

**From Burhan Wani to Abhi
Nandan: A Comparative
Analysis of India and Pakistan's
Newspaper Coverage of
Kashmir Conflict**

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Abstract

This paper compares the coverage of Kashmir Conflict in four English language dailies: two from Pakistan; DAWN and The Nation, and two from India; 'The HINDU' and 'Times of India' by employing Galtung's Model of Peace Journalism (Galtung, 1986; 1998) and Lynch & McGoldrick's (2005) Two-Sided Conflict Model. The study pursues two research questions; is the coverage of these newspaper war or peace-oriented, and do they report Kashmir Conflict through Two-Party (Pak-India) or Multi-Party lenses. For data sources, seven major recent events; Burhan Wani's killing (2016), Uri Attack, Indian Surgical Strikes, Pulwama Attack, Balakot Airstrike, and Abhi Nandan's Capture and Release (2019) were chosen. A total of 56 stories, one lead story and one editorial from each newspaper about every event, were collected. Each story was evaluated according to Galtung's 19 indicators; nine War, nine Peace and one Neutral, and accordingly categorized. The analysis revealed that DAWN had the highest (46.15%) peace-oriented coverage while The HINDU was second with only 23% peace content. In the war category, The Nation scored the highest (100%) while the Times of India was found second (92.85%). No story could qualify for the neutral category. Overall, the coverage of these newspapers was found grossly (81.13%) war-oriented. Moreover, in the coverage of the Kashmir Conflict, the media succumb to the Two-Sided Model, projecting Pakistani and Indian states as the only legitimate parties while Kashmiris are portrayed as mere passive victims. These newspapers also focus only on visible effects and heavily rely on elite positions. The purpose of this study was to examine how much Peace Journalism—being reasonably advocated throughout the last decade in the Subcontinent—has changed the attitude of our media towards peace reporting.

Key Words

Kashmir conflict, peace journalism, India, Pakistan, print media, Burhan Wani

Introduction

Relationship between Mass Media and Conflicts

We make sense of 'the world by taking messages and images—including those served up by the news—and slotting them into codes we develop through our lives' (Lynch &

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Fischer, 2014), and carry in our heads. Mass media have been shown to be playing a determining role in manufacturing for us these images and messages and cultivating our mental codes/frames (Durga, 2004; Entman, 1993; Goffman, 1974; 1986; McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Besides many other factors that cause conflicts, breakdown in communication between the warring parties is also one of the leading reasons why conflicts are born and persist. According to Peleg (2006), 'communication produces information which affects each side's decision, whether to hash out the differences or shun them' [...] 'Thus, communication becomes a crucial determinant in conflict and conflict resolution: it creates consciousness of, and attentiveness to, the Other' (p. 2).

A closer inspection of the timeline of the world conflicts reveals that 'media has played a dominating role in conflicts in Palestine, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, and now in the Middle East' (Siraj, 2008). Siraj (2008) further argues that studies on War and Peace Journalism suggest that the discursive construction of conflicts by mass media has always been a serious concern of combatants, academics, media professionals as well as common people. 'Media coverage shapes the course of events in war and peace' (Siraj, 2008). Geelen contends, 'Media has the power to reach a large number of audiences' (as cited in Ijaz, 2015), particularly in poor countries that are host to most of the conflicts in the world. 'During conflict situations, media can play an important role in easing tensions amongst people as well as between governments' (Ijaz, 2015). However, like almost all other technologies, mass media is also a double-edged sword: should they benefit or disserve humanity depends on who is wielding them. Therefore, media can be a frightful weapon of violence when they propagate messages of intolerance or misinformation that manipulate public sentiment (Ijaz, 2015), or can be an effective instrument for bolstering peace and mutual understating. However, Zaheer complains, 'research has found the media tilted towards aggression, violence, and disagreements during conflict coverage' (Zaheer, 2016). Moreover, '[p]ower of the media's coverage may prove stronger than the will of people and government, consequently, making the media and press as an actor which might complicate the attempts to resolve the conflict' (Riaz, Ahmad, & Shah, 2018). Particularly, Riaz and colleagues claim that South Asian media's coverage of Kashmir Conflict is based on different agenda settings that are void of objective representation of the Conflict.

Media and Kashmir Conflict

'According to UN records, Kashmir is the oldest conflict inscribed in the body of UN resolutions and one of the most serious' (Burki, 2007), and hence the longest-standing conflicts of the World. In the last seven decades, it has burst in several violent and semi-violent phases, resulting in three full-scale wars (1948, 1965 and 1999) between the two countries. This Conflict still triggers border skirmishes, frequent threats of war with massive troops mobilization alongside borders (Gadda, 2014), and drives the two nuclear-armed countries to the brink of mutually assured destruction. Why is this conflict so hard to be resolved? Besides many other explanations, in her book '*Kashmir: A Tragedy of Errors*', author Tavleen Singh (cited by Gadda, 2014), designates National media as one of the major players protracting the Kashmir Conflict.

