Chapter 5
Data Analysis and Interpretation – II
(The Pakistani Press)
Thematic and Qualitative Content Analysis (Event-wise analysis)

The present chapter deals with in-depth analysis of content selected from mainstream English press in Pakistan in order to derive inferences related to media’s role in conflict mediation between India and Pakistan. Aim of the present chapter is to highlight trends in media coverage of select events by eliciting dominant themes and frames through an extensive application of thematic and qualitative content analysis. Inferences derived at end of each section are weaved into appropriate theoretical framework in order to situate and link the analysis to pre-set research objectives. The chapter is a blend of empirical analysis as well as theoretical dimensions to media’s role in conflict. Empirical analysis was carried out on the basis of:

- **Thematic Analysis** – With an objective to elicit dominant and recurrent themes from selected coverage.

- **Qualitative Content Analysis** – A systematic and objective procedure to identify specific aspects of the text (Berelson, 1954).

- **Theoretical Framework** – For each select event and newspaper, the appropriate theoretical framework was chosen and applied to derived inferences in relation to press coverage.

### 5.1 AGRA SUMMIT

#### 5.1.1 Dawn (Karachi edition)

A voluminous data bank of more than 300 news stories and commentaries was generated for the Karachi edition of Dawn, procured from Library of Congress at Washington DC (Duplication Services). Bifurcation of articles is
presented as under. The bulk of media commentary was found in the month of July.

Table 5.1: No. of stories in Dawn (Agra Summit)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>No. of articles (news stories + commentaries)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 15-30, 2001</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1-31, 2001</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1-15, 2001</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total articles analyzed</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following content categories were derived from an analysis of media commentary in the pre and post-summit period.

- **Kashmir and related issues** – Central focus in coverage was accorded to Kashmir and issues surrounding it. Initial announcement of the summit was followed up with extensive and hyped coverage on Kashmir as driving point of the event. A cue taken from the official discourse in Pakistan, commentaries zealously focussed on various aspects of Kashmir. Major content categories elicited under ‘Kashmir issue’ were:

Table 5.2: News-frames on Kashmir in Dawn’s coverage of The Agra Summit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Views &amp; Opinions on Kashmir</th>
<th>Pakistan’s stand/position vis-a-vis Kashmir</th>
<th>Indian intentions and position on Kashmir</th>
<th>Role of separatist Kashmiri leaders in the summit</th>
<th>Killings &amp; Violence in Kashmir</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Views and opinions of varied political</td>
<td>A clear articulation of what Pakistan</td>
<td>The Indian position vis-a-vis</td>
<td>This frame clearly emerged as one</td>
<td>Killings in the valley by Indian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders in Pakistan on Kashmir</td>
<td>stood for as far as Kashmir was concerned</td>
<td>Kashmir was framed in a negative light</td>
<td>being vehemently advocated by the newspaper</td>
<td>security forces (e.g.: Two rockets fired by Indian forces, June 20 – pg 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactions from stakeholders such as military, media, peace-activists, opposition parties documented in the form of routine stories (e.g.: Kashmir: CE urged to take a firm stand, June 15 – pg 4)</td>
<td>Pakistan’s uncompromising posture on Kashmir, Pakistani solidarity and unity; their support to the Kashmir cause (e.g.: Division of Kashmir is not acceptable, June 25 – pg 3)</td>
<td>Specific terms such as such as “state terrorism in Kashmir”, “India’s inhuman activities in occupied Kashmir” were used to describe Indian rule in the region</td>
<td>Views of hardliners and separatist leaders in Indian Kashmir, their role in the summit, their expectations and their affinity and identification with Pakistan was particularly highlighted (e.g.: Hurriyat chief expects role at later stage, July 14 – pg 1)</td>
<td>Human rights violations by Indian security forces (e.g.: The agony of the divided families, July 6 – pg 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations from the India-Pakistan summit, especially with reference to Kashmir and its resolution</td>
<td>Vindication of the Pakistani position on Kashmir demonstrated as a result of India’s summit invitation to Pakistan</td>
<td>Indian reluctance to view Kashmir as a central issue, rather put it on backburner came under heavy criticism (e.g.: Summit to focus on Kashmir dispute, July 11 – pg 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Poor plight of Kashmiris as result of Indian dominance and forced occupation (e.g.: Kashmir leaders not allowed to hold rally, June 16 – pg 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Public opinion in Pakistan about the summit – Coverage in this newspaper made an attempt to assess public opinion, mood and expectations from the summit as manifest through several voices in Pakistan. For example, in a commentary on June 17 titled Preparing for the coming summit (pg 6), Mohammad Waseem succinctly expressed and broadly divided summit related opinions into three categories namely – the religio-conservatives, the pragmatic moderates & liberals and the general mass. Specifically, letters by readers section in the newspaper provided adequate space to positive expectations put around the summit by people in both India and Pakistan. Letters written by Indian readers were duly accommodated. For instance, a letter on June 20 (Efforts for peace in the subcontinent) written by a Pakistani reader responded positively to an earlier letter by an Indian reader,
emphasizing upon need for trust, people to people contact, boost in trade ties and exchange of media and popular culture. Thus, letters section in the coverage served as a platform for exchange of views and counter-views. Public opinion was covered in form of stories and reports on various seminars, conferences, discussions and meetings held in relation to the summit, meant to advise General Musharraf on his strategies for the summit (Musharraf asked to do homework before India visit, June 25 – pg 9).

- **International opinion about the summit** – International opinion about the summit was framed within purview of one – opinions of the international community (read the United States) and second repetitious invoking of frame of international mediation on Kashmir. Coverage addressed issues such as role of the US in compelling India to invite General Musharraf, US policy in the sub-continent, Pakistan-US relations in context of the summit and international reactions to the summit. Statements from US leaders and diplomats that viewed Pakistan favourably over India were found. For example, *US-India military ties not at Pakistan’s cost: commander* - pg 15 – international (July 11). American view on the summit’s fate was given extensive coverage (*Americans optimistic about summit* – pg 3 – by Akhtar Mahmud Faruqui (July 13)).

- **Political situation in Pakistan before the summit** – Pre-summit coverage in this newspaper focused on political situation in Pakistan as a result of the takeover of General Musharraf as the Chief Executive. The takeover was projected Pakistan in a privileged position at the summit vis-a-vis India; since the ‘weak’ Indian government was forced to engage with the same man who was responsible for Kargil war. Though not widely critical, a few opinions expressed concern over patterns of instability in Pakistani politics as a result of the takeover\(^1\), lack of democratic rule in Pakistan and raised doubts over Musharraf’s legitimacy to represent foreign affairs concerns in India. In fact, the coverage in Dawn suggested that President Musharraf enjoyed support from both religious and political constituencies in Pakistan as far as

\(^1\) *A pattern in instability: Aileen Qaiser (pg 3 – National, June 26)* in a column titled Dateline Islamabad
engagement with India was concerned. The attempt was to frame consensus over the summit and project unity in the country over talks with India (*Leaders extend support to CE, June 28 – pg 1*). The lone voice of criticism emanated from the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) that was vocal against Musharraf assuming the mantle of Indo-Pak peace 2.

- **Human interest** – Apart from hard news stories about the summit’s agenda and summit-related opinions and developments, coverage provided soft news in form of human interest stories as well as insights and a satirical take in the form of cartoons and graphics. For instance, on page 2 and 3, one could find cartoons that offered a humorous take on the summit with caricatures of Vajpayee, Musharraf, George Bush and several other leaders. During the peak of the summit (15-17 July), there were stories about Musharraf’s visit to Ajmer’s shrine and Sehba Musharraf’s appreciation of Indian food (July 16, pg 3) 3. Human interest stories highlighted civilian suffering in border areas 4, criticized role of hard-line elements in both countries and highlighted conditions of PoWs and fishermen captured on each side. Positive stories about intra-Kashmir travel, opening of civilian routes and making travel easier for people were featured (July 10). Majority of human interest stories were found on national and international pages of the newspaper. People-centric issues such as visa related difficulties, pitiable condition of soldiers in the Siachen glacier and inclusion of non-Muslims in the process of summit consultations (July 3) were also present in the discourse.

