USE OF PRINT MEDIA FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACE BUILDING: A CASE STUDY OF KASHMIR DISPUTE

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the print media coverage of Kashmir dispute, which is one of the most simmering issues between Pakistan and India. The research is based on the notion that media has potential to influence conflict prevention and its resolution. Kashmir issue intermittently appears in international media and rarely in research journals, thus, providing a room for further research. This study is confined to the content analysis of selected newspapers from Pakistan (Dawn), India (The Times of India) and the United States (The New York Times). Focus was to analyze the news, editorials/editorial notes and letters to editors pertaining to Kashmir conflict. The key findings confirmed that coverage of the issue is negatively framed and invariably centered on violence, violent events and failed to highlight peaceful alternatives, which anticipated further violence. It concludes that print media of the mentioned countries, regardless of its capacity, did not perform any pivotal role for peaceful resolution of Kashmir conflict.

Keywords: Kashmir dispute, print media, conflict resolution, content analysis, media in contemporary world.

Introduction

The Kashmir dispute is not only causing damage and untold misery to Kashmiris, both in property and life but also a root cause of confrontation between Pakistan and India for the last six decades. International Crisis Group Report 2003 indicated Kashmir conflict as a key cause of tension between the two countries. Kochler reported “it has proven to be the most stubborn problem of international politics for more than sixty years”¹. This unresolved matter has kept the both neighbouring countries on a dangerous course of
confrontation ever since inception. The division of India along communal lines by the imperial rulers was to prove a pandora box for the future generations. Tremendous drain of resources incurred by the two countries on military build-up and arms-race including the acquisition of nuclear bombs is a result of their confrontation over Kashmir².

Apart from the governments and ‘international multilateral organizations’ for instance, UN and NGOs, media is another significant actor that influences efforts for prevention and resolution of conflicts. Advancement in communication technology has minimized the governments’ monopoly over information and supported individuals and non-state actors to become significant partners in international affairs including conflict resolutions. Recently, news media has become a fundamental arena of violent conflict, from Iraq to Afghanistan or Israeli-Palestinian dispute, media’s role has changed considerably both in resolution or fomenting conflicts. Now people know much more about conflicts as information about developments in national and international affairs reaches sooner to them³. Considering this dispute as the most risky nuclear flashpoint in South Asia and momentous potential of media in advocacy and resolving conflicts, this paper analyzes print media’s role in peaceful resolution of Kashmir issue.

By applying content analysis, the study investigates as already mentioned national newspapers of three countries viz Pakistan, India (directly involved) and the USA (as a mediator). Print media was focused as it plays a significant role in shaping the political reality, and readers not only learn about the given issue but also realize the importance attached to it. Further opinion pages are forming as well as reflecting the public opinion, thus, based on the concept of conflict resolution, it analyzed whether their coverage has potential to contribute to peaceful resolution of the issue or not, which is disturbing global peace in general and South Asian stability in particular. The specific objectives were to gauge the frequency of content published with reference to Kashmir issue in selected newspapers of the stakeholders. Also to analyze and
compare coverage by newspapers in the light of conflict resolution approach.

Historically, Kashmir has been a victim of communally biased media much before India and Pakistan became two independent nations and Kashmir emerged as a conflict between them. This communally biased media later on in its ‘ultra-nationalist’ avatar spoiled every move for the resolution of the dispute. It has also been observed that the media of Pakistan and India is always being used by their respective governments to project official stance with reference to Kashmir issue thus, shaped the public minds accordingly. The propaganda creating hatred and distrust among people of both the countries. General A.G. L. McNaughton, the UN mediator highlighted the threat that non-resolution of Kashmir issue could spoil the peace in this region. He stated “as long as dispute over Kashmir continues, it is a serious drain on military, economic and above all, on spiritual strength of the two countries⁴. The political polarization and permanent tension along with increase of political and religious extremism amongst the stakeholders blocks the way of settling this issue and normalize relations between the two countries.

