Article

Four Vantage Points: Foreign Policy and the News Coverage of the Kashmir Dispute

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Abstract

This paper examines the international coverage of the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India. The study proceeds with a theoretical background to explore the foreign policy dynamics surrounding the Kashmir issue since the beginning. Then, the research relies on the framing paradigm and discourse analysis as the key methodological tools to analyse four English language websites from American, Turkish, Pakistani and Indian news outlets about this conflict in 2018. These news media outlets are CNN, TRT World, GEO News, and NDTV, respectively. The findings will uncover the role of media in positioning and packaging the Kashmir dispute and will help understand the politics and the shaping of the coverage in this particular case. Ultimately, the paper will explain the framing approach adopted by news media based on momentary national interests as well as past engagement and expectations of cooperation in the future, providing an understanding of how competing media cover the same conflict from a political economy of communication lens.

Keywords

Kashmir Dispute, News Media, Alliance Politics, Media Diplomacy, Foreign Policy, Mediatized Conflict

The Kashmir dispute has been one of the most protracted conflicts in modern history. The origin of this conflict dates from before the births of the two countries that have fought two wars over this territory, namely India and Pakistan. With both India and Pakistan having divergent positions pertaining to a path towards resolution, the decades-old Kashmir conflict has been difficult to resolve¹. With

¹ There have been numerous attempts on the part of the United Nations (UN) to mediate between the two nuclear-armed neighbors, starting with the McNaughton Proposals of 1950. One of these is the establishment of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) to observe and report violations of the ceasefire following the Karachi Agreement signed by Pakistan and India in 1951. Following the Indo-Pak War of 1971 when the Simla Agreement was signed, however,

violence escalating sharply in Indian Administered Kashmir in 2018 (Yadav, 2018), and as security deteriorated further, the Indian government revoked the special constitutional status² of Indian Administered Kashmir that guaranteed it special rights in August 2019. According to Pakistan, India's revocation of Kashmir's special status violates United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and at the time of writing, was going to 'exercise all possible options to counter illegal steps' (Siddiqui, 2019).

With both India and Pakistan having divergent positions pertaining to a path towards resolution, the decades-old Kashmir conflict has been difficult to resolve. Obfuscation of information pertaining to human rights violations, the potential role of the international community and the issue becoming a nuclear flashpoint, has been one of the reasons that have led to a delay and perhaps even a denial of its resolution.

This paper attempts to point towards reasons international media coverage of the Kashmir dispute has been less than effective, and even required. Given the prolonged nature of the dispute, a limited number of previous studies on the topic showed international media coverage tended to reflect national priorities of the countries whose media provided coverage as well as the status of their relations with India and Pakistan. This paper will not only build on past findings with a larger evidence base, but will also provide a rationale for international media coverage by highlighting reasons associated with both airtime and content of media coverage of the Kashmir dispute.

To do this, the paper will introduce the concept of media framing and outline how the Kashmir dispute has previously been covered by Pakistani, Indian and international media. After providing an overview of the bilateral relations between Turkey and India, Turkey and Pakistan, the United States of America (US) and India as well as US and Pakistan, the study will analyse the media coverage of the Kashmir dispute by four international news media outlets, namely CNN, TRT World, GEO News, and NDTV – American, Turkish, Pakistani and Indian, respectively. By utilizing qualitative as well as quantitative techniques, framing analyses of digital news content related to the Kashmir dispute by CNN, TRT World, GEO News, and NDTV were conducted.

By comparing and contrasting the various media outlets' coverage, the study con-

Pakistan and India disagreed on the mandate of the UNMOGIP. India argues that it lapsed after the Simla Agreement as it was specifically established only for and after the Karachi Agreement. The ceasefire remains in place until today. However, it is regularly violated (Jaffrelot, 2018).

² The 'special status gave Indian Administered Kashmir its own constitution and decision-making rights for all matters except for defense, communications and foreign affairs' (Dawn, 2019). The law 'also forbade non-locals from permanently settling, buying land, holding local government jobs and securing education scholarships' (Dawn, 2019).

cludes that past engagements, current national priorities as well as expectations of cooperation between countries whose media cover the Kashmir dispute and both India as well as Pakistan could explain the symbiosis and dissonance in international media coverage of the Kashmir conflict.

Pakistani and Indian Media Coverage of the Kashmir Conflict

Researchers have defined 'mediatized conflict' as 'how media do things with conflicts' (Cottle, 2006, p.9), specifically actions that work to 'define, frame, narrate, evaluate, contest, promote and perform conflict' (Cottle, 2006 in Vukasovich, 2012). Mediatize conflict is a paradigm that outlines the ways by which the media engages with conflicts (Vukasovich, 2012). The engagement is 'performative, complex and active, and represents a constitutive role within conflicts' (Cottle, 2006; Cottle, 2004 in Vukasovich, 2012). This theory contends that that 'war is produced and immersed in a new ecology of media and diffused through a complex and interconnected web of everyday media' (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010; Cottle, 2006 in Vukasovich, 2012).