- **Post-summit scenario** – Post-summit scenario involved dissection of summit happenings and gains as well as losses from the summit. The summit was not declared a failure in unequivocal terms. However, there was admittance about its failure to generate the much expected breakthrough. Commentaries carried out an assessment of who won, who lost and who gained an upper hand during

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2 *Summit not to provide relief to Kashmiris, says Benazir* (pg 3 – National, July 9).

3 *Delhi shrine to hold prayers for Musharraf, M.F.Hussain to present painting to President.* (July 12, pg 15)

4 *The agony of divided families,* July 6, pg 4 – National
the meetings. Post summit coverage in the newspaper capitalized on Musharraf’s breakfast meeting with Indian editors to underscore that while the Pakistani side held definite views, India was beating around the bush (Kashmiris’ will was main condition, July 22 – pg 1). Failure to sign a joint declaration also came up for deliberations in aftermath of the summit (Declaration was not far away, says Vajpayee – July 25, pg 1). Usual statements of blame-game surfaced from both sides, even as there was no clarity about the summit’s success or failure. Discourse in Dawn also identified factors from the Indian side that led to the summit’s debacle, namely difference of opinion with the Indian establishment and subversion by Indian (read Hindu) hardliners (India denies subversion by hardliners – July 27, pg 1).

Inferences:

• Under the theoretical understanding of media’s role in conflict as put forward in Gadi Wolfsfeld’s ‘Political Contest Model’ (1997), prominent frames that emerged were:
  - Kashmir
  - Legitimate freedom struggle in Kashmir
  - Pakistan’s solidarity and support to Kashmir
  - Negative framing of Indian intentions on Kashmir
  - Call for international mediation on Kashmir
  - Superiority of Pakistani stance in the summit

• Centrality of the discourse on Kashmir (with use of repetitions, reinforcement, hammering and hype) in Dawn pointed out to what Wolfsfeld identified as “promotion of one’s own media frames in order to achieve political influence and mobilize public support for the conflict”, in the case of Kashmir. Overall, discourse on Kashmir applied frames such as, resistance to Indian rule, protest against Indian rule.

• Framing of ‘Kashmir’ as a core issue was carried out in order to emphasize a weaker position for India during summit negotiations. Absence of issues apart
from Kashmir, to be addressed during the summit was observed. For example, a column titled *Dawn 50 Years Ago Today* was devoted to reprinting of news items published in the same newspaper on the same date fifty years ago. Such historical reference to past coverage highlighted Pakistan’s championing of the Kashmir cause from the beginning⁵.

- Empirical analysis revealed that Wofsfeld’s proposition of “*the political process more likely to have an influence on the news media rather than vice-versa*” was found true in case of Dawn’s coverage of summit proceedings due to the following reasons:
  - Coverage reinstated and vindicated Pakistan’s stand on Kashmir, not only promoted official version of the Pakistani state but also provided political legitimacy to it. Attempt was to mobilize public opinion in favour of the summit where President Musharraf would convince India about centrality of Kashmir to India-Pakistan relations. Summit agenda was confined to Kashmir, with hype and repetition as essential functions of coverage. The summit in essence was only about ‘Kashmir’, something that the Pakistani state so fervently advocated. Attempt was thereby to build pre-summit pressure on India to let Kashmir be the priority of discussion⁶.
  - An evident dichotomy of agendas between India and Pakistan emerged from an analysis of coverage⁷. This dichotomy reinforced Pakistan’s stand and framed it as legitimate while Indian demands were framed as an effort to stall peace⁷.

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⁵ Pakistan’s call to UN – published in DAWN 50 YEARS AGO TODAY, June 24 (pg 6).

⁶ July 3 (pg 3) contained three stories about the summit, all related to Kashmir. [*APHC leader wants Mandela to act as facilitator, Independent Kashmir advocated, Musharraf urged to discuss only Kashmir issue*]

⁷ In reference to the news-frames on the involvement of Hurriyat leaders in the summit, Pakistan’s stance was framed as reasonable, whereas India was framed as a spoilsport raising hue and cry over the Pakistan President proposing to meet Hurriyat leaders (*Talks success Islamabad’s prime concern*, (July 8)).
As the summit drew closer, the pitch on Kashmir grew stronger and forceful, with stories such as *Musharraf says no bargain on Kashmir* (pg 1), *President links all other issues to Kashmir* (pg 3) and *Pakistan, India closer than ever to Kashmir solution* (page 3), *JI opposes give and take on Kashmir* (pg 4) on July 12.

Dawn continued to report on instances of cross-border shelling by Indian forces. Thus, violence formed mainstay of press coverage even during a peace event to demonize the ‘other’ and reflect the ‘other’ in a poor light. Through such coverage, confrontationist ideas were reinforced even as leaders of the two countries were talking peace. Thus, as rightly pointed out by Wolfsfeld, media’s role in conflict fluctuates over time and circumstances as media follows diktats of how relationship between the two countries has evolved over time.

- Other highlights of Dawn’s coverage were, an underlying tone of Muslim victimization and Hindu dominance (in India) in examination of the Kashmir problem\(^8\), speculative news stories and commentaries on probable outcomes of the summit, critical observations on media’s role as there was scrutiny of media coverage post the summit (especially in context of Musharraf’s breakfast meeting with Indian editors that became a subject of controversy).

- The issue of India-Pakistan peace was directly linked to Kashmir and intricate developments on Kashmir were brought forth in the discourse. Quite in contradiction, news coverage in Dawn did not exaggerate expectations from the summit, as commentaries advised caution and realism to readers. Commentaries ranged from those that expressed faith in the summit to those that saw the summit as a failure right from the beginning.

Thus, Dawn’s agenda was to forward the statist position on Kashmir, create a lobby of public opinion and legitimize Pakistan’s position to draw attention of the international community for a speedy resolution of the Kashmir issue.

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\(^8\) A letter titled *Time for Kashmir solution* (June 21, pg 6) rested onus on Hindu majority India and Hindus to accommodate Muslims and solve the Kashmir dispute. It referred to past injustices and discrimination of Indian Muslims due to which partition happened.
5.1.2 The News International (Islamabad edition)

The period of analysis for coverage of Agra Summit in The News was July 1-31 in order to cover pre as well as post summit coverage. A total of 116 articles incorporating news stories and commentaries were sourced from a corpus prepared by The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Islamabad⁹. Key content categories that emerged were:

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⁹ From among news clippings in the corpus of The Institute of Regional Studies, majority were opinion pieces and commentaries as compared to few which were routine news stories. Inferences from analysis have thus been derived accordingly.
Table 5.3: Dominant content categories and sub-categories in The News International’s coverage of Agra Summit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Categories</th>
<th>Sub-Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essence of Kashmir issue to the Summit</td>
<td>• Pakistan’s official stand on the Kashmir ‘dispute’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Kashmiris as important stakeholders in summit talks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hopes, aspirations and expectations of Kashmiris from the summit (for example, <em>Kashmiris see light in a crack at border: WP</em> (July 14))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Opposing opinions on Hurriyat’s involvement in talks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hardline/nationalistic views on Kashmir i.e. rejecting the Indian version on Kashmir (for example, <em>Distorting history</em>, July 11 by Iffat Gulzar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indian stand on Kashmir and dichotomy of Indo-Pak views on the same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International opinion about the summit</td>
<td>• US opinion, US role and its mediation in summit talks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Statements from US leadership&lt;sup&gt;10&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ US as an important stakeholder in Indo-Pak conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ International importance and positive opinion of summit talks between India and Pakistan&lt;sup&gt;11&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Opinions of key leaders in the region (<em>Gujral for picking up talks from Lahore declaration</em>, July 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Statements and opinions on summit related agenda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>10</sup> *Bush letter verifies US role in summit*, July 14