Similarly, Riaz and colleagues (2018) have also studied the relationship of media and Kashmir Conflict and adduced that Indians and Pakistanis tend to structure their pattern of thinking about each other through the narrative endorsed by media and press. 'Most importantly, media reports of both countries on Kashmir Conflict significantly shape the perception of common people in both countries' (Riaz, Ahmad, & Shah, 2018). Indeed, mass media are not only the chief source of information for the

Pakistani and Indian populations, they—specifically the four esteemed newspapers which this study has selected—are also major sources of information for the officials of foreign office, bureaucracy and military of both states (Zaheer, 2016; Ijaz, 2015; Khalid, 2014).

However, various studies have shown that the coverage of Kashmir Conflict by both countries' media overblow war and violence. They moreover reveal that Kashmiris, the actual party and victims, are ignored, elite positions of India and Pakistan are over-projected, only physical aspects of the conflict are reported, similarities are overlooked and finally, violent means are valued at the cost of peaceful alternatives. This might have had a bearing over the persisting hostile environment in which several peace talks have so far failed. If media change their approach of covering conflict, it is likely that the political and public debate also follows which may foster an atmosphere conducive for dialogue. Since media coverage significantly influences public policy and cultivates peoples' attitudes, therefore it becomes pertinent that the contents of media be subjected to penetrating academic scrutiny. Both Pakistan and India have dynamic media systems—particularly print—and hold a very essential place in people's daily lives.

This paper critically examines and compares the coverage of Kashmir Conflict in four respected elite English language dailies: two from Pakistan; the DAWN and The Nation and two from India; The HINDU and Times of India (ToI). The Galtung's Model of Peace Journalism (Galtung, 1986; 1998) is the overarching theoretical framework while Lynch & McGoldrick's (2005) Two-Sided Conflict Model also informs the analysis. The principal goal of this paper is to find the value-bias of these newspapers towards peace and/or violence and war. This paper investigates two main questions. The first question draws on Galtung's Model of Peace Journalism (Galtung, 1986; 1998) and the second on Lynch & McGoldrick's (2005) Two-Sided Conflict Model: (1) Whether War or Peace Journalism dominates the coverage of India and Pakistan's newspapers? (Taking two newspapers from each side), and (2) Do these newspapers consider the Kashmir Conflict to be only between Pakistan and India or Kashmiri people/leaders are allocated legitimate space/role?

As was mentioned earlier, the Kashmir Conflict which keeps both India and Pakistan in a constant state of enmity has deterred peace in the sub-continent for the last 70 years and if not resolved, the future of this region's billions of inhabitants seems bleak. Since both these countries have vibrant media systems and keeping in view the failure of the two governments to negotiate peace within this region, Peace Journalism seems to be one of the remedies that can guarantee a peaceful future. This paper explores the prospects and promises that peace-oriented journalism can bring to the subcontinent. The finding of this study can be of immense importance to foreign and domestic policymakers, journalists, students of media and conflict studies and people at large.

Literature Review

In the following paragraphs, the latest studies on media coverage of conflicts specifically that of Kashmir Conflict, and War and Peace Journalism have been cited with an aim of identifying a research gap which this study must fill by contributing fresh insights to the existing literature.

Gadi Wolfsfeld, a renowned scholar of Media and Conflict Studies maintains that the nature of media by default is to cover disputes, conflicts, violence and tension (Wolfsfeld, 2004). In the same vein, Shinar (2004) also upholds this view saying that to create sensation and get high ratings, 'media mostly prefer to use war frames even

when there are peace negotiations between the opposing groups' (Shinar, 2004). Similarly, Fawcett in his content analysis (2002) found that for the Irish media, war frames were more attractive than the peace frames. Finally, Lee and Maslog (2005) were forced by the glaring findings of their study to announce that the media coverage of almost all Asian conflicts is dominated by war frames.

The coverage of Kashmir Conflict in Indian and Pakistani, as well as international media, has been widely studied. Gadda (2014) has compared Kashmir's local newspaper with Indian national newspapers using 'Partial Journalism' as his analytical tool. The author argues that to favor the Indian state narrative, the national media ignore the dissenting voices from Kashmir Valley. 'Truth became the first causality as media content was engineered from the power corridors to suit a particular ideology' (Gadda, 2014). He claims that the national media which is the only source of information about Kashmir for the people outside Kashmir are status-quo. 'National media has reported the situation in Kashmir with a partial approach, narrating only what fits the official policy, and ignoring anything, howsoever closer to reality, that hurts the interests of India as a nation or is in breach of the official policy'. Hence he concludes that the true story of the Kashmir has largely been kept untold (ibid).

Similarly, Jan and Khan in their article '*Peace Journalism and Conflict Reporting: A Case study of Pakistani Media*' (2011), examines the Pakistani media's coverage of conflicts from the perspective of Peace Journalism. They argue that media have the power to alter public opinions and can bring public attention to the peaceful resolution of conflicts. However, Jan & Khan (2011) have expressed pessimism as their study affirms that media have turned away from productive discussion on the peace initiatives which are essential for promoting peace in the region. Furthermore, they have also highlighted the danger of media's distortion of the news contents which has the potential to deteriorate conflicts and conceal resolution of disputes.