International Crisis Group Report 2003 states “media coverage of Kashmir issue is controlled by the government in Pakistan”. Media in Pakistan is not supporting to bring Pakistan and India closer⁵. Similarly, Josy Josep, ‘Times of India’ opines that “most Indian newspapers are reinforcing the standpoint of Indian government”⁶. ‘Reporters without Borders’ reported “Indian media propagates every social or political issue and favours India’s stance instead of independent approach”⁷. Another research reveals Indian media focuses on killings by militants while Pakistani television projects violation of human rights by Indian forces. Media is an accomplice in the reductive framing of Kashmir conflict as a national security issue and terrorism, whereas Indians view Kashmir exclusively as a territorial dispute.⁸
Since 1947, Kashmir issue is internationally-recognized and a focus of several UN resolutions. It is considered an issue of international community that has implications for global peace and security, due to nuclear potential of three powers actually controlling parts of the disputed territory. Every year, scores of books on different dimensions of the dispute are added to Kashmir bibliography. Extensive research has been done on Kashmir dispute but media’s role in its resolution is neglected by scholars, historians or media professionals. Media had its role in the past but communication technological advancement has significantly increased its responsibility for conflict resolution. While noticing acclaimed significance of media.

**Conflict Resolution and Media**

In 1970s, a Norwegian scholar ‘Johan Galtung’ introduced peace journalism as a self-conscious, working concept for journalists covering conflicts and wars. He described peace journalism as a “broader, fairer and more accurate way of framing stories, drawing on insights of conflict analysis and transformation”. Galtung observed these traditional war journalism is modelled after sports journalism, focusing on winning as the only thing in a zero-sum game. Peace journalism approximates health journalism. A good health reporter would describe a patient’s battle against cancer, and yet inform readers about the cancer’s causes as well as the full range of possible cures and preventive measures. Paluck stated “Media and conflict has been extensively studied, but research lacks at media’s role in peace building and conflict resolution”. The conflict or war is treated as news value, while reporting media reports are generally sensational, and a tool to increase ratings and circulations.

Galtung and Vincent viewed war journalism mainly focuses on violence and pays less attention to inspect the structural origins of the conflict. Conversely, peace journalism is an advocacy, interpretative approach to reporting on war, conflict and violence. Peace journalists spotlight on news stories that promote peace initiatives; reduce religious and
ethnic differences’ prevent further conflict’ focus on the structure of society, and support conflict resolution, reconciliation and reconstruction. Lee and Maslog expressed “Journalism scholars supported peace culture by rejecting war reporting against peace journalism”\(^\text{14}\). Thus, the last decade witnessed rise in the practice of ‘peace journalism’ and research in the field.

Media’s potential to promote peace and reconciliation through news and entertainment programmes has been established by research\(^\text{15}\). Patel expressed “media can play a preventive, constructive and proactive role in conflict prevention”. Manoff described “Media can support peace-keeping operations by exposing violations, publicizing and enforcing human rights and moral norms”. It can act like mediator and create pressure on the governments to address brewing and existing conflicts. It practiced conflict resolution approach by educating the community about existing conflict resolution resources and other successful cases of conflict management\(^\text{16}\).

In the light of above discussion, this study explores if Indian and Pakistani media have adopted this approach, which might help in bringing peace to this region. Only resolution of lingering issues between two nuclear neighbours can bring them together and the USA can better accomplish its targets of war on terror in Afghanistan with mutual support of them. The US media can play a pivotal role by publishing supporting content for conflict resolution between the two states. America’s role in Kashmir is always welcomed by Pakistan because, being a super power\(^\text{17}\), its media can highlight this issue while suggesting measures for its resolution. In Pakistan, media has the potential to influence public opinion thus, responsible to assist in contemporary conflicts resolution by suggesting applicable solutions. Although contribution of media in suggesting peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute has been acknowledged but due to the significance of the issue, media should cope with the situation more positively.
Conflict resolutions cannot be observed until all the key contributors realize their due responsibilities. Ganguly says that political thinkers, defense analysts, media, etc. have been suggesting peaceful resolution of Kashmir conflict and supposed that it will eventually be resolved through combination of negotiation, force and compromise among opposing parties”18. India claims to be the world’s largest democracy, and in democracy, press is considered to be the most effective fourth pillar of the state. Recent economic growth of India enhanced the demand for resolving all conflicts19. If media put efforts in resolving Kashmir conflict then Pakistan and India can concentrate on development and eventually achieve prosperity.