<sup>11</sup> *France optimistic about Pak-India talks outcome*, July 11
| Opinions of various stakeholders | • Historical analysis of past meetings/summits/declarations/accords (*Agra in the context of history*, July 8)  
• Opinions of intellectuals, scholars and experts (*Anatomy of Indo-Pak summit & Road to Agra*, July 13)  
• Indian views on the summit  
• Opinions of common people (*Agra summit: some watch amid hope, others doubt*, July 16)  
• South Asian perspective to the summit (*The Kashmir peace dividends*, July 12 & *Shadows Himalayas cast*, July 16) |
| Reportage on people’s issues/concerns | • CBMs introduced by India before the summit (*India to free 400 jailed Pak civilians*, July 5 & *Indo-Pak cricket matches to resume*, July 16)\(^\text{12}\)  
• Stories of people to people contact (*Rocca lauds Pak-Indian teenagers commitment to peace*, July 20 & *Follow the people to peace* – by Beena Sarwar (July 8))  
• Common concerns to be addressed by both countries (*Pakistan, India need to address poverty: intellectuals*, July 7)  
• Human interest stories and opinions (*Hope floats for families of PoWs in Pak jails*, July 9 & *Hopes for reopening of Srinagar-Pindi road soar*, July 10)  
• Shared past and common historical roots of the two countries (*Musharraf nostalgic about birthplace*, July 15 & *Musharraf to pass by Pakistani tank in Ajmer*, July 16) |

\(^\text{12}\) News reports on several Confidence Building Measures undertaken by Indian prior to the summit were framed to build positive opinion despite the fact that some commentaries saw these steps as an Indian attempt to sidetrack attention from the Kashmir issue.
Inferences:

- According to an assessment of coverage in The News undertaken within the frame-work of Wolfsfeld’s ‘Political Contest Model’, news coverage firmly held on to and furthered Pakistan’s official agenda on the summit i.e. it ensured an acceptance of Kashmir’s centrality to summit talks. Though views and counter-views emerged on this issue, there was no deviation from the fact that for Pakistan, the summit had to have a focus on Kashmir. Coverage was laced with positive and negative opinions on the summit’s fate. However, unanimity and uniformity of opinion was maintained on Kashmir.

- Coverage of The News was elitist in nature with excessive focus on statements by leaders, diplomats and other officials. Despite few positive stories about people to people contact and the troubles faced by common people owing to hostile Indo-Pak relations, reportage rarely went beyond politics and diplomacy of the summit, power games that the summit involved. Only briefly were issues related to poverty, under-development and nuclearization covered. Limited attempt though was made to address South Asian concerns, even as the idea of peace in South Asia was linked to resolution of Kashmir.

- The News worked to consolidate Pakistan’s official position on Kashmir, thereby confirming Wolfsfeld’s proposition of ‘a competition among antagonists over news media frames’. Pakistani and Indian media were in competition to promote their own news frames vis-a-vis the ‘other’ to mobilize popular opinion in their favour.

- Quite a few frames of antagonism also emerged from coverage in The News. For instance, CBMs initiated by India were criticised and framed as a means to deflect attention from the core issue of Kashmir, news frames on consensus and overwhelming support13 to General Musharraf in Pakistan to talk Kashmir in India and a diplomatic vindication of Pakistan’s claim on Kashmir due to Indian invitation for talks. These frames were contradictory to those found in the Indian pressii.

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13 The lone critical opinion put forth with regard to Musharraf’s India visit was by Benazir Bhutto (Declarations are difficult for generals, July 18).
As guided by political circumstances of the time, The News offered an uncritical account of the summit and Pakistan’s relations with India (viewed from the official lens of Kashmir) even as it set realistic expectations from summit talks, not framing it as momentous in history of the two countries. For instance, Dr. Moonis Ahmar in a commentary titled *Beyond no-win situation* speaks of the summit as an event that could set the tone for normal relations and be a good beginning for the peace process.

### 5.2 ATTACK ON INDIAN PARLIAMENT

#### 5.2.1 Dawn (Karachi edition)

For coverage of the attack on India’s parliament in the Karachi edition of Dawn, a comprehensive analysis of 300 news stories and commentaries was carried out, procured from Library of Congress (Washington DC). Prominent themes were derived from an analysis based on Entman’s Media Framing theory.

Table: 5.4: Content categories in Dawn’s coverage of Attack on India’s Parliament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Categories</th>
<th>Sub-Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **The terror attack** | • Pakistan’s condemnation of the attack  
|                     | • Pakistani attempts to distance itself from any involvement in the attack  
|                     | • Modus operandi and other details of the attack  
|                     | • Hints towards involvement of other nationals in the attack  
|                     | • Demands for a joint probe in the attack  |
| **Opinions about the attack** | • Opinions from The United States  
|                          | • US counsel to exercise restraint  
|                          | • US interest and stake in the region  
<p>|                          | • US role in Indo-Pak mediation  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implications on Indo-Pak relations</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• International opinion in support of Pakistan’s role in war on terror</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aggressive Indian stance post the attack</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hard-line opinions emanating from Pakistan(^{14})</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• International concern expressed over tensions in South Asia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blaming the ‘other’</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Contradicting and antagonistic statements from the political elite in India and Pakistan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conspiracy theories (Pakistan’s version) and allegations of Indian stage-management of the attack(^{15})</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Blame on the ‘other’ (India) for creating a conflict-like scenario (<em>New Delhi’s arm twisting</em>, Jan 2, pg 2)(^{16}).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reflection of anti-India sentiments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Damage caused by Indian shelling on the border</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kashmir</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• References to the Kashmir issue throughout the coverage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{14}\) ... AJK will be the graveyard for Indian soldier. We are fully capable to fight tooth and nail and inflict defeat upon the enemy... (Dec 22, pg 4) in *AJK president warns India against crossing LoC*.  

\(^{15}\) *Kashmir body sees Indian agencies’ hand in attack*, Dec 17, pg 3  

\(^{16}\) *NALC members briefed on Indian designs*, Jan 5 – pg 4
| **Terrorism** | • Human rights violations by Indian security forces in Kashmir  
• Indian failure to abide by UN resolution on Kashmir  
• War on Terrorism  
• Pakistan’s role in the war on terror  
• Pakistan’s efforts to weed out terrorism  
• Role of right-wing extremism in India (*Ban on Indian terrorist groups urged*, Jan 17 – pg 3) |
| **People’s concerns/Human interest** | • Human interest stories post Indian decision to sever road and rail links with Pakistan  
• Impact on people living in the border region  
• Popular desire for peace in the sub-continent  
• Nature of media coverage, state of media exchange among the two countries |
Inferences:

Integrating the theoretical framework provided by Robert Entman’s Framing theory, the researcher analyzed how certain issues were presented in reportage since media’s function is not only to decide issues of priority but also to frame and select certain aspects of a perceived reality and promote a particular way of examining it. Framing theory was appropriate for deriving inferences (based on themes extracted from coverage) as both selection of issues and treatment of the same could be determined\(^\text{17}\).

\(^{17}\) The attempt is not at quantifying which frame appeared how many number of times, but rather at delving into nuances of elicited frames and explain how frames function to give meanings to certain issues by focusing attention on those and placing them in a particular meaning. It is through selection and control that framing works in media.
• Context in which Dawn reported on the Parliament attack was informed by the ‘war on terror’ and Pakistan’s role in it. Resultantly, terrorism emerged as a content category as the attempt was to project high moral ground and assure Pakistan’s cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

• Post the attack, discourse was linked to troubles in Kashmir, especially Indian role in Kashmir and struggle for freedom in the region. Frame of ‘conspiracy theory’ i.e. India hatching the parliament attack plot to defame Pakistan was employed to ascertain Pakistan’s innocence. Throughout the coverage, Pakistan’s support to the freedom struggle in Kashmir was endorsed. For example, use of terms such as ‘illegal Indian rule over Kashmir’ and views from Kashmiri people on how they despise India\(^{18}\). Kashmir emerged as a narrative towards which the newspaper’s attitude remained unchanged.

• Reflection of anti-India sentiments and demonization of the ‘other’ was a repetitious frame employed in varying capacities. For instance:

  ✓ India’s attempts to create trouble for Pakistan (*India out to damage Islamabad’s interests: president*, Dec 15 – pg 3)

  ✓ Indian atrocities in Kashmir

  ✓ Indian firing and shelling on the border/villagers as ‘victims’ of the shelling\(^{19}\)

  ✓ Negative framing of statements by Indian leaders

  ✓ Pakistan as victim of Indian aggression

  ✓ India’s favour of war and Pakistan’s opposition to it

  ✓ Pakistan’s efforts at de-escalation, Indian efforts at raising the war cry

  ✓ Indian refusal to share evidence with Pakistan

\(^{18}\) *Kashmiri DPs worried over border tension* (Dec 31, pg 4)

\(^{19}\) Statements such as ‘India is intimidating us’, ‘India is playing the role of complainant and judge at the same time’, ‘India is engaging in unprovoked firing’, ‘India is trying to defame the Kashmir struggle by naming Pakistan’ were found (Dec 20). Reference to Pakistani shelling on villages at the Indian side was absent.
• Credence was given to conspiracy theory of India’s own hand in the attacks as an attempt to malign Pakistan in the international arena. Conspiracy theories were supported in this newspaper based on the attack’s suspicious timing, when the Indian government was trying its best to pass an anti-terror law.