Moreover, Hafsa Khalid (2014) in her article the '*Role of Peace Journalism in Indo-Pak Relation: A case study of Aman Ki Aasha*', maintains that the instability in this region, resulting from the inflexible conflict position of the two states, has created a horrifying atmosphere of looming nuclear war with the warmongering media adding fuel to the fire. She refers to the failure of both countries and their respective media to develop a peaceful environment in the region and suggests that Peace Journalism is the only way out of the fear of impending war and instability. Khalid (2014) asserts that only objective, unbiased and peace-oriented media can help redeem the tense political relationship into the forgotten history of Hindu-Muslim unity and can fill the political and communication gaps, which would allow the people of the two nations to hear each other's cry for peace. Her paper also suggests that the media should adopt Peace Journalism to improve the image of the subcontinent in the world because this conflict has painted its image as an insecure and dangerous zone.

Examining international media, Durga (2004) studied the coverage of the Kashmir Conflict and the parties caught up in it in The New York Times, The Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times from 1989 to 2003. She found out that all these newspapers, throughout their coverage, reported only war and violence and ignored peace-inspiring aspects of the conflict. Moreover, Durga also establishes that only officials from Pakistan and India are given space while Kashmiri people and local leadership are ignored.

In a fresh study, Lubna Zaheer (2016) examines the media coverage of Burhan Wani's killing. For her study, she selected four Pakistani newspapers; two of English and two Urdu language. She employed the Peace Journalism Model (Galtung, 1986) and Framing Theory (Entman, 1993) as her theoretical models. Her findings show that

Pakistani media are 'highly war-oriented and war Frames continue to dominate the coverage as compared to peace Frames' (Zaheer, 2016). Additionally, she found that 'Urdu press uses more war Frames as compared to the English language dailies' (Zaheer, 2016). She concludes that the reason for more war slanted reporting could be credited to the historical background and state policy towards the Kashmir issue. 'Due to the human rights violations and the violence itself in Kashmir might also be the reasons why Pakistani media cannot avoid War Journalism' (Zaheer, 2016). However, these are the very excuses and professional pitfalls which the 'Peace Journalism Model' (Galtung, 1986), has challenged.

Galtung's Model of Peace Journalism (Galtung, 1998; 1986) proposes a solution-oriented coverage of conflicts by giving voice to all parties that are involved/caught up in the conflict. Similarly, Lynch & McGoldrick state that the idea of Peace Journalism brings a unique style of news gathering, processing and presentation which minimizes the conflict between the parties involved, 'simply by not repeating such facts that may demonize one group and further escalate the conflict' (2005). 'Peace Journalism aims at focusing on the structural and cultural causes of violence, rather than on an oversimplified dichotomous account of conflict' (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) further state that Peace Journalism explains violence; frames conflict as involving many parties who pursue many goals; and finally, makes audible and visible the subjugated aspects of reality.

In contrast to Peace Journalism, Hanitzsch (2004) argues that in War Journalism, the center of attention is violence and destruction. He further explains that War Journalism is mostly biased, highlights the visible effects of war and is zero-sum oriented. Hanitzsch (2004) adds that War Journalism presents direct violence, visible consequences and it is also elite oriented in nature. Similarly, Siraj (2008) posits that to boost their TRP and paper circulation, media further dramatize War Reporting by using graphics and post-production effects. Moreover, Lee, et al. observe, 'war journalism is characterized by military triumphalist language, an action-oriented focus, and a superficial narrative with little context, background or historical perspective' (cited by Siraj, 2008).

Only a few studies were found which have comparatively examined the media of both India and Pakistan. Hussain (2015) in his comparative study concludes that the Indian print media use hate language and high level of war frames when reporting Kashmir Conflict, whereas the print media of Pakistan [he has only studied DAWN] use peace Frames and avoid hate language. Another notable co-authored comparative study '*A case study of Kashmir dispute* by Zia & Hajrah' (2015), has examined the print media's role in escalating or de-escalating the conflict and media's potential for the peacebuilding process. Zia and Hajrah (2015) concluded that the Kashmir issue was negatively framed and media consistently focused on violence.

However, these studies have compared only one newspaper from both countries and their time span is also short. This study, on the other hand, compares two newspapers from each country and focuses on those major events from 2016 onwards to 2019 which have mostly dominated the intervening media coverage. Moreover, newspapers were selected according to their ideological leanings. DAWN is an elite leftist daily, while The Nation is a conservative newspaper, both promoting two distinct world views. Similarly, The HINDU and The Times of India represent two opposing ideological camps, the former is considered leftist while the latter is center-right. Therefore, the analysis of these newspapers can yield a reasonably fair picture of the two societies' socio-political standing on the Kashmir issue. Moreover, they are read by the policymaking elite and analysts who influence the agenda of the public

discourse. So this study takes into account many essential considerations that the earlier studies have overlooked.

Research Methodology

This paper has adopted Comparative Content Analysis (Krippendorff, 2004) as its research methodology. The analysis takes into account both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the data, with more emphasis on the latter. Mazrui argues that 'Qualitative Content Analysis provides an important layer of analysis in a way that it helps to note what stories, stakeholders and frames are included and excluded and to what extent' (Mazrui, 1996).

Selection of time period and events as Data Sources

Bigger events are likely to create more news. Seven such major events that happened between 2016 and 2019 in Kashmir and with huge ramifications to both India and Pakistan were selected. These include; Burhan Wani's Killing (2016), Uri Attack, Surgical Strike, Pulwama Attack, Balakot Airstrike, and Abhi Nandan's Capture and Release (2019). The events were massively covered by media and dominated the public discourse in both countries. Therefore, the researchers decided to select these seven events for data collection. To distinguish their prominence and immediacy, the events are discussed below in detail.