This is explained well by Herman & Chomsky (1988) who stated that mainstream news media is influenced by factors including, among others, a reliance on official sources that allows the government to promote its own view, an aversion to flak or negative feedback that discourages controversial media coverage or institutional ideology such as fear of 'Islamic' terrorists. Hoskins & O'Loughlin (2010) based the relationship between media and warfare on altering perceptions using both coercive and aggressive methods. One of the more aggressive methods, according to Knightley (2003), is limiting access based on willingness to be in unison with the government and/or military or embedding correspondents within the military who would not report critically highlights the seemingly symbiotic relationship between mainstream media and the government-military apparatus. The success of the military-government apparatus' narrative in many conflicts, including most recently and clearly during the 2003 Iraq War, can be attributed to the complicity of the mainstream news media (DiMaggio 2010; Robinson & Taylor 2010; Entman et al. 2009 in Culloty, 2014).

David Hoffman observed in 1991 that the 'global communications network has become more important for the conduct of diplomacy than traditional cables and emissaries' (Hoffman, 1991 in Gilboa, 2005). In light of media scholarship underlining the symbiotic relationship between mainstream media and the government-military apparatus, as well as the propensity for governments to utilize the global communications network to conduct both traditional and public diplomacy, news coverage of even the Kashmir dispute is bound to reflect a particular set of priorities and not necessarily realities on the ground. As Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2010) argue, media enables constant connectivity that either

amplifies awareness of conflicts, modulating security and insecurity, or contains them by packaging them a certain way. This connectivity is the mechanism by which media is weaponised (Vukasovich, 2012). Essentially, the media becomes the battleground.

Media framing is one of the more coercive manners perceptions can be altered. Media framing involves both inclusion (emphasizing) and exclusion (de-emphasizing) of critical aspects of an event, prioritizing one over another – intentionally or unconsciously – to promote a particular interpretation of that event (Abdullah & Elareshi, 2015). According to Entman (1993):

Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described' (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

Successful promotion of salient frames may highlight saliency of key issues in the foreign public agenda resulting in 'improved public opinion perceptions, and potential influence on foreign elites' (Sheafer & Shenhav, 2010)' (Golan, 2014, p. 420).

As expected, since the inception of India and Pakistan, and the resultant Kashmir dispute, Indian and Pakistani media coverage of the Kashmir dispute strongly reflects their respective stances on the conflict (Sreedharan, 2009). Pakistani coverage highlights Islamabad's official stance that the Kashmir dispute must be settled in light of UN resolutions, without which there can be no progress in India-Pakistan relations. On the other hand, Indian coverage echoes New Delhi's standpoint, namely that Kashmir's accession to India is final, meaning there 'is no dispute to settle. The armed violence in Kashmir is a law and order problem' (Sreedharan, 2009, p. 100), purely a conflict between the Indian state and Pakistan-sponsored terrorists (Joseph, 2000 in Sreedharan, 2009). Another study by Ali and Perveen (2015) looked at Pakistani (*Dawn*) and Indian (*The Tribune*) media coverage of the Kashmir dispute and found that *The Tribune* and *Dawn* supported the Indian government's and the Pakistani government's position respectively (Ali & Perveen, 2015).

Historically, both India and Pakistan have relied on the assistance of foreign support for their respective positions on Kashmir (Cohen, 1995). Applying Entman's (2007) cascading network activation model (see Figure 1) to international audiences considering news consumption patterns via digital media (Deloitte, 2017), India and Pakistan could weaponize foreign media coverage in defence of their positions and gain foreign support.

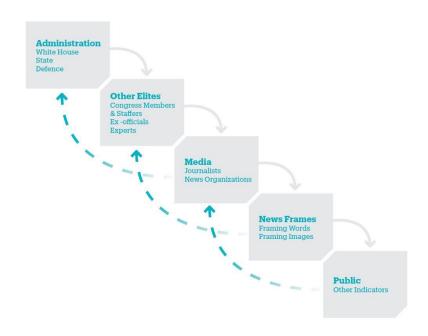


Figure 1: Cascading Network Activation (Source: Entman, 2007)

Studies show that governmental attempts to influence foreign media coverage can be best understood in the context of international relations, particularly frame-building during territorial disputes (Maoz, 2006; Rogers & Ben-David, 2010 in Golan, 2014).

International Media Coverage of the Kashmir Dispute

Conversely, foreign media coverage of the Kashmir dispute could be perceived as an opportunity for foreign countries to influence India and Pakistan as well as propagate their own political objectives. According to Gans (1979), journalists select stories based on availability as well as suitability. Particularly with respect to foreign policy, journalists tend to rely on government sources as that may be their only form of access to international news, and thus the way the media frame foreign policy coverage is influenced primarily by how the government frames an issue. As per Fuchs (2005), mass media is not a neutral subsystem of society, without any links to political or economic realities of the state.

