

## REPORTING OF INDO-PAK CONFLICTS IN ELITE PRESS: A PEACE JOURNALISM APPROACH

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**Abstract:** *In this study, the researchers have contently analyzed the prevalence of war and peace journalism in the elite press of India, Pakistan and UK on the reporting on three war and three peace events in the past twenty years between India and Pakistan. The data was obtained through lexis-nexus database. The total number of stories in the final sample was 3889. The researchers found that selected press mainly reported the six events through war journalism approach. Interestingly, the three warring events got more war journalism stories as compared to the peace events. Unlike the existing literature, the researchers found the peace events were also reported in war journalism approach. The economic CBMs on the other hand got equal distribution of war and peace journalism. The researcher found that those peace events that occur in highly politicized and elitist environments are also reported in war journalism approach. The study concludes that the nature of war and peace journalism approach is linked with the nature of an event. If an event involves a direct confrontation between rival groups, the national media is bound to produce more war journalism. If the level of intensity of a conflict decreases, opportunity for peace journalism increases.*

**Keywords:** War and peace journalism; Indo-Pak conflicts; elite press; framing theory; political environment.

### Table of Contents

1. Kargil War (1999)
2. The Mumbai Attacks (2008)
3. Kashmir Uprising (2016-2018)
4. The Peace Events: Lahore Declaration (1999)
5. Agra Summit (2001)
6. Economic and social confidence buildings measures (2012)
7. Literature review: Media and wars
8. Peace Journalism
9. Debates in Peace Journalism
10. Research Hypotheses and Question
11. Method
12. Findings
13. Discussion and Conclusion

Mass media are often described as double-edged weapons. They can be utilized for forging peace and harmony among nations and at the same time they can become horrific weapons of destruction. For example, during the Bosnia's civil war, the media's provision of public forums for communication and dialogue proved useful in conflict management (Howard, 2003). Barring few examples, media have traditionally promoted jingoism and nationalistic policies of warring states. Examples include the US media reporting of the 9/11 events and the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Pakistani media reporting of Taliban conflict (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005;

Hussain and Siraj, 2018; Jungblut, 2020). Researchers have identified an array of factors for the media jingoism like willingness on the part of journalists to throw away professionalism and readiness to play the patriotic role, government censorship, and the financial interests of mainstream media (Knightly, 2004; Carruthers, 2011; Entman, 2004).

Keeping in view the potential of media as escalatory or de-escalatory agents, it is important to investigate its role in the Indo-Pak conflicts. Both India and Pakistan are inhabited by about one-sixth of humanity who unfortunately are engaged in deadly confrontations since independence in 1947 from the British empire. What is the role of news media in the conflict between India and Pakistan? Do the media contributing to escalation or playing a more constructive role? Do the media follow consistent strategies during violent and peace events or they remain susceptible to factors like patriotism, war and peace, public pressure, civil society etc.

To answer these questions, a number of scholars have investigated the role of news media during the Indo-Pak conflicts (Seth, 2016; Thussu, 2002; Sreedharan, 2013; Iqbal and Hussain, 2018; Siraj, 2008). Despite making a valuable contribution to scholarship, there is a need to complement the literature through various perspectives. First, the available literature mainly focused on the role of media in the Kargil war in 1999 and make just scant references to role of media in other conflicts. There is a need to do a comparative analysis by including few other major standoffs between the two countries for a comprehensive understanding of media role in conflicts. Secondly, researchers have not analyzed media role in peace times. This would help identify the key factors influencing media content and strategizing for peace journalism in violent times. Thirdly, most of the literature exists in the form of reports and students theses. So, there is a need for a rigorous academic analysis of the Indo-Pak media during wars and peace purposes. Last but not the least, conflicts differ in terms of context, level of violence, role of stakeholders and media coverage, so there is a need to comparatively analyze a host of conflicts for better understanding and generalization.

In this study we intend to contribute to scholarship by analyzing the role of media in three war events between India and Pakistan (Kargil war, Mumbai attacks and Kashmir uprising) and peace events (Lahore declaration, Agra summit and confidence building measures in 2012) in the past twenty years. First we provide a brief description on these events for a better perspective on the study.