A Timeline of the Events

The recent unrest in Kashmir began when 'Burhan Wani, a popular separatist militant commander was shot dead by the Indian forces in a village in South Kashmir on July 8' (Bukhari, 2016). According to a BBC report (Bukhari, 2016), 'born to a highly-educated upper-class Kashmiri family, Wani was driven to militancy at the age of 15 after his brother and he was beaten up by police for no reason.' The report further states that after that incident, Wani swore to avenge his insult and joined local fighter group Hizbul Mujahedeen (Bukhari, 2016). BBC also claims that unlike militants in the past, Wani was highly active on social media and did not hide his identity behind a mask. Similarly, Gabol (2016) notes that Wani had become a hero, an iconic face of Kashmir militancy, spearheading the current wave of agitations. 'He regularly posted video messages online dressed in military fatigues, becoming an instant hit in Kashmiri youth and invited young men to join the movement against Indian rule' (Gabol, 2016). His killing caused massive protests in the valley and thousands attended his funeral (Meenakshi, 2016). To control the situation, the Indian state had enacted a curfew for 99 continuous days (Press Trust of India, 2016).

Next, on September 18, 2016, only two days before the Premier of Pakistan and the foreign minister of India were to speak to the UN General Assembly, an attack happened on Uri Army base, located in Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK), in which 19 soldiers were killed. India claimed 'the attack was carried out by Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) militants, crossing the border from Pakistan' (Praveen Swami & Shubhjit Roy, 2016). Pakistan, however, rejected the claims (Perry, 2016).

Less than two weeks later, on September 29, 2016, India claimed that it has executed surgical strikes along Line of Control (LoC)³ in Pakistani-administered Kashmir, taking out seventeen launch pads or temporary shelters, that militants were preparing to use to cross over into the country, and inflicting significant casualties

³The Line of Control (LoC) refers to the de facto border between the Indian and Pakistani controlled parts of the Jammu and Kashmir.

(Hindustan Times, 2016). Pakistan denied any such strikes ever to have happened (Press Trust of India, 2019).

‘On February 14, 2019, a convoy of vehicles carrying security personnel was attacked by a vehicle-borne suicide bomber in Pulwama district of Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK), resulting in the deaths of 40 Indian Central Reserve Police Force’ (Gurung, 2019). India again blamed it on Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) and Pakistan ‘denied any connection to it’ (Dawn.com, 2019). India threatened to attack the bases of Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) located in Pakistan and soon launched an airstrike on the *Balakot* area inside Pakistan’s Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Feb 26. India claimed to have ‘destroyed a militant base and inflicted heavy loss of life, killing up to 300 fighters belonging to Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM)’ (Slater & Constable, 2019). However, ‘Pakistan denied the claim, saying that the Indian Air Force (IAF) warplanes were forced to drop their payload on an empty hillside when confronted by Pakistani interceptors’ (Yousuaf, 2019). Islamabad also denied the existence of any militant camp in the area. The next day, ‘Indian and Pakistani warplanes engaged in a dogfight over Kashmir and Pakistan downed an Indian plane and captured its pilot after he ejected in Pakistan’s Administered Kashmir’ (Slater & Constable, 2019; Gettleman, Hari Kumar, & Yasir, 2019). Hours later, video clips of the bloodied IAF pilot, Wing Commander Abhi Nandan Varthaman, ‘appeared on social media, identifying himself to Pakistani interrogators’ (Reuters, 2019).

It was the first time in history that two nuclear-armed states carried out airstrikes against each other which brought India and Pakistan to the brink of nuclear war. The situation was so volatile that it could have conceivably got out of hand and led to a nuclear apocalypse (Akhund, 2019). There were extreme tension and war hysteria on both sides. However Pakistan announced that the pilot will be released unconditionally as a peace gesture and the next day, he was handed over to Indian authorities at Wahga Border.

Data Collection

For data collection, one editorial and one lead story about every event from each newspaper were collected. This was done because ‘editorial is the guiding element of any medium’s ideological bent...[r]evealing a level of tolerance, an editorial also exposes itself to taking sides’ (Jan & Ashraf, 2017). Similarly, the leading story of a newspaper also reveals the highest importance it places on an issue. Therefore, it can be argued that by examining the editorial and leading story of a newspaper, its overall editorial policy and ideological bent can be mapped, although generalization of the findings of such a study might have limitations. So a total of 56 stories i.e. 14 from each newspaper were to be collected but three editorials were not published. Thus 53 stories in actual could be collected ($7 \times 2 \times 4 - 3 = 53$). It is also important to mention here that DAWN did not publish editorial on *Balakot* airstrike while The Nation and The HINDU both about Abhi Nandan’s capture. Instead, they only relied on lead stories.