• Though quotes and reports were sourced from Indian newspapers in order to provide an Indian counter-point, majority of the times the counter-view was framed as negative.

• International opinion about the Indo-Pak standoff was framed in a peculiar way in Dawn. One could find commentaries from international press that posited Pakistan and its stance in the entire incident in a positive way. (For example, Kashmir unrest not terrorism: The Guardian, Dec 16 – pg 4). Appreciation for Pakistan’s efforts in combating terror was prominently covered.

• Framing of the Indo-Pak crisis was done to emphasize Pakistani solidarity against any kind of Indian misadventure. Stakeholders across Pakistan’s political spectrum were seen backing the military regime over Pakistan’s stand vis-a-vis India.

• In the frame under terrorism, presence of right-wing extremist organizations like Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), Bajrang Dal and Shiv Sena in India was highlighted to draw similarities between threats of extremism in both India and Pakistan. However, such a comparison stood bereft of substantiation and logical explanations.

• Human interest stories, specifically those on Kashmir were given political colour by a reflection of popular opinion against India. The attempt was to frame conditions of those living in border villages as reflection of anti-India sentiments.

• News discourse was framed to rebut Indian claims of Pakistan’s involvement in the attack. News stories, especially those on front and national pages had a tone and slant that remained unchanged throughout the coverage. There was no new information conveyed about either troop deployment at the border or
the diplomatic stand-off between both countries. While Dawn did not play up war, its coverage adopted a pro-nationalist stance.

- Careful analysis of coverage revealed that while routine news stories were meant to evoke nationalist sentiments, reader’s letters catered to popular opinion and commentary pieces offered a balanced perspective. Even in diversity of coverage, dominant view forwarded was a pro-nationalist one. Slant of stories if not particularly in favour of the government, was inclined towards Pakistan’s ideological affinity to Kashmir. Through a use of historical (Pakistan’s separation from India) and religious (invoking religion i.e. a call for Muslim unity and demonizing references to other religious ideologies) lens, Pakistan’s ideological, cultural and religious dichotomies vis-a-vis India stood reinforced.

Figure 5.4: Extracts from international press in coverage of Parliament attack (Dawn)
5.2.2 The News International (Islamabad edition)

Note: Archives for The News International’s coverage of Parliament attack were not procured, as these were neither available with the newspaper’s office nor could be sourced from any other research consortium/library. Hence, analysis for this particular event has not been conducted.

5.3 MUMBAI TERROR ATTACKS

5.3.1 Dawn (Karachi edition)

For a period from November 27, 2008 to January 31, 2009, seventy-two articles were sourced from Dawn’s e-archives for an analysis of coverage of Mumbai terror attacks. Application of Galtung’s ‘War and Peace journalism’ frame-work resulted into:

Figure 5.5: Bifurcation of articles in Dawn based on Galtung’s frame-work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of articles</th>
<th>72</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>War frame</td>
<td>36 news stories/commentaries/editorials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace frame</td>
<td>22 news stories/commentaries/editorials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral frame</td>
<td>14 news stories/commentaries/editorials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following themes emerged under the ‘war journalism’ frame:

- **Blame and Demonization**
  - Statements from officialdom in both countries
  - Political rhetoric of demonization
  - India’s condemnation of Pakistan backed terror
  - India’s dissatisfaction over steps taken by Pak to tackle terror
- Indian refusal to share evidence
- Rising border tensions and possibility of armed conflict

- **Pakistan’s reaction**
  - Response to India’s accusations
  - Pakistan’s extension of cooperation to India
  - Denial of accusations put by India
  - Pakistan’s counter-offensive (*Round one to Pakistan, Jan 3*)

- **Conspiracy theory**
  - References to Hindu extremism in India
  - Involvement of home-grown Indian militants
  - Concern for the ‘Indian Muslim’

- **Elite/International opinion**
  - US opinion and role in Indo-Pak mediation
  - Impact of tensions on the war on terror
  - Political opinion in Pakistan

The following themes emerged under the ‘peace journalism’ and ‘neutral’ frame:

- **Solutions to the Indo-Pak conflict**
  - Roots of the dispute
  - Probable solutions to the dispute (*Smoking the peace pipe, Nov 28*)

- **Cooperation & Restraint**
  - Identification of common threats like terrorism (*Fighting terror jointly, Nov 29*)

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20 *Zardari warns India not to over-react*, Nov 29

21 *Zardari offers India unconditional help*, Dec 2

22 *Pakistan must co-operate in Mumbai probe: Rice*, Dec 1
Solidarity with India

Co-operation with India at a time of crisis

Condemnation of hawkish elements on both sides

- **Impact on peace process**

- Long term impact on Indo-Pak relations

- Denouncement of war hysteria (*Nothing to gain from war*, Dec 24)

- Voices of peace, role of civil society

- **People-centric concerns**

- Root causes of conflict

- Impact of conflict on people

- Regional cooperation and progress

- Soft areas of cooperation between India & Pakistan

- **Media’s role**

- Critical reflections on the media’s role (*Indian media advisory*, Dec 6)

- Dynamics of media-state interface

- Comparisons between the coverage in Indian & Pakistani media (*What war means*, Dec 12)

- Recommendations and suggestions on the media’s role in conflict

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23 *We will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with India: Government*, Nov 30

24 *Where’s the dialogue?* - Jan 24

25 Under the frame of ‘people-centric concerns’, commentaries addressed systemic, structural inequalities and injustice that precipitate a conflict. Better living conditions for people in both countries by reducing military expenditure and strengthening regional cooperation were advocated (For example, India’s tragedy (Dec 8); Coping with the Mumbai fallout (Dec 13); A dream gone sour (Dec 17)).
Inferences:

• Despite the Mumbai attacks being terror attacks for which India blamed Pakistan, out of 72 articles analyzed in Dawn, 22 were categorized under the ‘peace frame’ and 14 under the ‘neutral frame’. Initial coverage in Dawn did not indulge in war-mongering due to a lack of authentic information about the origins, identity and affiliations of the attackers. Resorting to speculation, this newspaper framed Pakistan as a ‘victim’ of Indian allegations and nudged India to look beyond Pakistan in order to identify the real culprits. Initial coverage only highlighted rising tensions between the two.

• Significant frames of analysis that emerged from interpretation of initial reportage were:
  
  ➢ Pakistan as a victim of terror and blame game initiated by India.
  
  ➢ Domestic/home grown angle into the terror attacks (essentially a role of Hindu extremist elements from India).
  
  ➢ Pakistan’s willing cooperation as opposed to India’s disinterest in peaceful negotiation.

• Indian media’s coverage of the attacks was criticised excessively. Both commentators and readers came down heavily on Indian media for indulging in jingoistic and provocative coverage.

• News-frames on ‘Kashmir’ and ‘security/intelligence failure’ were present to a limited extent. The discourse was not Kashmir driven as was the case during coverage of attack on Indian parliament. Few references to the Kashmir issue were found, however coverage was not carried out from the stand-point of Kashmir.

• Even as the Mumbai terror attacks and the attack on India’s parliament were fundamentally different in nature, one could observe similarities in coverage by Dawn. There was a stark difference in the language and stance of this newspaper – aggressive and jingoist coverage (with Kashmir as a reference
frame) during the 2001 attack as compared to toned down and mature coverage (without Kashmir as the reference frame) in 2008.

- Indian outrage and consequent blame on Pakistan
- Pakistani denial and defense of its stance
- Criticism of Indian media’s role
- Pakistan’s commitment to the fight against terror
- Role of and reactions from The United States

- Coverage in Dawn reinforced that terrorism was a common enemy against whom India and Pakistan ought to unite. Sufferings of Pakistani citizens at the hands of extremists, penetration of violence and terrorism in the Pakistani society and Pakistani state’s struggle against non-state elements were at the centre-stage.