### 1. Kargil War (1999)

The Kargil War started between the two countries in May 1999 in the Kargil district of Kashmir and soon engulfed the entire border region (Swami, 2000). The immediate cause of this war was the occupation by the Kashmiri militants of the highland in the Kargil sector, which was under the control of India. Initially, Pakistan criticized Kashmiri militants for the operation **but later it was found that Pakistani forces were also involved in it** (Qadir, 2002). India retaliated with full military power and recaptured a majority of the positions on the line of control. This conflict increased threats of nuclear war between the two sides. After intensive international diplomacy led by the US, the two countries agreed to stop escalation.

### 2. The Mumbai Attacks (2008)

The 2008 Mumbai attacks were carried by a group of militants that lasted for four days across Mumbai. The attacks began on 26 November and lasted till 29 November 2008, which resulted in the killings of 164 people. These attacks received global condemnation. Pakistan also condemned these attacks but the Indian government blamed Pakistan for her role in it. The situation worsened and the armies of the two countries were ready for offensive (Iqbal, 2015). Cross border firings resulted in civilian casualties on both sides. The global community was quick to decipher the enormity of situation and persuaded the two sides to de-escalate the situation (Agrawal and Rao, 2011). The joint investigations by the two countries later found that certain splinter groups were involved with no backing of the Pakistani government. But the attacks jolted the already weak relations between Pakistan and India and almost brought the two countries to the brink of the fourth major war (Rabasa, 2009).



### **3. Kashmir Uprising (2016-2018)**

The 2016-18 popular uprising in the Indian administered Kashmir started after the death of young Kashmiri militant leader Burhan Wani. His death led to a series of violent protests in the region. The Indian government imposed curfew in the region and suspended mobile services for almost two-months (Iqbal, 2015). Dozens of protesters were killed and hundreds were injured and permanently disabled by shots from pellet guns. Pakistan having territorial claims to the region warned India against these policies and expelled Indian diplomats as a protest, which was retaliated by India and expelled Pakistani diplomats. The Kashmir uprising further vitiated the already tense relations between the two countries leading to postponement of trade and stopping aerial routes.

### **4. The Peace Events: Lahore Declaration (1999)**

The Lahore Declaration was signed by the two countries on 21 February 1999 after the a successful in Lahore (Agrawal, 2018). In this peace overture, both countries vowed to peacefully resolve all their bilateral issues including the disputed Jammu and Kashmir region. The two sides also signed an agreement to avoid accidental use of nuclear weapons. This agreement is considered as a watershed peace event in the otherwise hostile relations between the two sides (Mathur, 2017)

### **5. Agra Summit (2001)**

The Agra peace summit ushered a new era of peace and harmony between the two countries. Both India and Pakistan agreed to work towards resolving their bilateral issues like reducing the number of active nuclear arsenals and addressing the Kashmir conundrum and cross-border terrorism. Though the summit did not result in tangible suggestions on how to resolve the conflicts, it provided an opportunity to the leadership to interact and listen to each other in the aftermath of Kargil war (Mathur, 2017).

### **6. Economic and social confidence buildings measures (2012)**

In 2012, both India and Pakistan agreed to forge peace and harmony in the South Asian by promoting people-to-people contacts and further economic cooperation. The two countries started a range of confidence building measures like giving the status of favored nation to each other, facilitating visa process, and enhancing customs cooperation (Ramzan, 2012). Both states also exchanged list of prisoners with each other and agreed to inform one another in case of missile tests and work for safer use of nuclear energy. Pakistani cricket team visited India and was warmly received. All these developments paved way for bringing some normalcy to the Indo-Pak ties (Agrawal, 2018).

### **7. Literature review: Media and wars**

Credible academic scholarship is available on the analysis of propagandist use of media since the start of 20<sup>th</sup> century (Knightley, 2011; Carruthers, 2011). During World War 2 and the Cold War era between the US and the Soviet Russia, conflicts in the Middle East, the US sponsored war against Al-Qaeda, invasions of Iraq and Syria, media have been extensively used for the jingoistic purposes and pursuit of national interests (Lynch, 2008; Youngblood, 2017). The available scholarship shows that during wars, journalists perform patriotic duties leave the cannons of journalistic professionalism (Knightly, 2004; Allan & Zelizer, 2004). Much of the century old literature on media and wars has been supported by the recent scholarship in which researchers have analyzed the US media for its treatment of the reporting of invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan and found the otherwise objective media as docile, escalatory and subservient to the national elites (Hammond, 2007).