Theoretical Framework

The principal theoretical framework of this study is Galtung’s Model of Peace Journalism (Galtung, 1986; 1998) but Lynch & McGoldrick’s (2005) Two-Sided Conflict Model also informs the analysis. These two analytical approaches are briefly disused below.

i) Peace Journalism Model

‘Johan Vincent Galtung (born 1930) is a Norwegian sociologist and the principal founder of the discipline of Peace & Conflict Studies’ (Brewer, 2010, p. 7). Peace Journalism Model, ‘which today is a source of practical options for journalists; a lead into media monitoring for peace activists and offers a firm basis for drawing distinctions in a content analysis by academic researchers was originally conceived by Galtung’ (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). Galtung (2003) defines Peace Journalism as people-oriented, focuses on victims, gives voice to the voiceless and seeks a solution. It is a ‘special mode of socially responsible journalism’ (Hanitzsch, 2004), and ‘responsible and conscientious media coverage of any conflict’ (Shinar, 2004). War Journalism, on the contrary, is propaganda-driven and obsessed with violence, elite position and victory (Galtung, 1998).

How Peace Journalism can help societies imagine peaceful alternatives? Lynch & Fischer (2014) explain, ‘through Peace Journalism, editors and reporters make choices – about what to report, and how to report it – that create opportunities for society at large to consider and to value non-violent responses to conflict’ (Lynch & Fischer, 2014). They also claim that Peace Journalism has an intrinsic ability to inspire and building non-confrontational communication which is indispensable for conflict transformation (ibid). They further contend that as a promoter of depolarization and de-escalation, Peace Journalism can accomplish a significant role by inspiring journalists to portray disputes in a different manner than that to which they usually ascribe (2014).

Behind every visible battle, there are always underlying structural inequalities that form the roots of political grievances and violence. The continuing ignorance of this context by the media turns conflicts into protracted ones because ‘if no underlying causes are visible, there is nothing to ‘fix’ and we are left only with further violence as a possible response’ (Azar quoted in Peleg, 2006). ‘Peace Journalism, with its keen eye on causes and stimuli and with its commitment to a broader and fairer depiction of interests and motivations rather than positions’ (Galtung, 1996; Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005), ‘can and should bring such unattended human needs to the fore and alleviate intractable conflicts’ (Peleg, 2006).

Moreover, Lynch (2014) has described the following characteristics of Peace Journalism:

1. It explores the backgrounds and contexts of conflict formation, presenting causes and options on every side (not just ‘both sides’);
2. Gives voice to the views of all rival parties, from all levels;
3. Offers creative ideas for conflict resolution, development, peace-making, and peacekeeping;
4. Exposes lies, cover-up attempts and culprits on all sides, and reveals excesses committed by, and suffering inflicted on, peoples of all parties, and finally;
5. Pays attention to peace stories and post-war developments.

Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) claim that in the 18th century, there were disease journalists who, in great detail, reported how epidemics spread and affected the people, but nothing was told about cures. ‘Today we have health journalists who write about

current research on new cures and healthy lifestyles that help prevent disease' (ibid). They propose that it is high time for peace journalists to not only report wars, but also investigate its root causes, possible prevention, and ways to sustain peace. 'But they need not invent solutions to conflicts themselves—in the same way as health journalists need not invent cures for diseases themselves; they ask specialists. Similarly, peace journalists can ask various peace organizations and mediators about their ideas for preventing or ending the violent conflict, and report about it' (ibid). The authors conclude, 'health pages in newspapers are very popular, and it can be anticipated that the same will be true for reporting about peace proposals: all we ask is give peace a page'.

ii) Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) Two-Sided Conflict Model

The Two-Sided Conflict Model has basically been derived from War Journalism (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). Lynch and McGoldrick argue that War Journalism mostly favors official sources over voices from the grassroots; reports events instead of processes; and perceives a conflict only as a two-sided battle for supremacy. 'These preferences, indexing, and biases, [once] hardened into industry conventions, become a familiar journalistic habit of restricting the extent of debate to differences between government and official opposition (elite discord) and has the same effect of camouflaging choices as facts' (ibid). In simple words, the Two-Sided Conflict Model is an institutional apparatus and frame of mind through which journalists tend to see (or are forced to see) a conflict only through the eyes of the two combating parties and disregard all other actors. Thus journalism becomes a zero-sum game. The authors of this paper believe that Kashmir Conflict should not be viewed merely as a battle for territory between the two states of India and Pakistan but the people of Kashmir are the legitimate party/actors and not just statistics and hapless victims. So this analytical concept (Two-Sided Conflict Model) was chosen to examine how the four newspaper scores on this specific category.

Viewing a conflict through a dichotomous lens creates the risks of oversimplifying the conflict and obscuring wider options. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) warn that anything that is not, unequivocally, winning, risks being reported as losing, hence it brings a readymade incentive to step up efforts for victory or escalate. Lynch and McGoldrick also warn about the fixation on official elites. They emphasize that governments have the coercive apparatus (the 'legitimate' use of military power) at their disposal which other groups lack. 'For all these reasons, the primacy of official sources, coupled with the enduring national orientation of most media, is bound to skew the representation of conflicts in favor of a pronounced receptiveness to the advocacy of violence' (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). Moreover, Lynch and Fischer argue, 'stirrings of peace almost invariably begin at lower levels'. Therefore this paper also advocates that conflict should be seen through a multi-party lens and actors from the grassroots should also be given equal space.

Coding Scheme

This paper follows Galtung's (1986; 1998) classification of War and Peace Journalism for the codification of the data.

