that reality..."*

> *"Imagine the convulsions to the regular course of life in India when a full-blown conventional war erupts. How many multinationals would halt or cancel investment plans? The cancelled projects would be worth more than $11 billion. Besides, retail activities worth $51 billion would be shuttered indefinitely. Around $50 billion worth of-of foreign investments will be drawn out..."*

Journalists' activities must be carried out with objectivity and without bias which is considered an essential feature of journalism. More often journalists are seen taking part in the framing of conflicts scenarios following their political and national affiliation to gather maximum support. However, after observing the items published during conflicts after the Pulwama attack which were stressing on the consequences of the nuclear war, it is evident that Pakistani journalists and analysts were fully aware of their responsibility. Moreover, the journalists integrated the content, power to draw attention towards the catastrophic impacts that the world would face if India and Pakistan indulge in a full-blown nuclear war.

Perhaps the most unexpected finding during the analysis of the frames used in the reporting of conflicts between India and Pakistan after the Pulwama attack was the Frequency Results of the treatment responsibility frame. The treatment responsibility frame's frequency analysis found that the journalists critically analysing the conflict scenarios, no one took the responsibility of easing out tensions between the two nuclear countries (see table 4). When examining the conflicts, media can explicitly answer apprehensions regarding conflicts by framing problems, defining causes, and proposing solutions, thereby influencing public opinions on who is responsible for causing and addressing problems. Although a massive percentage of the number of items were found to be in the non-category of treatment responsibility frame, a balance was found in the use of individual and societal responsibility frame in the items published in the editorial section of Pakistani newspapers. Prime minister

Imran Khan and his government were given worldwide appreciation for handling the conflict with statesmanship and maturity. While reiterating the faith in the armed forces of Pakistan in protecting against any combat with India, the need for peace dialogues was highlighted by PM and his cabinet throughout contention between the two counties. Pakistani media also acknowledged the steps taken by Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan and his government in resolving the issues and conflict between two nuclear-armed countries through peaceful dialogue and emphasizing the consequences of nuclear war on both sides of the border.

> *"DEFT handling of the recent crisis by the Pakistani leadership may have helped de-escalate tensions with India. But it is not all over yet. The stakes for Pakistan are still high even though it has made India pull back, there is little doubt that PM Imran Khan's unexpected but timely announcement regarding the release of the captured Indian air force pilot was instrumental in deescalating the latest, full-blown, and nerve-wracking standoff between the sub-continental neighbours, and PM Imran Khan, in a speech which we hope heralds the return to the realm of good sense in the region, once again made a call to India to join Pakistan in dialogue instead of opting for war and conflict"*

As shown in the passages above, it is evident that while evaluating the Indo-Pak conflicts that heightened the possibility of a full-fledged battle, journalists also concentrated on highlighting the steps taken by the Pakistani Prime minister and his government and recognized their efforts who acted sensibly for peaceful and mature resolution of the conflict.

Conclusion

A free and unregulated flow of knowledge and ideas from which the public can make educated choices is of critical importance. In the circulation of this information, the mainstream media and journalists play a prominent part. Although there are diverse viewpoints regarding how media should present information, journalists play a critical part in the news sharing process to collect and present content for readers. Researchers have argued about news content and subject matter to be influenced by organizational pressures and policies. Media provide a wider understanding and interpretation of the news and topics that include expert opinions so that the review of news content on conflict issues is of vital importance as these approaches used in news media are significant in establishing the views of the audience.

Analysing the conflicts and issues of such scale which involves multiple individuals and countries requires great journalistic skills. The goal of this research was to look into the function and effectiveness of the media during times of war. The focused element in this

dissertation is how the media framed two Pulwama Balakot armed crisis in 2019. The importance accorded by Pakistani publications to both armed wars in their reporting indicates that journalists were aware of their role in conflict reporting and they vigorously transmit their content making power in their opinions and editorials so that audience is aware of the conflict. Keeping in mind the conflict framing process, Pakistani media set forth their best analysis of conflict events using conflict frame, causal interpretation of the conflict, and solution-oriented reporting.

National and worldwide concerns, as well as their causes and remedies, are given a platform, identified, and challenged in the news media. The media may properly handle responsibility attribution through a restrictive technique of framing; defining situations, identifying causes, and offering remedies, establishing public judgments about who should be held accountable for originating and dealing with difficulties (Kim et al., 2002; Zhang et al., 2016). Despite the fact stated earlier that promoting solutions for the resolution of conflict is also vital in conflict reporting, our findings didn't support this notion. In framing analysis of Indo-Pak armed conflict by Pakistani media it was observed that treatment responsibility framing was comparatively used in less weightage. Yet, there was some portion of content that focused on emphasizing the elements responsible for promoting potential solutions for the ongoing conflict. It was noted that a minor section of journalists inculcated individual treatment responsibility frame in their content and appreciated the Pakistani prime minister and his cabinet for timely and effective handling of the situation and providing every possible platform for the resolution of issues between two countries. This rather variation in the use of problem-solving angle in framing portrays journalistic practices in selecting which aspect of issue and conflict is to be made more salient in front of the audience while making other less visible and inconsequential.