- Few opinion pieces and editorials expressed sympathy with victims of the terror attacks; showed consideration for India’s concerns vis-à-vis Pakistan and displayed a tone of admittance over problems that plagued Pakistan and its after effects on India. (India deserves more than sympathy, by Mahir Ali - Dec 3).

- Dawn remained pre-occupied with the news-frame of ‘Indian Muslims as victims’ of apathy and neglect by Indian state. Among several news-frames that permeated its coverage, particularly through the medium of reader’s opinions were those that raised concerns over the plight of Indian Muslims and discrimination against minorities in India. (Far away from peace by Dr Tariq Rahman - Dec 2, Mumbai rekindles debate Letter – Dec 5).

### 5.3.2 The News International (Islamabad edition)

For the News’ coverage of the Mumbai terror attacks, the researcher procured and analyzed 139 articles/commentaries through an application of Galtung’s ‘War and Peace Journalism’ frame-work. Details of the same are as presented below:
Table 5.5 – Division of month-wise articles in The News and bifurcation on the basis of ‘frames’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month-wise bifurcation</th>
<th>No. of Stories/Commentaries</th>
<th>Frame – War/Peace/Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27th – 30th Nov, 2008</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>War Journalism Peace Journalism Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st – 31st Dec, 2008</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>85 29 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st – 31st Jan, 2009</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following themes emerged under the ‘war journalism’ frame:

- **Blame and Denial**
  - Blame on India for the attack
  - Blame on India’s security related issues
  - Denial of Pakistan’s involvement
  - Absolving Pakistan of Indian accusations
  - Criticism of India’s unwillingness to share evidence
  - Doubts on the credibility of Indian evidence

- **Demonization & Conspiracy**
  - Reference to ‘rising’ Hindu extremism in India
  - Discrimination faced by Indian Muslims
  - Radicalization of Indian Muslims
  - Indian belligerence and aggression
  - Criticism of India as a whole
  - Collusion of Indo-US interests
- India’s evil designs to defame Pakistan

- **Pakistan’s stance**
  - Superiority and legitimacy of Pakistani response
  - Pakistan’s attempts at cooperation
  - Pakistan’s moral high ground on terrorism
  - Emphasis on international mediation
  - Pakistan’s cooperative posture vs Indian aggression
  - Criticism of ‘weak’ and ‘soft’ reaction (on part of the state)
  - Role of non-state actors in the attacks

- **International opinion**
  - Positive opinions about Pakistan
  - Favourable projection of Pak at the international level
  - International solidarity and support to Pak
  - Positive role in the fight against terrorism
  - US response and US role vis-a-vis India-Pak

Following themes emerged under the ‘peace journalism’ and ‘neutral’ frame:

- **Regional & people-centric perspectives**
  - Interests of South Asia post the attack\(^\text{26}\)
  - Human security and demilitarization in South Asia
  - People’s perspective on rising tensions (*Heart of the matter* – Editorial, Dec 16)
  - Highlighting futility of war (*Say no to war* – Op-Ed, Dec 25)

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• **Terrorism**
  
  - Terrorism as common enemy of both countries\(^{27}\)
  - Reality of terrorism in Pakistan (addressed both by readers and commentators)
  - Call for cooperation to fight terrorism jointly

• **Peace process**
  
  - Cooperation and restraint (*Pakistan and India: two big fools* – Letter (Dec 16))\(^{vi}\)
  - Dangers of nuclear war (*Death and war* – Letter (Dec 17))
  - Concerns faced by common people as a result of tensions\(^{28}\)
  - Impact on sporting and cultural ties\(^{29}\)

• **Miscellaneous**
  
  - Introspection of the Pakistani state and society (post the attacks)
  - Criticism of the media’s role\(^{30}\)
  - Stories of truce and cooperation (early January coverage - *Pakistan, India exchange nuclear lists*, (Jan 2))

**Inferences:**

- The News unequivocally condemned the Mumbai attacks. As far as Pakistan’s role was concerned, a range of voices were present with unanimity only about Pakistan’s innocence and non-involvement. An introspective frame was invoked through commentaries that accepted Pakistan’s problem of terrorism and religious extremism (*A few days in Mumbai*: Op-Ed (Dec 2, 2008) by Kamila Hyat). Discourse in The News came across as accommodative of

\(^{27}\) *From Marriott to Mumbai* (Jan 24, 2009) by S Iltikhar Murshed

\(^{28}\) *Cost of war* – Op-Ed (Jan 25, 2009) by Dr. Farrukh Saleem

\(^{29}\) *Stop the sledging* – Op-Ed (Dec 23, 2008) by Tridivesh Singh

alternative opinions and even critical of the Pakistani state’s support to terrorists. It demonstrated boldness and vision in owning up to the threats that plagued Pakistan.

- Repeated references were made to the role of Hindu extremists in the attack (in the sense of a conspiracy, eg: *Beware, A Sinister Game is Being Played* (Dec 5, 2008) by Shireen M Mazari). Any blame on Pakistan was examined in terms of an attempt to malign Islam. A religious frame was invoked in terms of viewing the attacks from perspective of not only Pakistan’s Muslims but also South Asia’s Muslims.

- Role of the US in the entire imbroglio was framed in terms of the ‘war on terror’, its support to India in context of the attacks and Pakistan’s role in eliminating extremism. A critical and accusatory tone was adopted to discuss the role in terms of US support to India and its admonishing of Pakistan. At the same, through the use of a ‘pro-Pakistan international opinion’ frame, the newspaper looked to endorsement from the US. Especially in the letters section, readers expressed angst over the US stance, meek response by the Pakistan government and United Nations resolution against Pakistan (*Giving in to foreign pressure?* – Letters, Dec 14). Backdrop of the war against terror loomed heavily over the coverage.

- Among reader responses published in this newspaper, one set of reactions came across as particularly aggressive and demanding of a strong Pakistani response to Indian belligerence (a call to ban Indian TV and movies – *No Indian TV, please* -Dec 9). Another set of responses reflected maturity and called for cooperation and restraint while abhoring the idea of war (*Say no to war*, Dec 24). The expression of extreme sentiments was reflective of the manner in which popular opinion was involved in the India-Pak conundrum. Letters section in the Pakistani press was at the centre-point of anti-India sentiments.
Throughout the coverage, framing of the attack emphasized:

- Pakistan as an equal victim of ‘terror’
- Pakistan’s mature and cooperative response as opposed to India’s belligerent and accusatory posture
- References to conspiracy theory, stage managed attack, extremism in India and Indian attempts at maligning Pakistan.
- Sharp criticism of what was seen as the government’s soft posturing vis-à-vis India, making the Pakistani position vulnerable.

Specific disapproval was reserved for Indian media’s role in context of the attacks. It was accused of giving pitch to negative coverage about Pakistan, finger-pointing and fanning emotions and opinions against Pakistan. A few commentaries also came down heavily upon Pakistani media’s role.

Limited discussion on identity of Ajmal Kasab (one of the main attackers, captured eventually) was found. Reference to his Pakistani identity began only in the month of January. Unlike Indian newspapers that gathered and reported information on Kasab’s Pakistani connection, press in Pakistan turned defensive by denying Kasab’s Pakistani nationality.

Opinions from international community were limited to power elites such as the US, UK and China. Opinions from other international players were not covered as vigorously as of those who possessed power and status in international relations to win over strategic as well as diplomatic approval for Pakistan’s stand.

Data on frames pertaining to war, peace journalism and neutral frames conveyed an attempt on the newspaper’s part to present diversity in opinions, as also examine problems from a more holistic (as opposed to isolated) perspective. Sheer number of ‘peace’ and ‘neutral’ frames is reflective of an endeavour to balance extreme opinions emerging from a post-Mumbai scenario.
5.4 LoC BEHEADING/BORDER CLASHES

5.4.1 Dawn (Karachi edition)

**Period of analysis:** 6\(^{th}\) Jan - 6\(^{th}\) March, 2013

**Total no. of articles** = 90

- News articles = 68
- Op-ed/Commentaries = 13
- Letters by Readers = 09

Dawn’s coverage of border clashes between India and Pakistan included commentaries from Indian and Pakistani journalists, peace activists, lawyers, bloggers and experts occupying elite governmental positions.