Galtung Model (Classification of War, Peace and Neutral Indicators)		
War Indicators	Peace Indicators	Neutral Stories
Visible effects of War	Invisible effects of war	Stories that contain none of the indicators from these two categories are coded as neutral.
Statistics of casualties (dead and wounded)	Emotional trauma, damage to society, property or culture, long-term effects	
Difference- oriented	Solution-oriented	
Such reports lead to the escalation of the conflict	Suggestions/opinions for the solution of the conflict	
Elite-oriented	People-oriented	
Focus on political/military leaders and elites as actors and sources of information	Focus on common people as actors and sources of information	
Here and now	Causes and consequences	
Only reporting the current war situation/updates	Reporting the historical causes and future effects of the conflict	
Dichotomy	Labeling	
Good guys vs bad guys or heroes and villains	Avoid labeling of good and bad guys	
Two-Party Orientation	Multi-party Orientation	
One party winner, the other loser	Gives voice to all parties involved in a conflict	
Partisan	Non-partisan	
Being partial to one party in the conflict	(Neutral, not taking sides)	
Zero-sum Orientation	Win-win Orientation	
One goal: to win	Many goals and issues, solution-oriented	
Use of Demonizing Language	Avoid demonizing language	
Words such as brutal, barbaric, extremist, fundamentalist, etc.	Usage of more precise/inclusive descriptions, titles or names	

Table 1: Galtung’s Classification of War and Peace Indicators (Galtung, 1986)

Galtung has based the classification on four broader practices and, ‘linguistic orientations: peace/conflict, truth/propaganda, people/elites and solutions/differences’ (Galtung, 1998). ‘In contrast, war journalism is oriented towards war/violence, propaganda, elites and victory’ (Lee et al. cited by Siraj, 2008). Galtung has further expanded these four categories into 19 indicators; nine peace, nine war and one neutral (Table 1).

Following this method, a single story was selected as the unit of analysis. The stories were then accordingly grouped into ‘Peace’, ‘War’ and ‘Neutral’ categories. A story that had more indicators, for instance from the war category as compared to the peace category, was sorted as a war story and vice versa. The following Table 1 explains these 19 indicators (Galtung, 1986).

Findings of the Study

No.	Newspapers	War Stories		Peace Stories	
		No. of stories	Percentage	No. of stories	Percentage
1.	DAWN	7	53.84%	6	46.15%
2.	The Nation	13	100%	-	-
3.	The HINDU	10	77%	3	23%
4.	Times of India	13	92.85%	1	7.14%

Table 2: Result of Analysis: War vs Peace Journalism

The above table reveals that The Nation’s coverage is 100% war-oriented. The Nation deploys only war frames/indicators while reporting the Kashmir Conflict. Although DAWN scores the lowest with 53.84% war coverage, we can infer that this tendency somehow can compensate for the war-ridden coverage of The Nation (in Pakistan). However, there is very little margin between Times of India with 92.85% war journalism and The HINDU with 77%. Similarly, in the category of Peace Indicators, the coverage of DAWN is the highest with 46.15% peace orientation. It shows the relative professionalism and sensitivity of DAWN towards Peace Journalism.

The HINDU’s 23% Peace Contents, followed by the Times of India with only 7.14% are abysmal, given their respected stature in India. Overall, DAWN has the highest number of stories covering peace and the lowest covering war. While the Nation had the highest stories covering war and zero stories about peace. Moreover, none of the stories could qualify as a neutral story on Galtung’s Indicators.

Quantifying the Usage of Each Indicator

Table 3 shows which dominant indicators/frames these newspapers use in their coverage. The indicator ‘Visible Effects’, for instance, means that this was the highest used indicator in the given news story which caused the whole story to be placed into the war category.

It is evident from the above analysis that the newspapers use War indicators more than the Peace frames. Partisan language, a heavy focus on visible destruction, here, and now, and inattention to context, such coverage, according to Galtung (1998), is detrimental to conflict transformation. Moreover, these newspapers only report elite positions and their entire coverage is zero-sum oriented. Both these orientations, Galtung (1998) argues, obscure our understating of the deeper causes of conflicts and pushes the actors towards a win-lose battle.

Table 3 also shows that all these newspapers succumb to the Two-Sided Conflict Model (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). The newspapers report regarding the elite’s position and opinion from India and Pakistan but completely ignore the voices/positions of Kashmiris. They have not even considered taking the comments/opinions of common citizens from the two warring states. Similarly, their coverage is only restricted to Two-Party orientation rather than a Multi-party model. If the Conflict is framed in this Two-Sided template, Pakistani and Indian masses, as well as the world, cannot know the position and place of Kashmiri people and their political leaders. Instead, global opinion will continue to be shaped by Indian and Pakistani media which according to Gadda (2014) and Sulehria (2018) perpetuate status-quo

because they portray positions instead of interests and are fixated on victory for their respective states. Thus the Conflict will continue to rot.