Researchers attribute the propagandist and escalatory approaches of conflict reporting to different factors like the commercial and financial needs of the media industries (Carruthers, 2011), professional practices like the demands of journalistic objectivity which often leads to elitism (Lynch, 2013) and the ideological orientations of journalists to always lend uncritical support to the Western interests shrouded in the Western values (Herman & Chomsky, 2010).

On the other hand, one can find examples where the policymakers who were wary of the war-mongering role of media, have called for more peace oriented media content. When the League of Nations was established after the First World War, peace radios were established to promote peace in the Europe and other parts of the world. Similarly, after the Second World War, peace-oriented media projects were initiated throughout the troubled regions in the world to bring the warring parties together (Howard, 2003). In modern times, there are dozens of peace related media projects undergoing in many countries of the Asian and African continents to resolve and facilitate disputes within and between states the world.

### 8. Peace Journalism

Based on the concept of negative and positive peace, Galtung (1998) classified conflict reporting in two dichotomous frames war journalism and peace journalism. According to the Galtung model, “four major indicators characterize war journalism it is violence oriented, it is propaganda oriented, it is elite oriented and it is differences oriented (Galtung, 1998, p 12). On the other hand, the alternative of peace journalism “is peace oriented, truth oriented, people oriented and solution oriented. Obviously critical of the traditional journalism practices, the concept of peace journalism calls for a more constructive reporting of conflicts” (Galtung, 1998, p 13).

Peace journalism researchers like (Lynch, 2013; Galtung, 1998) have argued that traditional journalism “promote wars and conflicts by reducing the parties involved in a conflicts and wars to the us versus them dichotomy” ((Galtung, 1998, p 14). According to Hussain (2017), “the traditional way of media reporting is predominantly tilted towards the war journalism practices (p, 5).

Further dilating on the theory and practice of peace journalism, researchers argue (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005) that peace journalism provides a widest and broad account of conflicts by highlighting the invisible aspects like the social and psychological effects of instead of reducing the reportage to mere direct violence. Peace journalism accounts would delve deep into the root causes of conflicts and wars and provide all the information related to the context, history and background. Moreover, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) continues that peace journalism practices would help bring closer the conflicting stakeholders in a conflict by focusing on the similarities and commonalities among them and would evaluate opportunities to explore the avenues that could facilitate a win-win option for all the parties involved in conflicts.

Likewise, during the Kargil war, Joshi (2004) found “Indian media were jingoistic and inflammatory. They not only openly sided with their government but what the military positively viewed as force multiplier to win popular support for war efforts (p, 10). Similarly, during the Mumbai attacks, Bose (2011) analyzed the Indo-pak media and concluded “The media of both the nations have been fighting a proxy war that is blurring out factual and unbiased coverage of events in the subcontinent. Overly nationalistic posturing and jingoism lie at the heart of this. Journalists, columnists, TV anchors and analysts of the one country are busy exposing the {bias and hypocrisy} of the other, and in the process, adding insult to a 64-year-old injury”. Likewise, Seth (2016) in her analysis of the media of India and Pakistan argued “media penchant for sensationalism has arisen to such an elevated level that it has overtaken coherent arguments made by sane voices. A certain level of detachment from the brouhaha produced owing to the skirmishes, which surfaces intermittently with our neighbor, is desirable for critical analysis”. Likewise, Siraj (2006) found that the media of two countries mainly applied a war journalism approach while reporting on bilateral issues. In a detailed analysis, Iqbal and Hussain (2017) examined Pakistani media reporting of four war between India and Pakistan. Applying the peace journalism model, the researchers found that the reporting was highly nationalistic and war oriented. The Pakistani media openly supported its government policies and criticized India for stance. In another important study, Lee and Malog (2005) analyzed the coverage of Kashmir conflict in the Indo-Pak press. the researchers found that the media of the two countries was highlight jingoistic and produced war journalism discourse as compared to peace journalism.

