Pakistan Social Sciences Review
www.pssr.org.pk

RESEARCH PAPER

Framing of International Conflict Victims: Political Proximity vs Religious Proximity

Yasar Arafat [1] Dr. Rooh Ul Amin Khan [2] Dr. Muhammad Ahmed Qadri [3]

1. Ph. D Scholar, Department of Media and Communication Studies, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan
2. Assistant professor, Department of Media and Communication Studies, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan
3. Former Dean, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, University of Karachi, Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan

PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
	The current research through the lens of proximity model investigated that how victims of international Crisis are being depicted. Either they are being sympathized or distanced from the audience of reporting country. The research investigated two main themes, religious and political proximity. Two political Crisis were examined one in Rohingya and one in China (Uighur). Result of the study indicated that Rohingya Muslim was highly sympathized and Rohingya army is highly brutalized in Pakistani media, on the other hand Uighur Muslim is distanced from the reader and Chinese authorities are not brutalized. The research concluded that Pakistan have strong economical and political relation with china and that could be the proximity which distance the Uighur Muslim for getting sympathetic frame in Pakistani media. On the other hand Rohingya has neutral relation with Pakistan, but the victims of Rohingya Crisis were highly sympthesized because of the religious proximity with Pakistan. Through content analysis the research concluded that political proximity has more power than the religious proximity.

Introduction

Media allocate priority to victims of one Crisis than other, media empathize to some Crisis victims and neglect other(Hawkins, 2016).Contemporary literature focused to find that why media sympathize some victims and neglect other. Mostly literature supports the idea that during Crisis media follow the national interest of the reporting country. The literature support that when national interest are at stake or country personally involved in the Crisis, the media leave the objectivity and follow the elite interest. On the other hand when state is not personally involved and elite does not have the consensus then the media follow the objectivity of

journalism. This study now is going to test phenomenon that media during international Crisis when elite or not in consensus and state is not personally involved even then media instead of following the objectivity of the journalism, frame the Crisis according to their proximity with the Crisis actor. This proximity might be religious, cultural, ethnic, or geopolitical.

The first important focus is on the framing of foreign Crisis victims. The second focus will be on the indexing of media framing of Crisis to the elite policy. The third focus will be on the proximity between the Pakistani media and the Crisis actor. This emphasis proximity to enlighten why depiction of Crisis victims differ so much from Crisis to Crisis. By proximity does not mean only geographical closeness, it may be economical, religious, political or cultural closeness between the media and the actors of the Crisis(Yang & Chen, 2019). Current research highlights the connection between the news framing and context in which news provider do conduct their foreign Crisis reporting. It is somewhat complex to systematically scrutinize what sort of representation of one Crisis actor has been portrayed in another society. Therefore different Crisis (Rohingya, Uyghur) were selected in this study, as Pakistan have different relation with the actors of the international Crisis, in this way it will be helpful, to understand that why the image of victims change from one Crisis to another Crisis and what proximity brings stronger victimization of victims and absence of what proximity mute the victimization of victims of foreign Crisis.

Media-State Relation during International Crisis

The domain of press-state relation during foreign Crisis coverage has established considerable scholarly inspection in past few years from many perspectives. This include the "state-driven", "oppositional" and "independent model" by the media (Robinson, Goddard, Parry, & Murray, 2009). Inside these wide-ranging categories, there exist a range of specific hypotheses or models. For example, the elite-driven model is frequently associated with Bennett's (1990) indexing hypothesis and Hallin's (1986) spheres of elite consensus and controversy. The second model of media framing during international Crisis is independent model, which suggest that reporter attachment to objective and balanced coverage will provide independent. The crux of Independent model is to maintain a balance among official sources and opposite sources, thus the point of view of all actors is represented. The third model which is known as oppositional model, predict that any uncontrolled happening during Crisis might provide a chance for journalist to oppose the elite view point. Whereas the oppositional model predict that uncontrolled events occurring during the war are likely to produce oppositional coverage.