**Emergent Themes:**

- **Blame on the ‘other’** – Each side held the ‘other’ responsible for ceasefire violation and claimed innocence on their part. Sources for the discourse on ‘blame’ were rooted in information coming from the official apparatus i.e. the state and the military. For example, *Indian troops violate LoC, raid security checkpost: ISPR & Indians cross LoC, kill soldier at post* – (Jan 6).

- **Strong and forceful Pakistani response** – News stories and reports conveyed a strong stance adopted by Pakistan against India’s aggression. Nationalistic frames were employed to reinforce Pakistan’s readiness to retaliate Indian moves with force. Such reports emphasised on the need for national solidarity and unity at the hour of crisis.

- **Diplomatic steps** – Heightened diplomatic activity after the border tensions and a flurry of diplomatic steps taken by both countries were duly highlighted (*Pakistan lodges protest over ‘unprovoked’ Indian attack*, Jan 7). The coverage of diplomatic activity covered statements by leaders and political elite (*FM Khar says ‘India war-mongering’*, Jan 16).
• **International opinion** – Opinions that poured in from across the world, calling upon both countries to maintain truce. These opinions though were position favourably towards Pakistan (*China calls for calm along LoC*, Jan 7 & *US seeks end to LoC firing*, Jan 9).

• **Kashmir/International mediation** – Dawn carried articles that called for a prominent role to be given to the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) in the Indo-Pak dispute. Discourse was critical of Indian activities in Kashmir, consistently linking border tensions to the Kashmir issue (*Black day against Indian shelling*, Jan 11). Specific references to Kashmir as a Muslim majority state were made to reinforce legitimacy of Pakistan’s claim on Kashmir.\(^{31}\)

• **Role of Indian media** – Criticism of Indian media’s role (specifically broadcast media) for presenting an exaggerated and overtly nationalistic account of events at the border.\(^{32}\)

• **Peace process and CBMs** – Impact of border tensions on Indo-Pak relations and assessment of future relations was carried out (*LoC incidents not to affect Pakistan-India dialogue, hopes Khar*: (Jan 10) & *Violation of ceasefire may damage peace efforts* (Feb 1). Negative impact of tensions on sporting and cultural relations was also deliberated upon.\(^{ix}\)

• **Other themes** – Among other themes that emerged during coverage were persistent efforts for truce from both sides, criticism of India’s belligerent posture and reference to rise of right-wing extremism in India.

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31 Kashmir, a Muslim-majority territory, has been the cause of two of their three wars since independence from Britain in 1947... In - Pakistan protests ‘repeated, unacceptable’ Indian violations (Jan 11).

32 “Most TV channels in Delhi had a field day often with hawkish statements by analysts and anchors alike, including a recurring demand for hot pursuit of Pakistani troops.... In - Pakistan, India want to avoid escalation: India’s ‘deepest concern’ conveyed to Pak diplomat: Jan 10.
Inferences:

• With respect to themes that emerged from the analysis followed by an application of Entman’s theory of framing, it was quite evident that news stories presented a picture of Pakistan’s willingness, good intentions and cooperation to improve relations with India as opposed to Indian refusal to budge from belligerence. (‘peaceful’ and ‘pro-dialogue’ versus ‘aggressive’ and ‘belligerent’). Each side thus attributed hawkish behaviour to the ‘other’.

• Aggressive statements made by Indian political elite were selectively highlighted to reinforce that India was indulging in war preparations and Pakistan needed to be constantly on alert in order to counter the enemy’s threat. A probable war-like scenario was thereby created. Army became the primary source of information for the reportage; significant especially in case of the Pakistani media that shares a complex relationship with the army.

• Few opinion pieces took a comprehensive and holistic view of border tensions by not limiting its examination to the realm of hostile Indo-Pak relations (Shooting in the dark – Jawed Naqvi: Jan 10). Coverage attempted to identify factors at the root of India-Pak troubles and those that were a hindrance to the relationship’s normalization (Indian PM talks tough over LoC flare-up – Jawed Naqvi - Jan 15 and India-Pakistan ping pong by Amit Baruah - Jan 14). India’s electronic media and the opposition party, BJP were identified to be culprits propelling a negative and hyped up relation from Indian state.

• While beheading and mutilation of Indian soldiers were prime movers of coverage in the Indian press, the same frame was employed to depict India’s evil designs in the Pakistani press. Even as Indian press played up issues of beheading and mutilation to frame Pakistan as ‘barbaric’ and ‘inhuman’, there was silence with regard to this in the Pakistani press (apart from denial and claim of innocence).

• Reportage about border clashes was carried out in context of similar such clashes in the past. Facts and figures about past violations were unearthed and substantiated to pin blame of the present incident on the ‘other’. Few reports did state that ceasefire violations were carried out by both sides with impunity,
however no attempt was made to find out which side was actually responsible for the present clashes. Thus, media’s choice of contextual understanding is politically motivated by an agenda (in this case to prove Indian guilt and Pakistani innocence).

- Dawn, in particular, sourced information in form of news stories and opinions from the mainstream Indian media to validate criticism of the Indian viewpoint and vindicate Pakistan’s innocence in the incident. Examples are reports sourced from Indian TV channels like Times Now and NDTV.

5.4.2 The News International (Islamabad edition)

Period of analysis: 6th Jan -6th March, 2013

Total no. of articles = 52

- News articles = 27
- Op-ed/Commentaries = 20
- Letters by Readers = 05

The News’ coverage of border clashes between India and Pakistan included opinions expressed by former ambassadors, retired military and air force officials, analysts on South Asian affairs, Indian journalists, editors, researchers, human rights and civil society activists and people with governmental affiliations.

Emergent Themes:

- Reactions and Counter-reactions – India’s hysterical reactions to the border clashes, Indian attempts at war mongering, blame on the Indian army for cross border violations (Indian attack on LoC repulsed, Jan 7), lodging protests and issue of warnings by Pakistan, Indian campaign to malign Pakistan, criticism of Indian non-cooperation and belligerence.

- Conspiracy theory – Conspiracy by ‘enemy’ India to put blame on Pakistan, role of hawks and hard liners in India. Coverage hinted to two

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33 The Line of Control: Op-Ed by Shazad Chaudry (Jan 11)
kinds of conspiracies on India’s part – one dealt with an explanation that the border clashes were a work of anti-Pakistan, anti-Congress groups in India that were opposed to any reconciliation with Pakistan. The second explanation dealt with a probable involvement of the Indian establishment in these confrontations to deliberately shift attention from the actual problems of governance (*Reaction in India to skirmishes on LoC* - Abdul Marwat, Jan 31).

- **Third party mediation** – Call for a third party to intervene in the Indo-Pak dispute, absolute support of and legitimacy for international mediation, strong pitch for a pro-active role on part of the UNMOGIP.

- **Role of Indian media** – Sharp criticism of Indian media’s role for inflaming public opinion and jeopardizing peace, denouncing Indian TV news media for its role in war mongering, generating phobia and creating war rhetoric.

- **Peace process** – Prospects for the future of Indo-Pak relations, impact of ceasefire violations on the peace process, commitment to cause of peace by some sections in both countries.

**Inferences:**

- Comparison of coverage of border clashes in Indian vis-a-vis Pakistani newspapers clearly indicated an emergence of binary (opposite) frames on pertinent issues related to the event. Contradictory versions from the standpoint of both governments as well as military officials were seen. For instance, while employing the ‘victim-perpetrator’ frame, Pakistani press positioned Pakistan as victim of Indian provocations on the LoC (India as perpetrator) whereas Indian press did exactly opposite to it.

- Pakistan’s response to the border clashes was presented as ‘peaceful’, ‘mature’ and ‘responsible’, while the Indian response was framed as an anti-thesis of these very values i.e. ‘aggressive’, ‘belligerent’ and ‘irresponsible’.

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34 The ‘victim-perpetrator’ frame signifies either side in the conflict invoking victimhood and presenting the ‘other’ as an aggressor/perpetrator. In this case, both the Indian and Pakistani press indulge in such a framing.
• Issues of beheading and mutilation of Indian soldiers were absent from the coverage in News. In contrast, Indian newspapers were full of details on beheading and mutilation in form of stories and opinions that addressed angry reactions emanating from the Indian leadership.

• The News selectively sourced information and reports from the mainstream Indian media (specifically The Hindu newspaper) to put forward a pro-Pakistan and anti-India demeanour to the incident. For example, *A question of India’s honour?* - Asif Ezdi, (Jan 14).