War Indicators	Pakistan Print Media		Indian Print Media		Peace Indicators	Pakistan Print Media		Indian Print Media	
	Dawn	The Nation	The Hindu	Times of India		Dawn	The Nation	The Hindu	Times of India
Visible effects of war	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	Invisible effects of war	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)
	2 (15.38%)	-	3 (23.07%)	2 (14.28%)		-	-	-	-
Differences oriented	2 (15.38%)	2 (15.38%)	-	-	Solution oriented	3 (23.07%)	-	-	-
Elite-oriented	1 (7.69%)	1 (7.7%)	-	-	People Oriented	-	-	-	-
Here and now	1 (7.69%)	1 (7.7%)	2 (15.38%)	2 (14.28%)	Causes and consequences	2 (15.38%)	-	1 (7.69%)	-
Dichotomy i.e. Good, Bad	-	2 (15.38%)	-	2 (14.28%)	Avoid labelling	-	-	1 (7.69%)	-
Two-Party orientation	1 (7.69%)	4 (30.76%)	1 (7.69%)	2 (14.28%)	Multi-party orientation	-	-	-	-
Partisan/Biased	-	2 (15.38%)	3 (23.07%)	3 (21.42%)	Non-partisan: Un-Biased	1 (7.69%)	-	1 (7.69%)	-
Zero-sum Orientation	-	1 (7.7%)	1 (7.69%)	2 (14.28%)	Win-win orientation	-	-	-	-
Use of Demonizing Language	-	-	-	-	Avoid demonizing language	-	-	-	-
Total War Frames	7 (53.84%)	13 (100%)	10 (77%)	13 (92.85%)	Total Peace Frames	6 (46.15%)	-	3 (23%)	1 (7.14%)

∥

Overall Nature of the Coverage

The following Table 4 shows the overall inclination of these newspapers towards war and peace.

	Total Stories	War Stories	Peace Stories
Grand Total	53	43 (81.13%)	10 (18.86%)

Table 3: Overall nature of the coverage

The above table reveals that the prominent English language newspapers of both countries, and with a cautious generalization, the media of the sub-continent as a whole are highly war-oriented. The findings revealed that the lion’s share (81.13%) coverage of Kashmir Conflict is war-oriented as compared to only 18.86% peace contents. Drawing on the literature of Peace Journalism, we can assert that Indian and Pakistani media’s gross neglect of the peace approach can be one of the main reasons why this Conflict has remained tenacious and unsolvable.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study compared the coverage of Kashmir Conflict in two Pakistani and two Indian elite English language Newspapers drawing on Galtung’s Model of Peace Journalism (Galtung, 1986; 1998) and Lynch & McGoldrick’s (2005) Two-Sided Conflict Model. Mostafiz (2017) has claimed that there exists a ‘conflict-media nexus’. This is likely to be true ‘because news reporting has traditionally been feeding on war, conflict, and violence, often offering propaganda for one of the conflicting parties, and without any apparent intention to promote peace’ (Lynch & Fischer, 2014). The findings of this paper also confirm that the reporting of these four highly esteemed newspaper is heavily (81.13%) war-oriented. Such war-obsessed coverage can upset the prospects of peacefully resolving the Kashmir Conflict.

Besides war and peace orientations, our second question was whether media from both countries give coverage to Kashmiri people and their indigenous leadership which is the genuine party to the conflict. The analysis revealed that none of the newspapers considers the Kashmiri people as equal/genuine actors/party, rather they are treated as only passive victims. So it can be inferred that all these newspapers give in to the Two-Sided Conflict Model identified by Lynch & McGoldrick’s (2005). They declare coverage to be Two-Sided when it only involves the two dominant parties/states and ignores any other actors. Since in the decolonized world, most of the states cannot be delineated as purely nation-states on the model of Europe because they comprise many ethnicities and nations, therefore, conflicts between post-colonial states should not be considered as merely between the two dominant states. There are always other actors as well, for instance, Kashmiris in this conflict. This is why Lynch & McGoldrick (2005) argue, ‘the journalistic habit of restricting the extent of debate to differences between government and official opposition – ‘elite discord’ – has the same effect of camouflaging choices as facts’ (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005). Two-Sided depiction of conflicts also renders invisible the other parties and delegitimizes their aspirations. This is why we seldom see Kashmiris speaking for themselves but only Pakistani and Indian officials/journalists speaking ‘about’ them.

Moreover, it was found that all these newspapers do not provide any context to the conflict. Even if provided, it is restricted to the official narrative of Pakistan or India. How Kashmiris understand this Conflict and what sort of history they want to construct is a blanket omission in the coverage. Danish Nabi Gadda, a researcher from ‘Indian Held Kashmir’, argues, ‘The total loss of context is the greatest casualty in Indian and Pakistani media’s portrayal of Kashmir Conflict’ (Gadda, 2014). ‘One of the reasons why these mistakes could be made with impunity is because the National press, out of misguided patriotism, has always chosen to tell the National public less than the whole truth about Kashmir’ (ibid). He contends that this has made it possible

for the government in Delhi to design dangerously myopic policies. 'Issues which perceived to have a bearing on national interest/security, particularly those relating to defense, foreign policy, insurgency, and human rights are usually portrayed from a state security perspective, relegating the priorities and concerns of the Kashmiri people to invisibility' (Joseph cited in Gadda, 2014).

