Portrayal of Victims of Global Conflict in US, Indian and Pakistani Press

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Abstract

The article claims that one way to be used use the proximity in empirical analyses of framing victims of international conflicts is to measure the religious proximity and their intention of intervention between the media of reporting country and conflicting parties. Using qualitative content analysis, our research will demonstrate that religious proximity and intervention intention is related to successful framing of conflicting victims, building in the hypothesized direction: The closer the proximity between reporting country and conflict actor, the greater the chance that the actor will be highly empathized and the opposite side framing will be highly brutalized. The study analyzes each story with four functional frames suggested by Entman. Research will focus that media of reporting countries will frame victims and actor of each conflict with respect to their proximity bound based on political, cultural and economic relation.

Key Words: Proximity, International Conflict, Victim, Framing, News Media

Introduction

Since the finish of the Cold war there have been countless international conflicts that have concerned the death of millions of people and the agony and misery of millions more. In all of these conflict the media contributed an important role (Betz, 2011). However, it is furthermore setback that the extent to which the media allocate priority to covering one conflict rather than another in highly questioning that why media give coverage to some conflict and neglect the other (Hawkins, 2016). In post-cold war scenario, research further suggests that the depiction of conflict in USA/Western media depends on the intention of intervention of their respected state. If a state wants to intervene in any conflict then media index this intervention for the respected state. In such situation where intervention is required media starts portraying conflict as "barbaric". It has been scrutinized that "barbaric" conflicts are depicted as a breach of human rights, with clearly highlighting "victims" and "villains", and are depicted as valuable of intervention (Bajoria & McMahon, 2013).

In barbaric narrative media highly emphasize the victimization of victims and in doing so, strongly create the opposite side as villain or oppressor. Iraqi intervention is the best example of "barbaric" narrative, international forces jumped in the conflict by framing Iraqis as victim of Saddam Hussain. Media for the sake of intervention clearly presented Saddam Hussain as a villain, and Iraqi people as victims. Same is the situation in Syria, where Syrian government and Bashar al-Assad are depicted as oppressor and villain of the conflict (Averre & Davies, 2015). Therefore, in barbaric narrative media tends to create a binary of "victims" and "villain", just to intervene in any conflict. These intervention desires then create a third party which is "hero" or benefactor to the victims. In most of the cases these benefactor or hero is either USA army or Western/NATO allied forces. This depiction indexed by the media, legitimize the "intervention" in the particular conflict. Therefore, media help as facilitator for their government to give them enough legitimate reason to jump into the conflict. As a result victimization of the victims plays an important role for intervention in any conflict. This

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intervention is named humanitarian intervention which is depicted to protect the Human rights of the poor victims (Orford, 2003).

Conversely where state does not want intervention, the respected media starts depicting conflict as confusing battle (Roff, 2013). Where audience are confused to understand who are the victims and who is villain or oppressor. Such framing is done because the respected state does not want to intervene in the conflict and want to have distance from the conflict. In this situation media does not construct the victims or villain, instead conflict is shown as war between two parties where no one is victim and no one is villain, both parties are attacking each other. Here the suffering of victims is either missing or confused by labeling them as mindless wars between mindless people or tribes. Second important factor is that such international conflict gets lesser coverage as compare to those conflict where intervention is desired (Roff, 2013)

Humanitarian Intervention

On March 1999 the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) initiated air attack against the Yugoslavia. A variety of grounds were specified for the air attack (Gibbs, 2009). NATO administrator Javier Solana declared that the armed coalition took action for the reason that the Yugoslavia has rejected to fulfill the request of the worldwide community. International act is apparent on the lawful standing of such a deed. Article 2(4) of the United Nation creates an extensive prohibition of the exercise of force, except to two circumstances: self-defense and consent sanctioned by the UN Security Council. Operation Allied Force against the Yugoslavia obviously did not fall within either immunity. There has, however been a long running discussion that a supplementary exemption could allow for humanitarian intervention, explained by Ian Brownlie as 'the treat or utilization of military force by a country or state, with the purpose of shielding human rights. It was obvious that, even though this principle was mentioned by many analyst during and after the action, the acting country or state themselves demonstrated enormous reluctance to rely upon it, certainly, one of the situation for the wrapping up of aggression was the channel of a Security Council decision conceding legitimacy to the eventual settlement (Reisman, 1984).