Sheafer (2014) revealed that the more aligned the political objectives between Israel and a foreign country, the higher the acceptance of Israel's views in that foreign country's media, and vice versa. The same findings, when applied in the

context of the Kashmir dispute, could explain why certain frames were utilized by foreign countries' media coverage. Generated by past alignments (Wilkins, 2012) as well as shared political values and objectives, the media of states expecting cooperation in the future (Snyder, 1997) may be more aligned than opposed and vice versa. Other relevant influential factors for frame building include trade relations as well as the economic and political power of the country promoting a frame (Wu, 2000; Chang, 1998 in Sheafer, 2014).

A limited number of studies have looked at the international media coverage of the Kashmir dispute. According to Ray (2004) who studied The New York Times, The Washington Post and Los Angeles Times, the US media echoes the Indian media coverage of the Kashmir dispute, particularly after 1999. Dominant frames in the coverage of the Kashmir dispute by US news outlets included 'outside interference', 'violent neighbour', 'foreign fighters' and 'militant extremists' (Ray, 2004). Another study (Zia & Syedah, 2015) found that The New York Times provided minimum coverage to the Kashmir dispute in comparison with Pakistani Dawn or The Times of India. The study also asserted that limited coverage was generally more negative, defined as 'triggering the dispute by giving partial coverage or only publishing the violent aspect of the conflict and distorting the situation... provided unfair support to any party. If the coverage is supporting armed activities and appreciating aggressive acts or ferocity of all stakeholders' (Zia & Syedah, 2015, p. 169). Though the US had assumed the arbitrator's role in the Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan, analysing US media coverage of the Kashmir dispute suggested it tended to favour India's viewpoint (Zia & Syedah, 2015, p. 169).

Building on the above studies with a larger multi-country evidence, this study looks at how that influences media coverage of those countries, given that foreign countries have pre-existing values and political proximities with India and Pakistan, as well as expectations of alignment and opposition with both in the future. To explore these parameters potentially influencing media coverage of the Kashmir dispute, as well as the potential effects of cultural and religious proximity (or lack thereof), digital news outlets from US and the Republic of Turkey were included in the study, as both US and Turkey have multi-layered and evolving relations with India and Pakistan.

International Alignments: United States, Turkey, Pakistan and India

As part of alliance politics during the Cold War (Leeds and Mattes, 2007), Pakistan became the 'key point of an anti-Communist bulwark of regional countries' (Schaffer, 2009, p.44). In exchange, the US offered support on the issue of Kashmir and provided military and economic assistance to Pakistan (Afzal, 2018) well into the 1980s. Once the Soviet Union was defeated, the US had more room to focus on economic development and investments in overseas markets (Brain-

ard & Brookings Institution, 2001). This led the US to downgrade its focus on Pakistan, which also meant that Islamabad lost its support regarding the Kashmir conflict. Further deterioration in relations took place when the US banned the sale of military hardware and halted economic aid to Pakistan by 1990, creating a significant trust deficit between the two.

Nevertheless, following the September 11 attacks, the US once again sought Pakistan's help in Afghanistan against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda and in its broader so-called 'War on Terror' (Afzal, 2018). Essentially, Pakistan had to choose between joining the US-led war and not joining and facing 'America's wrath' (Tellis, 2008, p. 13). As a spill-over effect from the war in Afghanistan, Pakistan struggled with a Taliban insurgency on its soil from the mid-2000s onwards that has cost the country more than 75,000 civilian lives and suffered the loss of \$123 billion (Iqbal, 2018). However, the US contended that Pakistan provides a safe haven to terrorists (Trump, 2018), leading to a considerable deterioration in relations (Afzal, 2018).

Despite President Donald Trump announcing a new Afghan War strategy in 2017, reiterating US accusations concerning Pakistan and urging India to help with economic development in Afghanistan, Pakistan is considered important for US strategy for Afghanistan due to its perceived influence over the Taliban (Felbab-Brown, 2018). Pakistan is also at the very centre of China's Belt and Road initiative with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) (Economist, 2017) that would help consolidate China's influence in the region, which is not ideal for the US. The US supported India in its stance that CPEC passes through the disputed territory of Kashmir (Iqbal, 2017).

The US considers India strategically important in the larger Indo-Pacific region (Pant, 2015). According to a report commissioned by the Pentagon, 'there is a broad consensus within Washington and Delhi that each depends on the other to sustain a favourable strategic equilibrium as Chinese power rises' (Quadrennial Defence Review, 2010, p. 65). Additionally, India and the US have a bilateral trade relationship worth more than \$115 billion (Meltzer & Singh, 2017). In a policy paper published by the Brookings Institute, Dhruva Jaishankar captured the mood when he stated that 'Washington now tilts in India's favour' (Jaishankar, 2017). Experts suggest that the inclusion of India in the Afghanistan strategy may be the US employing a carrot and stick approach with Pakistan, conditioning its support on critical issues such as Kashmir in exchange for help in Afghanistan (Felbab-Brown, 2018).