National Interest, Objectivity, and Proximity

During a Crisis, mostly journalist quit their professional journalism to national interest (White, 1976). Particularly in such situation where journalist

believes that their national interests are at stake they prefer to quit professional journalism over national interest and toe the policy of their respected elite (Hussain, 2016). During Crisis if journalist depict contradictory version, which is against the audience line and interest, then label of traitor and unpatriotic are ready for such journalist (Finlay, 2005). Nossek and Berkowitz (2006) elaborated that journalist do complete their daily work through dual narrative. This twofold narrative is encompassed between core journalistic value and social pressure from their working world. The core journalist value is based on just to remove their subjective bias when reporting facts. Therefore journalistic job is founded on the core standard of professional ideology of objectivity. On the other hand, factual facts tend to consist in people with societal authorization that reproduce prevailing ideological positions. Therefore news is framed or constructed within already known boundaries of practice adopted by media outlet. Thus just like other industries journalist tend to work like worker who work within the boundaries of factory norms. To become "good Journalist" they must approach to the correct sources, which is then packaged properly and distributed to the masses. Journalistic norms authenticate that journalist always tries to find local angle for national and international news based on emotional and physical proximity. One of the tactics that reporters implement to effectively fabricate news is to tap into usual and already known cultural narratives (Lule, 2001; Zelizer, 1993). From the philosophy of journalistic objectivity, every journalist from every culture should report the same incident the same way. Malinsky (2015)elaborated that partiality appears when the production of information is effected by personal beliefs, liking or benefits. On the other hand critical journalism remarks that coverage without any perspective is almost impossible (Zelizer, Park, and Gudelunas,284). Bias in journalism is reality, now the question is where this bias exists and how does it works and why often it is concealed (Malinsky, 2015). Past research on media also authenticate that media of reporting country is strongly influenced by the political proximity of their country with the actor of the Crisis(Oliver & Maney, 2000). Media tend to frame the issue in such a way that resonates to political interest, national interest, economic interest Zuckerman (2004).Therefore it can be concluded that framing is dependent to political, national, economical and religious proximity between the actor and the media of reporting country. Nevalsky (2015) elaborated this notion by explaining that news is basically ethnocentric, mean news framing is standardized according to standards and customs of one own culture and key function is to demonize and condemning the enemy. Karniel, Lavie-Dinur, and Samuel-Azran (2017) study on the Israeli-Palestinian Crisis framing in European, American and Arab media, confirmed that political, economic, and Ideological proximity between the actor and reporting media was important factor in framing the Crisis actor as positive, neutral and negative. U.S. is more political close to Israel and provides more financial support to Israel and strong diplomatic relation was important reason for the framing of Israel as positive by the Fox news. Fox News almost showed Israel as positive like Israel Ch2. Fox which conservative right wing agenda was clearly depicted Israel as positive and Palestinian as negative. Because of more international audience and more international label the reporting of BBC and CNN was more moderate and balanced. On the other hand Al Jazeera framing was more

leaning toward Palestinian. Cultural and religious proximity and political favor of Arab world might be one of the reasons for such tilting toward Palestinian(Karniel et al., 2017). In conclusion, this work endorse the existing literature on the ethnocentric bias of news outlets, demonstrating that news coverage often depends on the geographical, political or cultural positions of the news outlet's home country, despite globalization.

Victim Reporting and Proximity

In the war time a novel news values is emerging which is known as "compassion" or journalism of attachment(Bell, 1998). Literature suggests that two diverse type of victimhood are emerging on the media, on the basis of the perception of media. Different forms of compassion can be created by the media journalist for similar Crisis victims. Compassion in fact is newly addition to the list of news values considered by the Galtung and Ruge (1965) (Nussbaum, 2003). Compassion has the ability to bring forth an emotional reaction between audiences about the difficulties of persons in far-away places who are bearing as a straight effect of Crisis. In this way such compassion framing bridge a relationship between audiences and "others" despite of where, or who, they are. Chouliaraki has differentiated or classified the suffering and compassion with victims in three types. In first type the media frame the suffering of victim as no cause of concern or action, such framing is called adventure news. Second type of news which produces pity and demand for action for victims, such framing is called emergency news. Third type of media framing is in which victims is considered to be like us and "one of us", such reporting is called ecstatic news (Chouliaraki, 2006). Cultural and geographical proximities are central in determining the levels of compassion, more proximity more compassion, lesser the proximity lesser the compassion. Literature support that we care more to those who are more related to us and politically close to us (Moeller, 1999). Previous studies also approve that compassion is every time culturally made and may differ among different groups, societies and journalist. Reporting of victim is mandatory by the broadcaster during international Crisis but it is all based on framing of victims, how they frame the victims (Heywood, 2015). Victims who fit more in cultural norms of the broadcaster will be shown with ecstatic news on the other hand victims how do not fit in cultural norms of the broadcaster; they will be presented as emergency news.