These conclusions help to increase the body of knowledge in the field of framing as a theory, the significance of the media in disputes, and the application of frame analysis in conflict contexts. Studies have been performed to look at framing strategies in adversarial democratic, political, and economic conflicts, such as those of (Post et al., 2018) examination of the frames used in newspapers in industrialized and developing economies to frame global warming. Although there are studies conducted to examine the influence of human affect and conflict framing in the news on political information, analysis of framing practises implemented in broadcasting US drone attacks, The study of framing patterns in violent conflicts is not more common., particularly in Pakistani conflict (Hamza & Fair, 2016).

Insights from this dissertation may help future researchers fascinated in examining frames used by media journalists during conflicts of national and international interest. With the shift in audience interest from print to digital media, new studies on framing effects are frequently conducted in the fields of digital and social media. The current study's findings will encourage researchers to thoroughly examine and constructively comprehend the role of print media and framing in shaping public opinion and emphasizing specific issues and events.

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Review: Framing Practices: Analysis of Editorial Coverage of Post-
Pulwama Indo-Pak conflicts   ✕

Dr. Fawad Baig

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Completed: 2022-09-25 09:03PM

Recommendation: Revisions Required

Reviewer Comments

For editor only

Review of the paper titled "Framing Practices: Analysis of Editorial Coverage of Post-Pulwama
Indo-Pak conflicts":

1) In title, "Framing Patterns" could be more appropriate than "Framing Practices". Further, as
it is written in the Abstract and Methodology, that opinions and editorials were selected then
why only "Analysis of Editorial Coverage" is mentioned in the title?

2) In Abstract, it is written that "In February of this year....", but it could be written like "In
February 2019...".

3) Author(s) have studied seven frames: Conflict, Responsibility, Morality, Solution, Human
Interest, Consequences, and Action. Then they further used sub-themes of responsibility
frames: i) Individual Treatment Responsibility frames, ii) Societal/Government Action, iii)
International Donor Intervention, iv) Others. Author(s) have mentioned that they employed
frames of "conflict", "treatment responsibility" and "consequences" from Galtung's Peace
Journalism model, but they did not mention in theoretical framework that where did they get
the rest of the frames?

4) Objective of the study should be mentioned before the heading of "Hypotheses".

5) Though seven main and four sub frames are employed in this study, but hypotheses are

frames: i) Individual Treatment Responsibility frames, ii) Societal/Government Action, iii) International Donor Intervention, iv) Others. Author(s) have mentioned that they employed frames of "conflict", "treatment responsibility" and "consequences" from Galtung's Peace Journalism model, but they did not mention in theoretical framework that where did they get the rest of the frames?

4) Objective of the study should be mentioned before the heading of "Hypotheses".

5) Though seven main and four sub frames are employed in this study, but hypotheses are revolving around only three frames. Further, it is not discussed before hypotheses that why it was assumed that only consequences and responsibility frames would be more dominant than others?

6) Time period for selecting editorials & opinion items is not mentioned in methodology.

7) Seven frames are mentioned in the abstract, but these frames are not mentioned in the methodology section. Later, frequency of only five frames are provided in Table 2. "Consequences" and "Action" are missing from this table. When we move further, then t-test is applied only on the mean values of these two missing frames.

Reviewer Files

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Recommendation

Set or adjust the reviewer recommendation.

Revisions Required ⌄

Reviewer rating

Rate the quality of the review provided. This rating is not shared with the reviewer.

🔘 No rating
⚪ ★★★★★
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⚪ ★★★
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Review: Framing Practices: Analysis of Editorial Coverage of Post-Pulwama Indo-Pak conflicts   ✕

dr salman amin

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Completed: 2022-09-02 07:05 PM

Recommendation: Revisions Required

Reviewer Comments

For editor only

- Please re-write the methodology
- Add some latest citations in the introduction section.
- In literature review, all studies are outdated (more than 10 years old)
- Mention in which duration, newspapers were selected for data collection?
- Write research objectives and questions before the method section.
- Delete the 1st sentence of conclusion.
- Proofread whole article before publication.

Reviewer Files

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Recommendation

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Review: Framing Practices: Analysis of Editorial Coverage of Post-Pulwama Indo-Pak conflicts   ✕

dr salman amin

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Recommendation: Revisions Required

Reviewer Comments

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- Please re-write the methodology
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Review: Framing Practices: Analysis of Editorial Coverage of Post-Pulwama Indo-Pak conflicts   ✕

dr salman amin

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Recommendation: Revisions Required

Reviewer Comments

For editor only

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Recommendation

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