On the other hand UN charter also protects the sovereignty of the Nations state. The United Nation law, regardless of defending nation-states, has been deduced by some worldwide lawyers and researcher as making exclusion to state autonomy in the situation of extensive human rights breach. This explanation is principally based on the '*Responsibility to Protect*' manuscript, revealed in 2001 by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, which summarize the obligation of other country to interfere in state where mass killing are taking place. So the discussion of human right protection and sovereign state is highly debatable between international lawyer and international relation (Morris, 2013).

Media and Humanitarian Intervention

Intervention is not possible without the role of media; therefore media become the prime agent to convince the public that intervention is necessary. This intervention is normally created by depicting the conflict with primarily two characters: the victims and villain; in next phase, then the media start portraying the role of hero, which is necessary to stop the brutality of villain and to rescue the victims. Orford (2003) asserts that the humanitarian intervention description frequently creates descriptions of community who lives in a country targeted for intervention as "starving, powerless, suffering, abused or helpless victims" in necessitate of liberate. If the victim and protagonist are well-established in any conflict then the question rise, who is performing the function of antagonist or villain? Walzer (2004) explains that intervention narrative is "extremely dependent on the victim/victimizer, good guys/bad guys' model" and asserted that forceful intervention could not be politically probable without it. Nevertheless, the function of the "bad guy" requires adequate intellectual investigation. Conflict scholars have enlightened thorough research that how a state's media frame an "enemy" to its community (Bahador, 2011), but fewer research has been performed relating to descriptions of an aggressor in humanitarian catastrophe. Whereas, the earlier literature has covered the necessitate for heroes and victims in an intervention narrative, current research broaden the theory to describe the significance of a particular "villain" and "victims" earlier to humanitarian intervention and to identify those factors which help in determining the role of "Villain" and "Victims."

Rohingya Conflict

Myanmar has an extensive history of religious and ethnic clash, predominantly clash among Muslim Rohingya and Buddhists. The Rohingya Muslims have long history of their settlement in Rohingya. Local Buddhists and government representative employ the word "illegal Bengalis" and rebuff to accept the word Rohingya for the Muslim, tagging them as illegitimate settler from the neighboring Bangladesh. In recent year, the Muslims were declared as non-citizen in Myanmar. Rohingya Muslims have been publicly sorted out by the administration as unlawful settler from the neighboring Bangladesh. On the other side, the Rohingya Muslims argue to be the residents of Myanmar for many centuries (Afzal, 2016). The government also criticizes anybody nationwide or internationally who employ the word 'Rohingya', and eradicate Muslim from the 2014 census. However numerous independent history scholars believe that quite a lot of reports propose the Rohingya Muslim reside in Myanmar since the 12th century, During British period from 1824 to 1948, a huge number of immigrant laborers arrived Myanmar from neighboring Bangladesh and India. After gaining independence, Myanmar official considered the migration through British period as illegal and denied nationality to a huge portion of Rohingya.

This caused the real conflict between the Rohingya Muslims and Rohingya authorities. In 2012, a conflict started between Rohingya Muslims and Buddhists. Thousands houses of Rohingya minority Muslims were ruined which caused their dislocation. In these clashes mostly, Rohingya Muslims came across more damage and losses from the hands of the Rohingya authorities and the Buddhists community. International Crises Group (2014), reports that according to United Nation figure approximately 310,000 people needing human assistance in Rakhine State. On the other hand state also blames Rohingya Muslim to erupt violence and terror against them. The 2017 armed forces crackdown was provoked by an ambush carried the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), a Muslim rebellious group that murdered 12 security officials at the border posts. Before the latest crackdown, the UN released a document in February 2017 that claimed that military troops "very likely" executed crimes against civilian Muslim. The United Nations human rights officer Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein alleged that Myanmar's newest action of the Rohingya emerge to be a model of ethnic cleansing and condemned the wicked military operation against the Rohingya Muslim in Rakhine province (Islam, 2018).

Research Question

RQ1. Do Pakistani, India and USA Media use barbaric frame or native frame in depicting the victims of Rohingya Conflict?

RQ2. What is the main factor that could might be the reason in framing of Rohingya Victims?

Methodology

In order to examine the coverage of Rohingya conflict victims, three English language newspapers, one from each country, were selected and the content analysis of their news was conducted. A two-month time period was chosen and the news published during August 17 to October 17, 2017 were analyzed. It is relevant to mention that a most of the violence happened in Rohingya during this period of time. To examine frames, the methodology projected by Robert Entmanin was considered for current research project. Entman (2004) recommended analyzing events within the issue by recognizing functions of the frames. In his manuscript, Entman propose analyzing frames identifying an issue, event, and actors (e.g. individuals, groups, nations, etc.). Following each is identified; Entman advocate identify frame functions to analyze the frame. The frame functions comprise of four steps: defining problematic effects/conditions (Problem/What is going on?); identifying cause/agent (Why? /who?); endorsing remedy (What to do? /How to resolve?/What is suggested?); conveying moral judgment (Evaluation. Who is good, bad, neutral, etc.? What is right and wrong? Why is it right or wrong?)(Entman, 2004). To identify the function of frames content analysis was used.