Examination of international news flow, establish that happening and issue in countries of economic and political significance likely to receive more coverage in the local reporting media (Shoemaker, Danielian, & Brendlinger, 1991; Wu, 2000). The reporting media are therefore usually tilting towards covering those countries with alike cultural and societal characteristic (Galtung & Ruge, 1965).These conclusions specify that the journalist or media have an immense socio-cultural orientation through which they instigate news coverage of international event. It indicates that media coverage of international events normally needs a few levels of social and cultural links for the audience(Tanikawa, 2017).

Theoretical Approach

The notion of framing is interrelated to the agenda-setting practice but spread out the research by focusing on the spirit of the topic at hand instead on a particular topic. The foundation of framing theory is that the media spot light concentration on certain actions and then put them inside a field of sense. Framing is an imperative subject from the time when it can have a large persuade and for that reason the notion of framing extended to organizations as well. Earlier research has been likely to attribute media reporting of terrorism to cultural clashes and judge against the differences between Arab and Western countries (Yarchi et al., 2013). While such comparisons have been helpful to some extent, they usually have not treated with the broader topic of how and why terrorism is branded, shaped and characterized in the media. Current research challenge to offer a bigger range for terrorism report studies by using representative media and cases in an attempt to analyse to what extent international media frames are influenced by the interactions of multiple factors such as ideology, religion and international relations. By applying terrorism assault as a case study, this research proposes to donate to the information of framing studies particularlywith respect to international political communication. The current research is going to develop a level of proximity during Crisis framing. which proximity is higher than the other, religious or political proximity taken from Yung model.

Research Design and Methodology

The current section enlightens and validates the research methodology employed in the existing study, specifying the analytical techniques utilized in reviewing the coverage of victims reporting of international Crisis. Framing analysis can be done with quantitative or qualitative methods. Weaver (2007) revealed that "frames can be investigated through an organized content analysis or supplementary interpretive textual analysis alone". Van Gorp (2007) furthermore elaborated that few research scholar select for a quite qualitative approach during investigating media frames, like discourse analysis, whereas others utilize conventional content analysis or other quantitative technique. Current research focus on the quantitative content analysis.

RQ1: What are the dominant frames in depiction of Crisis victims of internal Crisis.

H1: In Rohingya Crisis, the Rohingyan Muslim will be will sympthesized and Rohingyan Army will be brutalized (empathy frame in favor of Rohingya Muslim will be depicted.)

H2: In Uyghur (Chinese) Muslim Crisis, the Muslim will not be sympathized; Chinese authorities will not be brutalized.

Coding

Applying Robinson' sorting of media framing, current research arrange UOA (unit of analysis) inside news into two forms, that empathise and those that distance the international Crisis victims. Current research classified descriptors that either: show empathy with the victims of brutal condition (index the government policy or follow the proximity with victims); or depict a distance from the victims of international Crisis (indexing the state policy or having proximity with the perpetrator). This study intended to expose the level to which international Crisiss victims are framed with an empathizing perspective, such victims show that a brutal or barbaric enemy is there, in this way a justification of the government policy or strengthen the religious, political or economic ties with the victims and the audience. Similarly those victims with an opposite frame (distance frame) were depicted as confusing battle where no one is victims and no one is perpetrator (either following the government policy or having proximity with perpetrator).

The coding scheme of the current study was based on, Actor, Character (aggressor or victims). Above mention categorization and their descriptor and indicator are discussed below.