## 9. Debates in Peace Journalism

Peace journalism has got a fair amount of criticism from media theorists and practitioners from different perspectives. Considering it as part of peace diplomacy, Hanitzch (2007) equates it with Peace Public Relations as both have similar values to convince elites to promote peace and avoid war. Lyon (2007) on the other hand believes that if journalists assume the role of conflict resolution for themselves, they would make a hash of everything. He therefore suggests that peacemaking should be left to policymakers and journalists should do their job (Lyon, 2007). Similarly, Fawcett (2002) believes that the theory and practice of peace journalism are not in tune with the actual journalistic practices. She has argued that the various structural and cultural factors in the journalistic profession would always throw it in the search for more drama and sensation. Wolsfeld (1997) believes there is contradiction between the practice of peace and the profession of journalism. Last but not the least, Hanitzch (2007) has pointed towards the place of peace journalism in the mass communication theories and approaches. Peace journalism assumes powerful effects of media which many modern scholars of communication have rejected. Many communication theorists have rejected. Media do not have powerful effects rather these are mediated by a range of factors Baran and Davis, 2006). Moreover, if peace journalism advocates the 'mass society notion', it runs the risk of ignoring the interests of its audiences and hence prospects of economic existence in jeopardy (Hantizsch, 2004).

The above level of criticism has been addressed by the advocates of peace journalism. Lynch (2007 and 2008) has dealt particularly with the critique. He has clarified that peace journalism is not an open advocacy for peace purposes rather it is a remedial movement for more constructive and responsible reporting of conflicts. As a peace journalist, Lynch (2014) argues all aspects of conflicts are reported including the violent and non-violent aspects. Others like Galtung (2006) and Ottosen (2008) have also stressed the same point that peace journalism is against the current practices of conflict reporting because states and powerful groups have used propaganda and misinformation to present false information to the people. Peace journalists have also criticized the theory of objectivity because it is abstract and unachievable in practice (MacGoldrick, 2006). As an alternative, the peace journalism advocates call for more responsible reporting of conflicts (Hackett & Lynch & Seaga; 2010).

## 10. Research Hypotheses and Question

**H1:** Dawn, The Hindu and The Guardian mainly adopt war journalism approach while reporting on the selected war and peace events between India and Pakistan.

**H.2:** The three war events (Kargil war, Mumbai Attacks and the popular uprising in Kashmir) are mainly reported in war journalism approach as compared to the peace events (Lahore declaration, Agra Summit and economic CBMs).

**H.3:** The Kargil war involving direct military confrontation between India and Pakistan results in more war journalism stories as compared to other warring events.

**H.4:** The economic CBMs (2011-12) predominantly results in peace journalism approach as compared to the other peace events.

**R.Q.2:** What are the major attributes of war and peace journalism approach used by the Dawn, The Hindu and The Guardian?

## 11. METHOD

In this study, the researchers apply content analysis technique to investigate the war and peace potential of the three selected war and peace events. All the relevant news stories and news opinions were retrieved through the Lexis-Nexis database. The population included a total of 7778 stories. To make the data manageable for coding purposes, the researchers applied systematic sampling technique by selecting every second story appearing in the Dawn, The Hindu and Guardian on the start and ends dates of Kargil war (1999), Mumbai attacks (2008) Kashmir uprising (2016) and three major peace events including Lahore declaration (1997), Agra summit 2001 and the economic



CBMs in 2012. Thus a total of sample of 3889 stories was obtained. The Guardian included in the study to know how a newspaper from a neutral country would report the Indo-Pak events. This is important because studies show media would be more war-oriented in conflicts in which their own country is involved. Data was collected by operationalizing the war and peace journalism indicators as identified by Galtung (2000), Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) and Maslog and Lee (2005).