Turkey has also offered to mediate between India and Pakistan to help resolve the Kashmir dispute. Turkey and Pakistan enjoy historical ties, dating back to when the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent supported the Ottoman Empire (Pay,

2015) leading up to present day support from Pakistan on multiple fronts including against FETO, considered a terrorist organisation by the Turkish government following the attempted coup of July 15, 2016 (Akan, 2017). Much to India's irritation, in a 2017 visit to New Delhi, Turkish President Erdogan called for efforts to reduce the suffering of Kashmiris (Krishnan, 2017). International humanitarian and development assistance has become a central part of Turkish foreign policy. Moreover, 'humanitarian diplomacy' has been highly visible given the fact that the country hosting almost 4 million Syrian refugees in 2018 (Hasimi, 2014). President Erdogan calling for a multilateral dialogue to resolve the conflict that has cost thousands of Kashmiris' lives dovetails with Turkey's foreign policy objectives (Kalin, 2012)³.

Turkey has recently sought to widen its web of relations with international powers when it comes to trade and investment. An example of this is Turkey's engagement with China as part of both the Middle Corridor Initiative and China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative (Talbot, 2018), both of which Pakistan is a significant contributor to. With reference to trade and investment, the Turkish defence industry secured its most substantial arms deal with Pakistan in 2018 (Bekdil, 2018). However, Turkey and India also have growing trade relations. Given Turkey's interest in joining BRICS (Korybko, 2018), Turkey and India may seek greater cooperation in the future. With that, as previously noted, come expectations of support on critical issues. In the past though, support was not forthcoming. For example, India maintains friendly relations with Cyprus (High Commission of India Nicosia Cyprus, 2018). New Delhi was not particularly supportive in the fight against the FETO organization (Asian News International, 2017). Turkey for its part did not oppose India's entry to the elite Non-Suppliers Group (NSG) but also supported Pakistan's entry.

Thus, US-Pakistan, US-India, Turkey-Pakistan, and Turkey-India relations have been multi-layered and complex, attuned to the ever-shifting global dynamics that have led to the Kashmir dispute being both a barometer and instrument of influence by India and Pakistan. Additionally, considering the Kashmir dispute primarily affects Kashmiri Muslims, and has been viewed as a Muslim cause, the inclusion of US and Turkish media will allow for the study of relevant media from the lens of religious and cultural proximity to the Kashmir dispute (or lack thereof) as well.

Research Methodology

Cable News Network (CNN), TRT World, GEO News, and NDTV were selected as respectively American, Turkish, Pakistani and Indian news sources for the study. CNN and TRT World are well-known sources of American and Turk-

³ İbrahim Kalin is the Turkish Presidential Press Secretary.

ish English-language news outlets internationally. CNN was the first to revolutionize television news and expanded their broadcasting internationally in the early 1980s (Lule, 2016), and became a significant actor in international relations during the 1991 Gulf War. CNN is also associated with the 'CNN effect', that assumes that the news media influences or determines what governments do (Hoskins & O'Loughlin, 2010; Cottle, 2006; Robinson, 1999), making this the channel most likely to be utilized by the US administration in public diplomacy efforts. Also an international broadcaster, TRT World is a Turkish English-language 24-hour English language news channel. Launched in 2015, TRT World is part of the country's public broadcaster, the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT). According to Turkish officials at TRT World's test launch, Turkey would conduct public diplomacy by engaging all its institutions in order to protect its national interests (TRT Haber, 2015). TRT World is an international broadcaster with its own news agenda. However, there is a strong likelihood that the network's views will not be contradicting the Turkish government's foreign policy. With that said, the channel reports with minimally loaded language and utilizes credible sources (Media Bias/Fact Check, 2018-a).

For Pakistani and Indian news sources, GEO News and New Delhi Television Limited (NDTV) were selected. GEO News was Pakistan's first 24-hour news channel, launched in 2002. It is the most watched network in the country (Al Jazeera, 2018). Importantly, PTV World, the 24 hour English news channel owned by the Pakistani state, at the time of writing, did not have an English-language online news outlet. NDTV was also India's first 24 hours private news channel, launched in 1988 and headquartered in New Delhi, India. Though the study could have included Doordarshan, the state network that had an online news outlet, it may not have led to reliable comparisons with the Pakistani private channel included in the study. In any case, NDTV republishes stories from the Press Trust of India for national news and presents world affairs from an Indian perspective (Media Bias/Fact Check, 2018-b).

Digital news outlets of CNN, TRT World, GEO News, and NDTV were selected as incoming traffic to media organizations' own news websites is one of the most important sources for online news consumption (Deloitte, 2017). Online content is reflective of the broadcast content that is produced by these channels (Graber & Dunaway, 2017). Considering that the study is a discourse analysis, relying on framing analysis and comparative keyword analysis, which is 'a method for the conjoint qualitative and quantitative analysis of large amounts of text, adapted for social research purposes' (Charteris-Block, 2012, p. 142), using online written content is preferable.