• The News addressed in a limited way, root cause behind the LoC confrontation i.e. construction attempts at the border by the Indian army. However, this was overshadowed by official political rhetoric surrounding the incident. Only a select section of the Indian press (notably The Hindu) chose to address this aspect.

• During incidences such as border clashes and border violence, media is heavily depended on sources in the armed forces for obtaining first-hand information. The information given, however, could rarely be verified. Hence, media on both sides remain free to create ‘enemy images’ and reinforce antagonistic public opinion. It can be concluded that during border clashes, media on both sides frame issues in a similar manner showing the ‘other’ in a negative light.

• Overall coverage in The News was a mundane representation of facts and counter-facts about the incident, with a purpose to reinforce dominant ideas related to India-Pakistan conflict. As a result, alternative perspectives could hardly emerge.

5.5 THE HANGING OF AFZAL GURU

5.5.1 Dawn (Karachi edition)

Themes that emerged in Dawn following Afzal Guru’s execution were as described below:
• **Reactions to the execution** – Reactions from prominent leaders especially from Azad Jammu and Kashmir, reactions from the military and common man in Pakistan surfaced in the coverage. These reactions condemned the act with anger and hatred, framing the Indian state apparatus in an extremely negative light. For example, *Afzal Guru’s hanging condemned in AJK*, Feb 9. The execution was also criticised in terms of a ‘denial of justice’ to Guru and his family and doubts were laid over political motivations behind his execution (*The evolving scenarios*, Feb 13 & *A reprehensible act – A G Noorani*, Feb 22).

• **Kashmir** – Stories pertaining to Kashmir brought forth the tense situation in the region, people’s reactions to the execution, security situation and clashes between protestors and army (*India imposes curfew in Kashmir after Afzal Guru’s execution*, Feb 9 & *Clashes in Kashmir continue*, Feb 12). Other than these routine stories, commentaries threw light on innovative means of protest employed by Kashmiris in the post-execution scenario (*Kashmir’s new age of dissent*, Feb 15). A dominant frame was support to the cause of Kashmir’s freedom (*Indian atrocities condemned*, Feb 14 & *Guru’s hanging to add new impetus to freedom struggle*, March 3).

• **Impact** – Impact of the execution in terms of ‘politics’ and ‘security’ on India-Pakistan relations and the Kashmir region were discussed in commentaries and letters by readers (*India’s self-goal in the Valley*, Feb 26). Some commentaries were predictive in nature and tried to assess the future course of Indo-Pak relations based on a scenario that evolved post Guru’s execution.

**Inferences:**

• Both Indian and Pakistani press framed Guru’s execution in terms of Kashmir. However, this framing was carried out in a contradictory manner as Indian press heavily relied on the ‘security’ frame whereas Pakistani press relied on frames of ‘injustice’, ‘human rights abuse’ and ‘freedom’ while referring to Kashmir.
Another binary framing observed in Indian and Pakistani press was description of Guru’s activities and life. Indian press referred to him as a ‘terrorist’ and ‘conspirator’ in the attack on India’s Parliament (2001). As opposed to this, Pakistani press entitled him with glory of a ‘martyr’, ‘hero’ who had sacrificed his life for the cause of Islam and Kashmir. For instance, a report on February 18 (Guru told his family to be proud of him) described contents of a letter written by Guru to his family, in which he instructed them to be bold and proud about him embracing death for a righteous cause\textsuperscript{xii}.

The execution’s criticism was framed from the stand-point of India’s unjust rule in Kashmir and popular backlash to Indian presence in the region. Stories on Kashmir evidently simmered with anti-India sentiments. Condemning the execution not only from the perspective of justice and rights, commentaries in Dawn offered reference to the state of Indian Muslims, providing a religious undertone to the issue. For instance, in a commentary by Gowhar Geelani on February 11 (Kashmir on the boil after Guru’s hanging), the author mentions that the “action (of the execution) has deeply hurt the sentiments of more than one crore Kashmiris in particular and the Muslim population in general.”

In an observation that emanated from both Dawn in particular and the Pakistani press in general, reference to the present Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was found repeatedly. He was identified as a right-wing extremist leader and India’s prospective PM. Media discourse in Pakistan expressed concern over his rise in Indian politics at the national level.

5.5.2 The News International (Islamabad edition)

Themes that emerged in The News International’s coverage of Afzal Guru’s execution were as described below:

- **Reactions to the execution** – Strong and stern reactions that condemned the execution, described it as ‘judicial murder’, highlighted the grave injustice manifest through the execution, criticism of loopholes in the judicial and legal process that led to the execution. For example, Afzal Guru’s hanging ‘judicial murder’ (Feb 11) & To what end? (Feb 12).
• **Kashmir** – Impact of the execution on peace in Kashmir, broader concerns of Kashmiri people and their freedom struggle, future of the region and its people, setback to the resolution on Kashmir (*A political execution* by Asif Ezdi, Feb 18).

• **State of Indian Muslims** – Concern for conditions of Indian Muslims in general and Kashmir Muslims in particular, discrimination meted out to Indian Muslims, growing power of Hindu nationalists in India. For instance, a news report titled *Guru’s hanging celebrated in India* (Feb 10), made use of extremely negative undertones right from the story headline. It depicted ‘Hindus’ as celebrating the killing of a Muslim (Afzal Guru) to showcase antagonism displayed by Hindus in India towards Muslims. It came across as a highly provocative report with an intending to promote religious disharmony.

**Inferences:**

• This newspaper particularly looked at Afzal Guru’s hanging from the perspective of the Kashmir issue and linked it with India’s reluctance to resolve the dispute. The agenda was to bring a discussion on Kashmir to the forefront of Indo-Pak relations.

• The News gave a religious undertone to many issues especially by highlighting condition of Indian Muslims and growing power of Hindu nationalists in India’s political fabric. A dichotomy of ‘India versus Pakistan’ and ‘Hindu versus Muslim’ colored the coverage. The ‘victimhood’ frame was employed in reference to India’s Muslims and their status in Indian democracy. For instance, Aijaz Syed’s column *A judicial murder and desperate politicians* (Feb 14) weaved different arguments into a common theme i.e. the state of India’s Muslims. He specifically critiqued the Congress party for using Muslims as vote-banks and practicing politics of vendetta. The ‘victimhood’ frame asserted Pakistani media’s nature to cling to the baggage of partition while reporting on issues related to minorities in India.

• The hanging was framed as a negative, conniving and evil event manifest of Indian (read negative) intentions and was examined and framed from the prism of Kashmir and Religion.
5.6 INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSION

5.6.1 Comparative Inferences – Dawn and The News International

The present chapter analysed two major Pakistani newspapers as part of the study sample, namely Dawn and The News International. Focus of the analysis rested on eliciting themes and frames from data procured. An event specific analysis with help of particular theoretical frame-works was used to extract dominant patterns from coverage. Resultantly, the researcher drew inferences with reference to each newspaper’s role in a particular event of conflict/peace. At the same time, this exercise in analysis and interpretation aided drawing up of generic conclusion about media’s role in conflict mediation. Following comparative inferences were derived for coverage in select newspapers:

- **Dawn** – While apparently there was not much difference in reportage of Dawn vis-a-vis The News, on closer scrutiny, coverage in Dawn was found to be more exhaustive, nuanced and positioned on a broader canvass in contrast to The News. Exhaustive, because the reportage in Dawn not only accommodated a diverse range of opinions, but also attempted to explore issues in-depth. Coverage of events was not limited to news stories, commentaries, opinions and letters. Instead it extended to a wide range of innovative communicative features such as niche columns (for instance Dawn 50 years ago Today – a column that linked historical events to present context), commentaries by experts, opinions by Indian authors and satirical cartoons that projected serious issues in a humorous manner. Even as the newspaper employed tried and tested news frames, its communication agenda was to attract readers to a wide range of opinions. Especially, the edit page in Dawn was devoted to a multi-dimensional scrutiny of issues under concern. It provided a balance of opinions and facts, presented from the stand-point of experts and regular readers, adding to richness of coverage.