Table 1

Actor	Uyghur	Rohingya
Side A Actor	Chinese government/Army	Rohingya government/ army
Side A people	Chinese	Rohingya Buddhist
Side B Actor	Uyghur Muslim	ArakanRohingya Salvation Army (ARSA)
Side B people	Uyghur Muslim	Rohingya Muslim/Rakhine Muslim
Both Side A and B people	Chinese	Rohingyan
Unidentified rebels or militia	General reference to rebels/militia	General reference to rebels/militia
International Community	Countries other than two actor of Crisis	Countries other than two actor of Crisis

Perpetrator or Victim

Here the research will identify who is portrayed as victims or perpetrator. Victims: General (e.g., four men), Martyrs, Combatant, Freedom Fighters, Separatist, Non Combatant, People, Mujahidin, unarmed. Perpetrator: Demons, Monsters, Animals, Savage, Evil, Aggressive, Irrational, Primitive, Barbaric, Uncivilized, Irresponsible, Brutal, Genocide, Oppressor, Inhuman deeds/action.

Population and Sampling

Population includes all the English newspaper of Pakistan. Sample selected consisted of The News and Dawn, their news stories concerning Rohingya disaster published between a periods of August 25, 2017 to December 25, 2017 are analyzed. Most recent migration of Rohingyan Muslim commenced after 25 August 2017 attack, therefore press gave more space in this time period. A sole news article has been taken as a unit of analysis. For Uyghur, data of six month is collected from July 2019 to December 2019.

Results and Discussion

In framing the first important task is to see the coverage that which incident got more coverage than the other. Clearly the Rohingya Crisis got more coverage than the Uyghur Muslim. Out of 98 stories of The News only two stories covered the Uyghur Muslim and 96 stories give coverage to the Rohingya Muslim. Similarly Dawn news covered only one story of Uyghur Muslim and 72 stories covered the Rohingya Muslim.

Table 2
Frequency

	Uyghur	Rohingya	Total
The News	02	96	98
Dawn	01	72	73
Total	03	168	171

Result indicates that most stories of the Dawn, and The News depicted Rohingya Muslim as victims and Rohingya army and Buddhist people as perpetrator.On the other hand Uyghur were not treated in the same mode their victim frame is missing and not single report depicted chimes government or army as perpetrator.

Table 3
Victim Framing

	Uyghur Depicted as Victims	Rohingya Depicted as Victims	Total
The News	00	80	80
Dawn	00	63	63
Total	00	143	143

Similarly same pattern emerged in perpetrator frame, both the news stories from Dawn, and News not in single story depicted Chinese authorities as perpetrator, most of the stories raised the question of authenticity regarding the news about Uyghur Muslim. On the other hand in all the 80 stories out of 96 news items depicted Rohingya Army as perpetrator.

Table 4
Perpetrator Framing

	Uyghur Depicted as Victims	Rohingya Depicted as Victims	Total
The News	00	80	80
Daily Dawn	00	63	63
Total	00	143	143

Conclusion

Over all result indicate that Rohingya Muslims were sympathized by the Pakistani media and Uyghur Muslims were ignored or distance by the Pakistani media. It is highly perceived that Pakistani media give religion more weight than anything else and same should be reflected in our media, but result do reject this hypothesis. However it seems the religious proximity has lesser values when it is in Crisis with the political proximity. Chinese have strong political and economical friendship with Pakistan that might be the reason that Chinese authorities were not challenged by any news story published in Pakistani paper. Most of the stories related to Uyghur Muslim were neglected and did not get place in Pakistani media. On the other hand Rohingya Muslim were highly sympthesized and Rohingyan authorities and armies are highly brutalized. Pakistan has neither friendly nor enmity relation with the Rohingya government but here in this case, Pakistan has only religion proximity with the Rohingyan Muslim and this seems to be the enough reason for sympathizing Rohingya Muslim.

From the above discussion and result it is clearly indicated that political and religion have more value in framing of any international Crisis victims, religious similarity of victims with the repotting press does matter only when perpetrator have not political or economical bond with the reporting media. On the other hand religious proximity of victims with the reporting country defuses if the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator have strong political and economical relationship with the media of reporting country. Religious proximity has more value and weight if alleged perpetrary have not economical and political relation with the repotting country.