Framing analysis, as a discourse analysis technique, allows us to 'select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text,

in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation' (Entman, 1993). According to Ray (2004):

'The salience of a frame in a media text is a product of the interaction of the frames embedded in the text and the mental schemas of the reader. Although the presence of frames in a text, as detected by researchers, does not guarantee that audience frames will be identical to the frames in the text (Entman, 1989), media frames, by emphasizing some aspects of a problem over others, activate certain kinds of knowledge within people, and this, in turn, affects their trains of thought and recommended behaviour' (Ray, 2004, p.17).

The Lexis Nexis search engine located all news articles using terms including 'Kashmir dispute', 'Kashmir conflict' or 'Kashmir war' from January to August 2018. Even though Indian Administered Kashmir had experienced increased violence since 2014 onwards with 2018 being the decade's deadliest year (Zia, 2019), this date range was selected to highlight media coverage that was not coloured by a particular 'media event' such as major terrorist attack such as the Pulwama attack in February 2019 and resulting military confrontations. Media events are 'interruptions of routine' (Dayan and Katz, 1992: 9-14), and the date range is reflective of a period of routine media coverage provided to the Kashmir dispute on all the channels included in the study. This is important as it can be assumed that the effects of past alignments, shared political values and objectives, and expectations of cooperation in the future may be less contaminated by a media event such as an overt war, when perhaps current priorities can take precedence.

In terms of operationalization of the framing analysis, the first phase of the study concurrently applied both inductive and deductive reasoning to qualitatively explore and select themes, or frames. Inductive reasoning 'is aimed at detecting generalizations, rules, or regularities' (Klauer & Phye, 2008, p. 86). It is based on 'grounded theory' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967 in Vukasowich, 2012), the aim of which is to discover theory that is implicit in qualitative data (Vukasowich, 2012). It 'involves the search for patterns from observation and the development of explanations – theories – for those patterns through [a] series of hypotheses' (Bernard, 2011). Deductive reasoning, on the other hand, bases the conclusion on multiple premises that are believed to be true (Ratolo & Sator, 2018). Thus, some frames were pre-selected based on historical positions and political tensions between India and Pakistan vis-à-vis the Kashmir dispute as well as their relations with the US and Turkey, while others were selected as they were detected in the media coverage. The CNN and TRT World frames were grouped together based on what were considered alignments with the Pakistani and Indian stances.

Following a sequential multimethod approach (Dreissneck, Sousa & Mendes,

2007), the second phase used quantitative analysis to compare these selected frames and offer more rigor 'in terms of mapping results of a qualitative analysis' (Vukasowich, 2012). In order to be able to provide evidence for international media coverage reflecting not just current national priorities but also past engagements and expectations of cooperation between countries whose media cover the Kashmir dispute and both India as well as Pakistan as well, the following hypotheses were tested:

H1: CNN is **more** likely to cover the Kashmir dispute in terms of security framing than TRT World.

H2: TRT World is **more** likely to cover the Kashmir dispute using humanitarian frames than CNN.

H3: There will be **more** differences than similarities between CNN and GEO News frames as well as keywords in covering the Kashmir dispute than compared with TRT World and GEO News.

H4: There will be **more** differences than similarities between TRT World and NDTV frames and keywords in covering the Kashmir dispute than compared with CNN and NDTV.

Hypotheses 1-2 reflect current national priorities of US and Turkey, while hypotheses 3-4 capture the status of their relations with India and Pakistan respectively, reasonably assumed influenced by past engagements and expectations of future cooperation between them and India as well as Pakistan.

Findings

CNN coverage of the Kashmir dispute consisted of 10 articles during the period of study, two of which were linked with non-conflict related sexual violence, and so were not included in the study sample. TRT World had 35 news articles on the Kashmir dispute during the same period, and all were linked directly to the Kashmir dispute. This led to the use of Fisher's exact test analysis for most tests concerning CNN in this study. A Fisher's exact test analysis affords a more robust analysis when conditions for a chi-square test analysis cannot be met⁴.

With respect to the first hypothesis, though a Fisher's exact test analysis revealed that there was no significant difference between the likelihood of CNN utilizing the security framework compared with TRT World (p= 0.40, FET), CNN was almost twice as likely (38 percent versus 23 percent) than TRT World to include the security frame in their coverage of the Kashmir dispute. The following

⁴ A Fisher's exact test analysis can be used when more than 20% of cells (in a chi-square analysis) have expected frequencies of less than five, because applying approximation method is inadequate.

sub-frames were included in the security frame: Indian violent behaviour in self-defence, attacks on Indian soldiers or security personnel, descriptions of 'militant' organizations as well as India and Pakistan being nuclear powers⁵. In corroboration, keyword analysis also revealed that CNN uses the label 'terrorists' while TRT World used the term 'rebels' and 'protestors'. Additionally, CNN included references to India and Pakistan having nuclear arms in 20 percent of their coverage while it was referred to in only 5 percent of TRT World coverage. Though the Fisher's test did not confirm whether CNN employs the security frame statistically significantly more than TRT World, potentially due to the small number of CNN articles, triangulation of data shows that findings point in that direction.