## 12. Findings

The answer of research hypotheses and questions are as:

RH1:

**Table 1: Distribution of War and Peace Journalism Stories**

Newspapers	WJ	PJ	Total	Chi-Square	P value
Dawn	836(53)	739(47)	1575(100)	112.3	.02
The Hindu	1134(63)	657(37)	1791(100)	81.5	.00
The Guardian	347(66)	176(34)	523(100)	105.7	.00
Total	2317(60)	1572(40)	3889(100)	91.8	.01

As shown in the above table 1, the three newspapers predominantly covered the six events in war journalism approach. Out of total of 3889 news stories, the war journalism category got 60 percent stories and the peace journalism category got 40 percent stories. The low p value (.01) suggests that the difference is significant and hence the hypothesis is supported. These findings are quite consistent with the existing literature that news media usually adopt war journalism approach when reporting on conflicts and wars (Lee and Maslog, 2005; Lynch, 2008; Woslfeld, 2004; Youngblood, 2017; Ottosen, 2008; Hussain and Lynch, 2018; Hussain and Siraj, 2018). Separately, all the newspapers mainly applied the war journalism approach to report the six events as shown in the low p values. While in case of both Dawn and The Hindu it is not unexpected since the countries are involved in the conflict, we expected The Guardian to be more peace oriented. However, as shown in the above table, The Guardian reported 60 percent of stories in war journalism approach. This shows irrespective of national stance, media have tendencies to favor war journalism due to their penchant for news values and drama and sensation in the coverage (Woslfeld, 2004; Youngblood, 2017).

**Table 2: Distribution of War and Peace Journalism in Terms of the Nature of Events**

Nature of event	WJ	PJ	Total	Chi-square 4.5 p-value .07
Violent events	1595(62)	974(38)	2569(100)	
Peace events	722(55)	598(45)	1320(100)	
Total	2317(60)	1572(40)	3889(100)	

The hypothesis 2 conjectured that war journalism would be more prominent in the war events as compared to the peace events. As shown in the above table, in the war three events, as many 64 percent stories were reported in the war journalism category and 36 percent stories were reported in the peace journalism category. Similarly in the peace events, 58 percent stories were reported in the war journalism category and 42 percent stories were reported in the peace journalism category. The higher p value (.07) suggests that the difference between the two categories is not significant and hence the hypothesis is not supported. Literature suggests that peace journalism is possible when the overall environment is positive towards peace overtures (Woslfeld, 2004; Hanitzsch, 2007; Hussain, 2017; Iqbal and Hussain, 2017). However, in this study, despite a sizeable

number of peace journalism stories in the peace events, war journalism stories were still dominant due to the elite orientation of the process.

**H3:**

**Table 3: Distribution of War and Peace Journalism in Terms of war events**

Nature of conflict	WJ	PJ	Total	Chi square 12.5 P value .03
Kargil war	588(72)	230(28)	818 (100)	
Mumbai attacks	597(64)	343(36)	940(100)	
Kashmir uprising	410(51)	401(49)	811(100)	
Total	1595(62)	974(38)	2569(100)	

As shown in the above table 3, the Kargil war received more war journalism stories as compared to rest of war events. More than 70 percent stories are reported in the war journalism style. Statistically the p value is lower than the .05 and hence it is deduced that the war journalism is not equally distributed among all the categories and hence the hypothesis is supported. The above data reveals that the prevalence of war journalism is related with the nature of a conflict. In a detailed analysis, Hussain and Lynch (2018) found that peace journalism was inversely related with the assumed security nature of a conflict. According to these researchers, higher the intensity of a conflict, higher would be its score on war journalism indicators” (p, 20).

**H4:**


**Table 4: Distribution of War and Peace Journalism Stories on the Peace Events**

Events	WJ	PJ	Total	Chi square 13 P value .02
Lahore declaration	342(62)	210(38)	552(100)	
Agra summit	270(59)	184(41)	454(100)	
Economic CBMs	110(35)	204(65)	314(100)	
Total	722(55)	598(35)	1320(100)	

As shown in the above table 4, unlike the above two events, the economic CBMs got 39 percent stories in the war journalism style and 61 percent stories in the opposing peace journalism approach. Studies have found that peace journalism approach is more prevalent in the economic or social domains as compared to the political world (Hussain, 2017; Iqbal and Hussain, 2017). In this study, apart from the economic CBMs, rest of the two peace events is reported in the war journalism perspective. Some important reasons for this type of coverage are the elite-orientation of these events heads of governments were involved, the excessive political nature of the two events (to normalize relations after years of hostility and wars) the political environment. The opposition parties in the two countries were criticizing the respective governments for comprising on national security, which got maximum coverage in the press and hence more war journalism. Unlike these two events, the talks on economic CBMs which were held at a ministerial level went with lesser critical debates and hence more peace journalism. It means lesser an issue in political and elite orientation greater are the chances for peace journalism.