Qualitative Content Analysis

Qualitative content analysis (QCA), on the other hand, allows for greater freedom, as the researcher codes each text using an open ended coding sheet in order to let themes freely emerge from the data. Altheide and

Schneider (2013) identified that there are three steps in Qualitative content analysis. First of all Researcher must identify specific problem, it is necessary step in QCA, specifying problem help to inform appropriate unit of Analysis. Second important step in qualitative content analysis is to explore different sources of information. Lastly in preparing to conduct QCA, researchers must examine several examples of documents in order to determine what the unit of analysis should be. Schreier (2012) defines the unit of analysis as "each case on which qualitative content analysis is carried out".

Population & Sampling

Population consists of all the English elite newspaper of Pakistan, India, and USA. Sample chosen is *The New York Times* of US, *The Times of India* from India and *Daily Dawn* from Pakistan, their stories about Rohingya Crisis published between a period of August 25, 2017 to December 25, 2017 are analyzed. As the latest migration of Rohingya begin after 25 August 2017 attack, so press would have given space in this time period. A single news item has been taken as a unit of analysis.

Results and Finding

Responsibility Frame

In Entman four function of framing the first important function is attribution of responsibility. In Rohingya crisis both Rohingya Muslims and Rohingya authorities put the responsibility on each other. For Rohingya Muslims the main cause of problem is the Rohingya authorities and their armies. Muslims think that the citizen law is the main problem through which Muslims are excluded from the Rohingya citizenship. The second problem is the Buddhist and Rohingya armies, who are brutally killing and torturing Muslim, on the other hand, Rohingya authorities Blame Muslim and their terrorist activities. The Rohingya authorities also consider that Rohingya Muslims are illegal immigrant from Bangladesh and India.

Result indicates that most stories of the Daily Dawn, and the New York Times put the responsibilities on the Rohingya authorities. On the other hand Times of India did exactly opposite and placed the responsibility on the Rohingya Muslim. Out of 65 pieces of The New York Times*,* 49 stories have placed the responsibility on the Rohingya authorities and their Military, while 16 were showed mix coverage of the crisis and placed the responsibilities on both the parties of the conflict. *Daily Dawn*, out of 26 news pieces 25 News stories placed the responsibilities on the Rohingya authorities and their government and Armies while only 01 story was there which have put responsibility on both the actor of the conflict. *The Times of India* having majority of the stories placing the responsibility on Rohingya Muslim, out of 32 pieces 29 stories placed the responsibility of the conflict on the Rohingya Muslim. *The Times of India* primarily focusing on their domestic interests, majority of stories portrayed Rohingya refugee as a threat to national security, depicting them as terrorist against the country, also many of stories were focusing on eviction of Rohingya refugees who took refuge in country during the Rohingya crisis.

Table 1.

Newspaper	Responsibility Placed on Muslim	Responsibility Placed on Rohingya Army	On Both
The New York Times	49	06	10
The Times of India	29	01	02
Daily Dawn	-------	25	01
	79	32	13

Solution Frame

Endorsing remedy is also important function of Entman framing Function. It gives the answer that what the story is suggesting. Both parties in the conflict have solution, it is highly important that story gives preference to who's solution. The solution presented by Myanmar authorities is, that Muslim of Rohingya are Bengali, highlighting that they belong to Bangladesh, and they must "accept scrutiny" under the country's 1982

Citizenship Law. The 1982 law put limits on citizenship of those groups who are not affiliate member of officially decreed ethnic. Secondly the authorities consider that Rohingya Muslim should stop their terrorist activity. Similarly for Muslim the solution is exactly opposite to it, they do not consider themselves as the illegal immigrants. They believe that they are the National of Burma and they should be considered equal citizens like the Buddhist community. Secondly the Rohingya Army should stop genocide and brutal attack against the Muslims.