Confirming the second hypothesis, a Fisher's exact test analysis revealed that TRT World employed the humanitarian frame significantly more than CNN (p<0.01, FET). In fact, TRT World was almost three times as likely (54 percent versus 20 percent). This frame included the following sub-frames: use of pellet guns to blind protestors in Indian-administrated Kashmir, unfairness of legal systems in Indian-administrated Kashmir, trauma experienced by civilians, civilians experiencing human rights abuses as well as journalists being in danger.

Confirming the third hypothesis, a Fisher's exact test first revealed that GEO News was statistically significantly more likely to use the 'Pakistan stance' than CNN (p<0.01, FET), while a chi-square analysis revealed that there were no significant differences between GEO News and TRT World in utilizing the 'Pakistan stance' frame (x2=1.41, df=1, p=0.23). Additionally, keyword analysis revealed that CNN uses the terms 'terrorists' or 'militants' which is less aligned with GEO News, whereas TRT World uses the terms 'rebels', 'fighters' or 'youth' which is more aligned with the language employed by GEO News. This analysis includes sub-frames clearly reflecting Pakistan's stance including 'Kashmir does not want to be a part of India', 'Kashmiris are resentful', 'Kashmiris are carrying out anti-India protests', 'Pakistan denies role in terrorism in Kashmir' and that there are 'renewed or indigenous protests in Kashmir'.

With respect to the fourth hypothesis, though a Fisher's exact test analysis revealed that there was no significant difference between the likelihood of CNN employing the 'Indian stance' frame compared with TRT World (p= 0.42, FET), a chi-square analyses revealed that NDTV coverage was more similar to CNN (x2=22.05, df=1, p<0.001) than TRT World (x2=31.33, df=1, p<0.001) coverage. The 'Indian stance' frame included the following sub-frames clearly reflecting the Indian stance: 'Pakistan supports terrorism', 'Pakistani terrorist', 'globally recognized Kashmiri terrorist' and terrorists 'killing' or 'attacking'. Additionally, CNN

⁵ Terrorist as a term was not included as TRT World coverage does not utilize it in a single news article in this study sample and that may have biased the outcome. However, such an omission did not appear to make the result significant in any case.

uses the terms 'terrorists' or 'militants' which is aligned with NDTV news coverage, along with referring to Kashmir as 'Jammu and Kashmir', while TRT World refers to Kashmir as 'Indian Administrated Kashmir'. Though the Fisher's test did not confirm the fourth hypothesis, potentially due to a small number of CNN articles, the chi-square analysis showed greater alignment between NDTV and CNN compared to NDTV and TRT World.

Inter-rater reliability was calculated using two coders who coded and compared the first 10 percent of CNN, TRT World, GEO News and NDTV content with each other in terms of frames utilized by each news outlet. Cohen's Kappa was=0.762, which is, as proposed by different investigators, 'substantial' (Landis & Koch, 1977), 'good' (Altman, 1991) and 'excellent' (Fleiss, 1971).

Discussion

Aligned with findings from a study by Zia & Syedah (2015), who also found that US media provided sparse coverage to the Kashmir dispute, this study also had significantly less CNN articles on the topic when compared with TRT World. Bahador (2011) showed that US media including CNN was less likely to cover an issue that did not directly involve Westerners or their military forces. Because the US, any other Western country or their militaries are not directly involved with the Kashmir dispute, this may be partially explanatory. According to Halton (2001), if a foreign story does not involve bombs, natural disasters or financial calamity, it has little chance of entering the American consciousness. This is aligned with the news domestication theory (Cassara, 1993 in Taradai, 2014) which highlighted the 'domestication' of international news. The term was first coined by Gurevitch et al. (1991), 'as a process of presenting distant events as relevant to a domestic audience and constructing them as compatible with the culture and dominant ideology of the country of broadcast' (Gurevitch et al., 1991 in Taradai, 2014, p. 68). Ray (2004) found a significant jump in the coverage of the Kashmir dispute during the Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan in 1998-1999 in the US media confirms this.

Though there was no statistically significant difference between TRT World and CNN when it comes to utilizing security oriented frames and keywords in their media coverage of the Kashmir dispute, trends detected by analysing CNN coverage versus TRT World coverage utilising security oriented frames as well as keyword analysis point towards CNN being more security oriented. This result could signal that the 'CNN effect', or 'the ability of real-time communications technology, via the news media, to provoke major responses from domestic audiences and political elites to both global and national events' (Robinson, 2002, p.2), is overshadowed by priorities related to national security. As per Livingston (1997):

'The CNN effect is a loss of policy control on the part of policy makers because of the power of the media. It includes...the media's power to force officials to take quicker decisions in response to foreign events involving (or not) U.S. interests' (Livingston, 1997 in Palloshi, 2015, p.49).