References

Bell, M. (1998). *The Journalism of Attachment. In M. Kieran (Ed.), Media Ethics* (pp. 15-22). London: Routledge.

Chouliaraki, L. (2006). *The Spectatorship of Suffering*. London: SAGE Publications.

Finlay, W. M. L. (2005). Pathologizing Dissent: Identity Politics, Zionism and the Self☐Hating Jew. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 44(2), 201-222. doi:10.1348/014466604X17894

Galtung, J., & Ruge, M. H. (1965). The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus crises in four Norwegian newspapers. *Journal of peace research*, 2(1), 64-90.

Hawkins, V. (2016). *Stealth conflicts: How the world's worst violence is ignored*, Routledge.

Heywood, E. (2015). Comparing Russian, French and UK Television News: Portrayals of the Casualties of War. *Russian Journal of Communication*, 7(1), 40-52. doi:10.1080/19409419.2015.1008940

Hussain, S. (2016). Media Coverage of Taliban: Is Peace Pournalism the Solution? *Asia Pacific media educator*, 26(1), 31-46.

Karniel, Y., Lavie-Dinur, A., & Samuel-Azran, T. (2017). The Dream of Statehood and the Reality of Conflict: Local and International Coverage of the Palestinian United Nations Bid for Statehood. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 27(1), 33-48. doi:10.1080/01292986.2016.1258429

Malinsky, A. (2015). Death is in the Eye of the Beholder: A Study of Casualty Count Framing in the 2014 Israel–Gaza Conflict. C*ritical Studies on Terrorism,* 8(3), 491-502. doi:10.1080/17539153.2015.1096653

Moeller, S. D. (1999). *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sell Disease, Famine, War and Death*. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Nevalsky, E. C. (2015). Developing Terrorism Coverage: Variances in News Framing of the January 2015 Attacks in Paris and Borno. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 8(3), 466-477. doi:DOI: 10.1080/17539153.2015.1096656

Nossek, H., & Berkowitz, D. (2006). Telling "our" Story Through News of Terrorism: Mythical Newswork as Journalistic Practice in Crisis. *Journalism Studies*, 7(5), 691-707. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/14616700600890356

Nussbaum, M. C. (2003). *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions. Cambridge*, Cambridge University Press.

Oliver, P. E., & Maney, G. M. (2000). Political Processes and Local Newspaper Coverage of Protest Events: From Selection Bias to Triadic Interactions. *American Journal of Sociology*, 106(2), 463-505. doi:0.1086/316964

Robinson, P., Goddard, P., Parry, K., & Murray, C. (2009). Testing Models of Media Performance in Wartime: UK TV News and the 2003 Invasion of Iraq. J*ournal of communication*, 59(3), 534-563. doi:/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2009.01435.x

Shoemaker, P. J., Danielian, L. H., & Brendlinger, N. (1991). Deviant Acts, Risky Business and US Interests: The Newsworthiness of World Events. *Journalism Quarterly*, 68(4), 781-795. doi:DOI:10.1177/107769909106800419

Tanikawa, M. (2017). Seeking Cultural Relevance: Use of "culture peg" and "culture link" in International News Reporting. *Journalism Practice*, 11(1), 115-133. doi:10.1080/17512786.2015.1105725

White, A. (1976). *Ethical Challenges for Journalists in Dealing with Wate Speech*. Ohchr, 1-5.

Wu, H. D. (2000). Systemic Determinants of International News Coverage: A Comparison of 38 Countries. *Journal of communication*, 50(2), 110-130. doi:10.1111/j.1460–2466.2000.tb02844.x.

Yang, L., & Chen, H. (2019). Framing Terrorist Attacks: A Multi-Proximity Model. *International Communication Gazette*, 81(5), 395-417. doi:10.1177/1748048518802245

Zuckerman, E. (2004). Using the Internet to Examine Patterns of Foreign Coverage. *Nieman reports*, 58(3), 51.