**Table 7: Distribution of War and Peace Journalism Indicators**

Differences oriented	223 (7)	Solution oriented	287 (15)
Visible effects	402 (13)	Invisible effects	324 (17)
Elite oriented	332 (11)	People oriented	389 (20)
Here and now centered	306 (10)	Causes and effects	220 (11)
Dichotomous	398 (13)	Avoid of good/bad guy	86 (4)
Two-party oriented	331 (10)	Multi-party oriented	135 (7)
Partisan	376 (12)	Non-partisan	91 (5)



Zero-sum-oriented	290 (9)	Win-win orientation	207 (11)
Demonizing language	470 (15)	Avoid demonizing language	196 (10)
Total	3128(100)	Total	1935 (100)

As shown in the above table, the dominant categories in the three newspapers are demonizing language (15 percent), visible effects (13 percent), dichotomy (13 percent) and partisanship (12 percent). These four indicators are termed as aggressive war journalism indicators (Lee and Maslog, 2005; Lynch, 2008) where the newspapers actively resort to jingoism to promote war. In this study, the dominant frame was the usage of demonizing language for the stakeholders. Similarly, the emphasis on the visible effects and partisanship suggest the media showed biasness. Likewise, among the peace journalism indicators, people-oriented got 20 percent coverage, focus on invisible effects got 17 percent coverage, solution oriented coverage got 15 percent and win-win orientation got 11 percent coverage. These indicators are of mild peace journalism nature where it occurs due to situational factors and not as an agential force (Lynch, 2008; Hussain and Siraj, 2018). In one representative news story, daily *The Guardian* (July 22, 1999) reported a detailed story entitled as “Early deal to end Kashmir conflict was ignored”. In this story, the newspaper criticized the policymakers of India and Pakistan for ignoring the human cost of the Kargil war through military dilly-dallying ‘that cost hundreds of lives and increased the chances of an all-out war between the two countries’. The application of active war journalism frames imply that journalists consider themselves part of a conflict and promote the interests of a particular party.

### 13. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings from this study are interestingly very much in line with the existing literature with few original contributions to the scholarship as well. As discussed in the findings chapter, the war journalism approach proved to be the dominant perspective in the reporting of selected events. This is not surprising, as majority of the studies on the conflict reporting have found that war journalism is the norm and peace journalism is an exception (Fahmy, 2004; Lynch, 2008; Wolsfeld, 2004; Youngblood, 2017; Ottosen, 2008; Hussain and Lynch, 2018). In the Indo-Pak context, previous studies have found preponderance of war journalism due to the entrenched nationalistic discourses and ideological differences (Lee and Maslog, 2005; Lee, 2006; Siraj, 2008; Bose, 2016; Thussu, 2002; Sreedharan, 2013).

As shown in the research hypothesis one, the liberal and progressive newspaper *Dawn* from Pakistan reported the Indo-Pak conflicts from the nationalistic perspective. These findings support the indexing theory, which argues that media follow national interests while reporting on international events. Interestingly, as compared to *The Hindu*, *Dawn* is less war-oriented. The reason for this is the particular contexts of the events. Except for the Kargil War, the other warring events Mumbai attacks and uprising in Kashmir occurred on the Indian side. The Pakistani government sympathized with India over the Mumbai attacks but later the conflict intensified when India implicated Pakistan in the attacks. On the Kashmir issue, the Pakistani side is emphasizing on the human right violations. So the initial Pakistani stance on Mumbai attacks and on the Kashmir issue, Pakistan position is less jingoistic and more conciliatory and hence chances for more de-escalatory coverage.

Similarly, *The Hindu* appeared to be more war-oriented as compared to the other two newspapers. One main reason for this dominance of war journalism is the Indian-centricity of these war events. A number of studies by Indian researchers (Thussu, 2002; Bose, 2016; Seth, 2011; Sreedharan, 2013) have found that the country’s press is escalatory while reporting on conflicts with Pakistan. *The Guardian* was no less war-oriented and jingoistic. These findings are supported by the literature where researchers have found that war journalism approach is usually followed due to the typical journalistic conventions and standards (Fawcett, 2010; Youngblood, 2017; Hussain, 2015).