Similarly, Farooq Sulehria, an academic from Pakistani 'administered' Kashmir states that in academic discourses on India and Pakistan as well as journalistic narratives – emerging out of Orient as well as Occident – Kashmir is usually delineated as the nuclear 'flashpoint' (2018). 'Kashmir as a disputed territory between these two states is a commonsensical understanding in and beyond South Asia' (Sulehria, 2018). This understanding, he continues, is reinforced by an unending war of words between New Delhi and Islamabad. He refers to Tashkent Accord (1966), Shimla Agreement (1972) and Lahore Declaration (1999) and concludes that India and Pakistan preferred a strategic 'status quo *ante bellum* on the question of Kashmir' (Sulehria, 2018). 'Neither India nor Pakistan, public and diplomatic narratives notwithstanding, wants to incorporate Jammu & Kashmir in its entirety' (Sulehria, 2018). So on one hand, if media do not provide context, it leads to the oversimplification of the issue and what Galtung defines as 'visible effects', but on the other hand, even if an issue is contextualized, it should be scrutinized as what kind of context/background is being provided. Locating the conflict in the officially sanctioned context by Pakistani and Indian media cannot challenge the status quo on Kashmir Conflict which, according to Sulehria, the two countries have agreed upon.

Besides this, providing context plays a significant role in broadening perspectives and choices of the actors caught up in a conflict and safeguard them from sliding into a dead end. Lynch & Fischer (2014) stress that Peace and War are not events but processes. As a decontextualized and mis-historicized conflict, Pakistan charges the violence in Kashmir on India as 'unprovoked border violations' while India does the same. Caught in the cross-fire, the value of the Kashmiri lives and sufferings has been reduced to 'unfortunate statistics' and 'collateral damage'. In Pakistan, as a result of the state propaganda, one can hear and read popular slogans such as 'Kashmir will become Pakistan' but no one thinks what Kashmiris, being a nation unto them, says about their own destiny. And the same is the case in India as 'Kashmir remains one of the world's most heavily militarized zones; the 700,000-plus Indian troops have been stationed there' (Ashraf, 2016). Akin to the approach of the two states to resolving a political problem with military means, the media coverage is also heavily militarized.

Moreover, from the analysis, we can see that both the media outlets impose their own partisan and reductionist labels on Kashmir, its people and their struggle. Metaphors and frames can distort the Worlds' understanding of the Kashmir issue. The Nation uses words like 'freedom fighters' while DAWN identifies them as 'militants'. Pakistani newspapers call the part of Kashmir that is controlled by Pakistan as 'Azad (Independent) Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)' while label the Indian controlled part as Indian Occupied Kashmir (IoK) or Indian Held Kashmir (IHK). Similarly, both Indian newspapers use the word Pakistan Occupied/held Kashmir (Po/hK) when referring to AJK. In addition, both these Indian newspapers claim that Pakistan deploys terrorism as state policy and use words like 'Pak-based terrorists, Pak-backed militants, infiltrators, foreign militants and Pakistan's establishment-backed terrorists'. The use of these terminologies suggests that both the media outlets have presumed that the Kashmiri people, by default, subscribe to these labels. The choice of Kashmiris to represent themselves cannot be delineated from the coverage of these newspapers.

While Kashmir Conflict is an existential issue for Kashmiris, both India and Pakistan use it for their own domestic politics; to hide their corruption and win

elections. The Kashmir issue is a handy invocation for diverting the attention of their respective populations from their poor political performances and drowning all social and economic problems in the war frenzy and patriotic whirlpool created in the name of 'national security'. In this respect, both media seem to be serving their respective governments intentionally or otherwise.

From the analysis, it can be concluded that Indo-Pak Journalism is War Journalism as it focuses on events rather than on the processes of the conflict. The studied newspapers only reported visible violence and death statistics which according to Lynch and Fischer (2014) is a strategy of circumventing context and solution-oriented coverage. Lynch & Fischer claim that in War Journalism, reporters/editors avoid controversy by dwelling on the 'details of death and destruction wrought by a bomb' (2014). 'What is automatically more controversial and hence Peace Journalism is to probe why the bombers did it, what was the process leading up to it, what were their grievances and motivations' (Lynch & Fischer, 2014). They moreover argue, 'with the enduring national orientation, most media are bound to skew the representation of conflicts in favor of a pronounced receptiveness to the advocacy of violence' (Lynch & Fischer, 2014). Hence, Peace Journalism, they suggest, 'is a remedial strategy and an attempt to supplement the news conventions to give peace a chance'. Lynch and Fischer (2014) conclude their article with the following lines;

The time has come for peace journalists to write not only about war, but also about its causes, prevention, and ways to restore peace. They need not invent solutions to conflicts themselves—in the same way as health journalists need not invent cures for diseases themselves; they ask specialists.

This paper adds to this and proposes that media of both Pakistan and India in their coverage must include Kashmiris as the legitimate party in the conflict and give more space to them as compared to the officials from the two claimant states. As Peleg has argued, 'the notion of the media as a third party to a conflict, the facilitator of communication, the mediator or the arbitrator between the two rivalling sides, it is our contention that Peace Journalism as a third side can best enhance prospects for resolution and reconciliation by changing the norms and habits of reporting conflicts' (Peleg, 2006). Peace Journalism is thus an inspiring theoretical and practical option for the media of both countries to follow which will lead to a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir Conflict.

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