The CNN effect was a result of US foreign policy becoming 'media-specified crisis management' (Livingston, 1997, p.1). While many media researchers argue that the CNN effect does have an impact, nevertheless, according to Bahador (2011), the CNN effect never really existed as US media framing never fully operated independently of the ones in power. Thus, CNN is inclined to convey the 'official' language of the US government and its security-oriented foreign policy. Lance Bennett argued that 'mass media news is indexed... to the dynamics of governmental debate' (Bennett, 1990, p. 108). This is particularly after the 9/11 terror attacks when US media largely reflected the US government's positions (Lahlali, 2011). Other authors (Malek, 1997; Herman & Chomsky, 1988) have questioned the US press' ability to exercise judgment that is independent of officialdom in Washington, and that appears to be especially evident when examining US media coverage of the Kashmir dispute.

From the perspective of the US, it appears that CNN coverage is more aligned with NDTV coverage than GEO News is not just given US-India economic relations, but also due to strategic and political considerations. As noted above, the US considers India strategically important in the larger Indo-Pacific region (Pant, 2015), and according to a Pentagon report, 'there is a broad consensus within Washington and Delhi that each depends on the other to sustain a favourable strategic equilibrium as Chinese power rises' (Quadrennial Defence Review, 2010, p. 65). Secondly, many US officials have been unsupportive of Pakistan's role in the US war in Afghanistan, accusing the country of facilitating terrorists (Mangaldas, 2018). The American government-military apparatus' frustration with Pakistan is detectable in the analysis. In fact, the same terms are being used to describe Pakistan's role in Kashmir as its role in Afghanistan, in an apparent attempt to develop a 'case' for American efforts being thwarted by Pakistan, even if they are two entirely different conflicts. Some authors went to the extent of stating that the US is scapegoating Pakistan for its failures in Afghanistan (Gul, 2018). Relatedly, when it comes to reporting on Muslims, and consequently Muslim causes or conflicts primarily affecting Muslims such as the Kashmir dispute, research studies have confirmed that Islam and Muslims receive negative reporting from Western media outlets (Hassan & Omar, 2017; Alghamdi, 2015). This is aligned with Van Dijk's (1988) cognitive-structural model framework describing the relationship between the 'structures of news, the process of news production, and the processes of news comprehension on one hand, and the social practices within which these three elements are embedded' (Bell & Garrett, 1998 in Alghamdi, 2015, p. 199). Reflecting on the discourse on security and terrorism, researchers found that 'the association of Islam with terrorism and violence has come to be accepted, to the extent that terms such as "Muslim" and "terrorist" have become almost synonymous' (Eid & Karim, 2014, p.105 in Alghamdi, 2015, p. 203). In corroboration, as previously noted, keyword analysis also revealed that CNN uses the label 'terrorists' to describe the same actors TRT World describes as 'protestors'.

However, CNN is not significantly different from TRT World when it comes to reflecting NDTV coverage, and while that could be attributed to Turkey's focus on economic growth as part of foreign policy foci (Kalin, 2012), it could also be due to the US foreign policy establishment being mindful of potential future cooperation with Pakistan vis-à-vis the War in Afghanistan⁶. This was evident when President Trump offered to mediate between India and Pakistan with respect to the Kashmir dispute during Pakistani Prime Minister's official visit to the US in July 2019, when the dialogue was expected to centre on the Afghan Peace Process and Pakistan's role in facilitating US-Taliban talks (Kocis, 2019). CNN coverage of the Kashmir dispute with its propensity to focus on security issues, lack of promotion of either Pakistani or Indian stance over the other yet using the same keywords as NDTV reflects current national priorities as well as past engagements and expectations of cooperation between US and both India as well as Pakistan.

TRT World was significantly more likely to employ humanitarian frames and keywords than CNN. According to Kalin (2012), the Turkish leadership has emphasized that 'the current global order has to be based on principles of justice and equality as a precondition to finding sustainable long-term solutions to current conflicts' (Kalin, 2012, p.14). Post 2015, Turkey's foreign policy has been characterized by 'moral realism' (Fuat, 2016), which combines hard power-based military assertiveness with humanitarian norms in order to achieve three goals simultaneously: to remain proactive in terms of foreign policy, to exhibit moral responsibility to protect human lives and to respond effectively via hard power if need be to address security challenges (Keyman, 2016). In the last decade, Turkey has expanded its foreign policy tools and humanitarian organizations are central to them (Ozcan, 2017). Turkey has focused on 'humanitarian diplomacy' (Hasimi, 2014), expanding both development assistance and humanitarian aid with respect to geographic location as well as the scope of activity⁷. This humanitarian focus does not appear entirely aligned with religion alone. As per Tabak (2017):

⁶ Indeed, Pakistan facilitated direct talks between the US and Taliban, which eventually culminated in a US-Taliban agreement on February 29th 2020 that has the potential to end the decades-long war in Afghanistan (Hashim, 2020).

⁷ By 2013, Turkey had 'implemented development projects in 110 countries from all continents (Hasimi, 2014, p.134). In regards to aid-related foreign policy, examples include an 'open door policy' for Syrian refugees (Hasimi, 2014).