   Specifically, front, national and international pages were devoted to news stories related to India-Pakistan conflict, whereas the opinion page (pg 6) put forth deliberations based on views of experts, scholars, political elites. Discourse in both Dawn and The News was limited to certain news-frames.
meant to forward a pre-set agenda. Aim of coverage was to mobilize public opinion in favour of Pakistan’s stand vis-a-vis India. Coverage on issues such as Kashmir, growing Hindu nationalism in India, discrimination against India’s Muslims toed an official (statist) line. However, Dawn’s reportage was overtly critical of the Pakistani state’s actions and response to India on several issues such as the diplomatic offensive spearheaded by India against Pakistan (2001), Indian campaign to defame Pakistan in 2008 (post the Mumbai attacks) and border clashes in 2013. Despite adopting a favourable bent towards the Pakistani government’s stand on peace and conflict issues, Dawn’s reportage was a blend of subtle tone of support as well as sharp criticism of government actions. However, one could observe the absence of debate on aspects such as ‘nationalism’, ‘ideology’ on the basis of which Pakistan was created. Complete reverence to the ‘idea’ of Pakistan was what Dawn’s reportage followed wherein even though questioning of governmental actions was encouraged, questions over ideology and nationalism were limited. Dawn, came across as a bold newspaper whose discourse on Indo-Pak issues did not hesitate in raising uncomfortable questions on intricate issues such as Islamic terrorism, Kashmir, Indo-Pak discord and the state of Pakistan’s society and democracy. Overall, Dawn’s reportage of events select events in the study was intellectually stimulating.

- **The News International** – The News is a partner in the ‘Aman ki Asha’ (Hope for Peace) campaign with The Times of India since 2010. Due to this collaboration between an Indian and a Pakistani newspaper, it was relevant to analyze coverage of Indo-Pak issues in The News. Due to limited archival availability of reportage in The News, the study remained restricted to those events for which data could be procured. In case of The News, data for reportage on Indian Parliament attack could not be obtained; as a result of

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35 Dawn was founded by Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah in the pre-partition era and was a prominent player in the separation and creation of Pakistan from undivided India. These historical roots of Dawn are reflected in its total commitment to the ideology on which Pakistan was created i.e. as a homeland for South Asia’s Muslims. Commitment to such an ideology has led it to repeatedly question neutrality of Indian state vis-a-vis India’s Muslims and reinforcement of the Hindu versus Muslim dichotomy.
which the researcher decided to juxtapose the same with the coverage on Afzal Guru’s execution (main accused in the Parliament attack case). Coverage of Indo-Pak issues in The News was carried out primarily from a nationalistic prism, with an agenda to forward and strengthen Pakistan’s position in the discord. A feature of the coverage was emphasis on routine and fact based news stories as compared to opinion-based commentaries. Compared to coverage in Dawn, The News exercised limitations in terms of sources, opinions and range of views accommodated. There were hardly any niche columns or innovative communication strategies employed in The News to convey a positive opinion about Pakistan’s stand in the discord with India. Coverage was routine and jingoistic in nature, positing itself on enmity with India and reinforcing dichotomous frames in both peace and conflict. The broad canvass on which Dawn operated was also missing in The News; since coverage remained limited to opinions emanating from political elites and military. More than The News, one could find Indian opinions prominently surfacing in Dawn’s coverage. Whereas Dawn experimented with its coverage on issues of peace and conflict, The News did not indulge in any such experiment. Commentary in The News provided a limited perspective on problems that afflicted Pakistani state and society, instead choosing to focus its energies solely on examining the Indo-Pak conflict from the stand-point of ‘nationalism’, ‘religion’, ‘Kashmir’. Both The Times of India and The News, despite their commitment to peace journalism in form of ‘Aman ki Asha’ campaign did not refrain from producing coverage that was nationalistic, jingoistic and demonizing of the ‘other’. Thus, even a formal commitment to peace does not deter media from reporting on issues of conflict and war, as a result of which exploring possibilities of peace is confined to news frames about people to people contact, economic ties, civil society contact and cultural relations.

Comparative inferences drawn for coverage in Dawn and The News resulted in several news frames that emerged as common – namely the ones on Kashmir, elite political opinion, international opinion on the Indo-Pak discord, call for third party mediation in the dispute, use of religious frames and derision of Indian actions/responses. Both newspapers expressed strong
nationalistic sentiments towards some issues, and a moderate stance on others. However, objectivity and neutrality as news values were lacking in addition to balanced sensibilities that could have probably led to an alternative discourse being accommodated in coverage.

Table 5.6: Summary of Prominent Coverage Frames in Dawn & The News

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kashmir as focal point of the discourse in Pakistan</th>
<th>Elite political opinion, public opinion and reactions to events of peace and conflict</th>
<th>People’s concerns, human interests, human security, South Asian security &amp; CBMs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divergent opinions on Kashmir as ‘core issue’</td>
<td>International opinion, role of international community in Indo-Pak relations</td>
<td>Political rhetoric, conspiracy theories, opposition of Hindu vs Muslim interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repression and violence in Kashmir, Kashmir’s freedom struggle</td>
<td>Terrorism, security, militarization and nuclearization, blame-game and demonization</td>
<td>Peace process, bilateral relations, media’s role, diplomatic activity, restraint and cooperation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes

i A sharp distinction between Indian and Pakistani commentators (in the op-ed section) pointed out to differences in agenda that persisted throughout coverage in Dawn. While Indian commentators suggested that Kashmir be discussed along with other issues related to CBMs, Pakistani commentators toed the official line about discussion on Kashmir prior to any other issue.

ii In another sharply antagonistic frame in the Pakistani press, reference to the Kashmir issue was very often made in terms of an anti-Hindu news frame (equivalent to anti-India), alleging that India was presenting a flawed version of Kashmir’s history before partition. In an opinion piece on July 11 in The News, Iffat Gulzar writes “...People of Kashmir pray for an end to the miseries and agonies that they are being subjected to under rapacious Hindu menagerie”. Here, we not only find a nationalistic news frame in place but also demonization employed to pit one community against the other. In another example, while the Pakistani press framed Musharraf’s breakfast meeting with Indian editors as Pakistan’s diplomatic victory, Indian press blamed the meeting for breakdown of the summit.

iii Some of the articles had a prescriptive and normative orientation, trying to suggest measures that should to be taken by both countries to ensure dispute resolution.

iv Distribution and categorization of articles and commentaries under the ‘peace’ and ‘neutral’ frame is a clear reflection of the media’s ability to contribute to conversations and discourse other than ‘war/conflict’ between enemy nation-states. Number of news-frames under these categories is reflective of a balanced, accommodative and diverse approach towards conflict mediation as demonstrated in Dawn, even in an extremely limited sense.

v For this understanding promulgated in reportage, the alleged involvement of Hindu extremists in Samjhauta Express and Malegaon blasts was used as a reference point.

vi Notably editorial pieces in The News strongly advocated restraint on part of both countries by drawing attention to the common threat of terrorism.

vii See the frame on International Opinion discussed earlier in the same section.

viii Such readers were pre-dominantly retired army and air force personnel who had participated and fought in wars with India.

ix Shiv Sena protests against Pakistani players in HIL (Jan 14), India suspends new visa scheme for Pakistanis (Jan 15), Pakistani hockey players sent home by India (Jan 15), Indo-Pak friendship: The phoenix without wings (Jan 21), Suspension of visa after LoC incident – Letter (Jan 25).

x I expect all my commanders at the Line of Control to be both aggressive and offensive in the face of provocation and fire (quote of Indian army chief) In - Indian army chief accuses Pakistan of planning deadly Kashmir incident, (Jan 14).

xi In both Pakistani newspapers selected for study, coverage of border clashes was full of political rhetoric in form of statements and responses from governments on both sides. Entire coverage was based on official reactions emerging in India and Pakistan. For instance, Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh’s statement “It cannot be business as usual” (Business with Pakistan can’t be as usual: Singh, Jan 16) was duly covered in
both Dawn and News to highlight India’s extremely stern and harsh response to the entire incident.

xii Guru’s identity was framed in different ways in Pakistani newspapers – as a Kashmiri, devout Muslim, patriot, martyr, hero and a symbol of Kashmiri resistance against India.

xii An analytical comparison of Dawn’s coverage of the Parliament attack (2001) vis-a-vis Mumbai terror attacks (2008) revealed a more aggressively nationalistic stance adopted in the former’s coverage as compared to composed, subtle and balanced tone in coverage of the later.