The critics of peace journalism argue that it is a normative concept and could not be practiced during wars and conflicts when national feelings and patriotism rule supreme. Relevant literature suggests that peace journalism is possible when the overall environment is positive towards peace overtures (Wolsfeld, 2004; Hanitzsch, 2007; Hussain, 2017; Iqbal and Hussain, 2017). However, in





this study, these arguments are not supported. The press appeared to be war journalism oriented during war and peace events. This tendency is due to the long-standing enmity and mistrust between India and Pakistan and the sensationalistic nature of the media environment where even peace overtures are viewed with suspicion.

The Kargil war, which was an active war between the armies of India and Pakistan, was mainly reported in the war journalism fashion as compared to the other warring events. This means higher the intensity of a conflict, higher the prevalence of war journalism. In a detailed analysis, Hussain and Lynch (2018) found that peace journalism was inversely related with the assumed security nature of a conflict. While peace journalism was less prominent in the Taliban conflict, the score of peace journalism improved as the intensity of a conflict decreased. Similarly, the Israeli media report Palestinians more in war journalism approach as compared to the Jordanian who are considered less problematic (Wolsfeld, 2004).

The view that peace journalism approach is possible in less securitized and less elitist environment is evident from the hypothesis four where among the three peace events, the economic CBMs were more prominently reported in the peace journalism fashion. The Lahore and Agra summits were major peace talks between India and Pakistan that were conducted after very hostile incidents. However, as shown in this study, both these events got lesser number of peace journalism stories due to the elitist involvement and typical journalistic cultures. These findings suggest an important departure from the existing literature on peace journalism that it is possible when the political parties are supporting it (Wolsfeld, 2004; Hanitzsch, 2007; Hussain, 2017; Iqbal and Hussain, 2017).

We also investigated the dominant features of war and peace journalism. The major indicators of war journalism are the usage of demonizing language, emphasis on visible effects and labeling the parties in the conflict in terms of good and bad. These indicators are a clear departure from professional ethos of journalism and are considered as active form of war journalism. It means most of the times, in these conflicts, the journalists violated the ethical considerations of their professions and worked for the interests of policy elites of their respective countries. Likewise, among the peace journalism indicators, people-oriented coverage, focus on invisible effects and solution oriented coverage were the major indicators. These indicators are of mild peace journalism nature where it occurs due to situational factors and not as an agential force (Lynch, 2008; Hussain and Siraj, 2018).

This study offers some original insights to the scholarship in a number of ways. In longstanding disputes like between India and Pakistan where mutual suspicions are high, institutions are weak, popular sentiments and political positions are at stake, peace events are more likely to be reported in the war journalism approach. Peace journalism has more chances to be practiced if the issues are of less political and strategic nature, media attention is de-focused and talks conducted at closed bureaucratic levels. In this study, the talks economic CBMs got more peace oriented coverage because these were held in less political and media glare as compared to the Lahore and Agra summits which involved meetings between heads of governments of India and Pakistan.

Secondly, the nature of war journalism and the peace journalism approach is linked with the nature of an event. If an event involves a direct confrontation between rival groups, the national media is bound to produce more war journalism. If the level of intensity of a conflict decreases, opportunity for peace journalism increases. In this study, the Kargil war was mainly reported in the war journalism fashion as compared to the Mumbai attacks and the violence in Kashmir.

As shown in this study, the war journalism indicators were active and specifically chosen by the media professionals to report on certain events. comparatively, the indicators of peace journalism are of mild nature that can be treated as practices imbibed with journalistic ethics rather than an active agential duty by journalists to promote peace and harmony between India and Pakistan.

This study has several limitations and we believe researchers should work on these. Due to time constraints, we analyzed just one newspaper from the three countries. Future studies can analyze more newspapers for a better perspective. Electronic media and social media discuss would be very interesting. Secondly, latest events happening in the two countries can be analyzed. Researchers

may analyse these events through a qualitative analysis for a more in-depth insight into the media coverage. Last but not the least, the peace journalism models developed by other researchers can be utilized to analyze media reporting of conflicts in the South Asia.

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