Most of the stories of *The New York Times* have presented the solution as presented by Rohingya Muslim. 48 stories of New York Times out of 65 depicted the Rohingya crisis as initiated by Rohingya Army and endorsed the remedy which is presented by the Rohingya Muslim. Similar is the case with *The Times of India*, 25 news stories out of 32 presented the solution as presented by Rohingya government and authorities. In most of their stories Times of India blamed the Muslim of Rohingya and their terrorist activity as the main cause of the problem. Only 4 stories initiated the solution which was presented by Rohingya Muslim and 3 stories showed mix result. *Daily Dawn* also have reported 26 stories on Rohingya conflict, all the 26 stories of Daily Dawn recommended the solution of which favor the Rohingya Muslim. In all the stories Daily Dawn highlighted the brutality of Rohingya Army.

Table 2.

Newspaper	Solution Favor Rohingya Muslim	Solution Favor Rohingya Army	On Both
The New York Times	48	04	13
The Times of India	04	25	03
Daily Dawn	26	----	----
		29	16

Morality and Moral Judgment Frame

Last framing function is moral judgment; morally word will be very important. Morally loaded words are aggressor, terrorist etc. are used for which actor in the conflict. If Rohingya Muslim are also given such name then it means that news stories is morally devaluing Rohingya Muslim, similarly if such words are labeled to Rohingya Army then it means the story is morally devaluing the Rohingya government and Army. Most of the stories of *The New York Times* have used morally loaded words for Rohingya Army. Majority of the New York Times stories 56 out of 65 depicted the Rohingya army as brutal and responsible for the genocide. Same is the case with the Daily Dawn, 23 out 26 stories used loaded words for Rohingya Army. Rohingya Army is depicted as the cruel and brutal in Daily Dawn. Muslim on the other hand, presented as victims, and helpless innocent. *The Times of India*, 20 news stories out of 32 presented the morally loaded words for Rohingya Muslim. In most of their stories Times of India used word terrorist for the Muslim of Rohingya and their terrorist activities are highlighted and 3 stories showed mix result.

Table 3.

Newspaper	Negative Language for Rohingya Muslim	Negative Language for Rohingya Army	On Both
The New York Times	06	56	03
The Times of India	20	09	03
Daily Dawn	----	23	03
		29	16

Conclusion

If all the three framing functions support one actor and oppose second actor, then it means all the three framing function support one party and oppose the second party. As a result, actor one is highly empathized and second

actor is highly shown as brutal. If all functions support one party and oppose the second party, it means Meta frame is developed in the news story in favor of one party. But if a story has mixed result it supports one or two framings and oppose one or two frames then barbaric frames are not recommended, victims are not empathized. The majority of the news' stories from *The New York Times and Daily Dawn* articulated the Rohingya as a humanitarian crisis, and held Rohingya Army responsible. On the other hand, the Indian newspaper considered Muslims as terrorists and responsible for the conflict. The New York Time and Daily Dawn all three framing function supported the Muslim of Rohingya Muslim on the other hand, Times of India all three framing function, supported the Rohingya Army. By considering the indexing theory which is basic analysis of our study, it confirms that Pakistan, India and USA newspaper supported their respected government policies. Pakistan policy was very clear on the issue and they strongly supported the Rohingya minority Muslim. So this policy is undoubtedly depicted in the Daily Dawn. Not a single frame which supported Rohingya Army. Similarly Indian policy was more favorable toward Rohingya Army and their respected government and PM of India also visited Rohingya and also met with the government official including their Army chief and showed them full support on the this particular issue. On the other hand, India also showed great fear and uncomfortable from the Rohingya refugee. Their policy is highly depicted in the time of India. Therefore it is quite clear that those countries that do not hold the power of intervention still use barbaric frame to index the policy of their respected state. In the case of Pakistan, which did not hold the power to intervene in any international conflict, still their media depicted the intervention narrative, by clearly depicting all three frames supporting one party. Therefore this research may conclude that framing of Pakistan and India was only favoring their government policies. As Pakistani government was more in favor of Rohingya Muslim, and Idnian government was more favoring the Myanmar government and their military operation in Rakhine state. Now the important question is: why USA media was showing Muslim as victims and not supporting the military operation in Rakhine state against the Muslim. The research may deduce when there are genuine victims the state of reporting media (in this case USA) has no political or any other proximity with any actor in the conflict then the media of reporting country will victimize the real victims of that conflict. Pakistani and Indian media were having interest in that conflict because of their government policies that is why they both index the policy of their government. On the other hand, Pakistan has religious proximity with the Rohingya Muslim; this could be another reason for their support to Muslim of Rohingya Muslim. On the other hand, BJP government has clear cut anti-Muslim policy and this policy is also reflected in Maynamar case, where Indian government fully supported the Myanmar government policy and this support is publically indexed by their national media.

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