Previously, Muslim communities were almost the sole beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance, but, in the JDP era, deprived communities of all beliefs (Muslims and non-Muslims) in zones of conflict, war, and poverty have been extended a helping hand, yet with a confident Muslim identity (Tabak, 2017, p. 90)

Although TRT World has its own news agenda and priorities, it is part of the country's public broadcaster, and is likely to use humanitarian lens when it comes to news reporting (TRT World, n.d.). Therefore, it is reasonable to expect TRT World to highlight human rights abuses in Kashmir more than CNN.

Considering Pakistan and Turkey's significant past alignments, it is not surprising that TRT World coverage is significantly more likely to echo GEO News coverage, and consequently Pakistan's stance, than CNN. However, even though analysis showed NDTV coverage to be more similar to CNN than TRT World, the fact that there was no statistically significant difference between CNN and TRT World aligning with NDTV coverage, that reflects pro-Indian stance frames and keywords, requires investigation. Though it could be explained by the small size of CNN articles, a review of Turkish foreign policy principles may help. According to Kalin (2012), Turkey has 'moved from modernization to globalization where there are multiple centres and new spaces for opportunities' (Kalin, 2012, p. 20). The Turkish foreign policy objective of economic development through trade and investment (Kalin, 2012) as well as expectations of more engagement with both India and Pakistan, in either political or economic terms, may be reflected in TRT World's balanced usage of terms such as 'Indian or Pakistani Administered Kashmir'. These are the terms used by the United Nations itself rather than 'Jammu and Kashmir' (used by CNN and NDTV) or 'Azad or Indian Occupied Kashmir' (used by GEO News). Furthermore, Kalin (2012) states that 'Turkey has put economic considerations at the centre of its foreign policy and has advocated closer cooperation with other rising powers' (Kalin, 2012, p. 10). Turkish foreign policy emphasizes 'trade and economic development as a tool of strengthening bilateral relations' (Kalin, 2012, p. 14). Both Pakistan and India represent economic opportunity.

However, considering Turkey's population is predominantly Muslim, TRT World uses terms such as 'rebels' or 'fighters' rather than 'terrorists' or 'militants' as used by NDTV and CNN (as previously noted, Muslims receive negative reporting from Western media outlets) and 'youth' or 'martyrs', used by GEO News. Turkey confidently and constitutively deploys religious causes and discourses in foreign policy, and the Kashmir dispute is no different. This is aligned with Turkey's 'Turkish Islamic exceptionalism' (Mardin, 2005 in Tabak, 2017, p. 98), and that the 'role Ottomans and the preceding 'Turkish' states played in the building and sustaining of Islamic civilization endows Turkey with a responsibility towards fellow Muslims worldwide' (Tabak, 2017, p. 98). Thus, current national economic

and foreign policy priorities as well as past engagements and expectations of cooperation between Turkey and both India as well as Pakistan, also a Muslimmajority country, are influencing TRT World's coverage of the Kashmir dispute with its focus on human rights abuses and promotion of the Pakistani stance on the matter, yet, using neutral keywords.

Conclusion

Findings from this paper provide evidence for current national priorities as well as past engagements and expectations of cooperation between countries whose media cover the Kashmir dispute and both India as well as Pakistan could explain the manner in which the Kashmir dispute is provided international media coverage. Highlighting the dynamics associated with reporting on the Kashmir issue this study provides a nuanced view of how national and regional priorities affect foreign media coverage and offers explanations in light of factors including competing political objectives and alignments with Pakistan, India as well as other international powers. Given the apparent impasse between India and Pakistan, political motivations of foreign countries, seemingly irrelevant but ultimately connected, will continue to colour international media coverage.

Media coverage is never without political context, and coverage of the Kashmir dispute is no exception. In fact, comparing findings of this study with media coverage of the Kashmir dispute after the revocation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution in August 2019⁸ may prove that: TRT World had almost 50 percent more coverage in terms of articles on the topic than CNN from August 2019 till March 2020. With that said, the role of the media in coverage of international conflicts, and in particular the longest international conflict to date namely the Kashmir dispute, is critical for it can outline and even activate the agency of the international community when bilateral dialogue has clearly failed. However, if international media coverage aligns itself with the agenda of any country, it can obfuscate the reality on the ground and potentially perpetuate conflict and consequently human suffering. Clearly, airtime of international media coverage by any media outlet, or lack thereof, of the revocation of Article 370 in August 2019 of the special constitutional status of Indian-Administered Kashmir, which was the covenant of its special rights, may prove to be an unfortunate testament to that.

Bio

Ravale Mohydin is an analyst at TRT World Research Centre. With graduate degrees from Harvard University and the University of Pennsylvania, her research

⁸ Article 370 allowed the only Muslim-majority Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir its own constitution, a separate flag and freedom to make laws relating to permanent residency, ownership of property and fundamental rights. It also barred non-Kashmiri Indians who live outside the state from purchasing property or settling there to protect against demographic changes (BBC News, 2019).

interests include the political economy of media, strategic communications, public diplomacy, political effects of entertainment media and media literacy.

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