Lee depicts media power as symbolic and persuasive. He states that media primarily has the potential to control the minds of readers or viewers20. Achieving conflict resolution or peace through media is one of the Track Two Diplomacy21. Powerful media messages have the potential to influence attitudes and behaviour of people, a major stage in the process of resolving issues particularly in poor countries where most of the conflicts take place”22. Pakistan and India are important economies of the region and nuclear powers thus, tension between them is damaging the peaceful environment. Both are spending huge budget on defense whereas majority of their people are deprived of basic needs. Davison remarked that media can fortify international understanding by promoting mediation, negotiation and other conflict resolution mechanisms23. Wolfsfeld anticipates that media can positively influence peace and nature of debate about peace process. He suggested that during conflict, media can itself reframe issues to make the conflict more tractable, which in turn, helps the parties in reframing issues and formulating possible solutions”24.

Although media has the potential to play effective role in conflict resolution and peace building but research shows that concerned media never remains supportive because journalists use frames to present central point, stock phrases and stereotypical images to maintain a specific interpretation
of an event\textsuperscript{25}. The frames generally set-up by media professionals and pressure groups in the society including political parties, policy makers, religious leaders, corporate sector, etc. The press is deliberately misinterpreting facts thus exonerates government’s careless policies reported in 2003. Further analyzed the reporting frames of US press and concluded that US print media selected two aspects of the Kashmir conflict to highlight religion and warfare.

Media’s role in formation of foreign policy is significant but portrayal of Muslims was dominantly negative in the US press\textsuperscript{26}. Al-Zahrani and Aziz have indicated to ‘Time’ ‘ABC TV’ and ‘The New York Times’ about this aspect and focused on the crisis. Maximum stories portrayed Muslims and Arabs negatively\textsuperscript{27}. A comparative study of Pakistani newspapers on Kashmir issue indicates that Daily \textit{Nawa-i-Waqat} has reported more human rights violations in Kashmir than Daily \textit{Jang}, which has more circulation\textsuperscript{28}. Indian Institute of Journalism and New Media Report suggested in view of the economic and geographical proximity of countries, Indian media should pay more attention to Kashmir conflict resolution.

The above cited studies indicate that Kashmir issue is decisive in normalizing relationships between India and Pakistan. Media’s role is critical for peaceful conflict resolution. Therefore, present study has examined the coverage and contribution of influential newspapers representing in India, Pakistan and US in suggesting peaceful resolution of Kashmir issue.

Considering Kashmir conflict as an international and core dispute between India and Pakistan, ‘Content Analysis’ of respective newspaper’s coverage on the issue was essential to be evaluated however, considering the mediator’s role of USA between them and the most influential country in United Nations that has the capacity and power to resolve this conflict, American newspaper has also been analyzed. It is one of the most prestigious dailies of United States and enjoys
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widespread respect among the reading public and elites including policy makers.\(^{29}\)

Considering print media as an independent and conflict resolution as the dependent variable of present study, coverage of this issue was investigated in chosen newspaper from 1\(^{st}\) of October 2008 to 31\(^{st}\) of December 2008. The period of the study was focused on the basis of judgmental sampling. The preferred time was substantial as Mumbai attacks took place during the epoch that affected the state of relations between the two countries and eventually the media coverage. In view of conflict resolution approach, media is expected to act like mediator and create pressure on the governments to resolve the developing and existing conflicts including Kashmir issue during this chaos. A study “print media functioning as peace building mechanism for conflict resolution” concludes “during chaos, dependency of public on press for latest information regarding contemporary development is highly increased”. Media would be influential if portraying conflict situation with objective approach and avoid provoking abhorrence among public.

A coding sheet was created by allotting specific codes to the content of media for instance, news stories, letters to the editor, editorials and editorial notes that were published in selected dailies regarding Kashmir conflict during specified period of time. Newspaper’s content directions of the selected conflict were separately measured and the data was marked on three point scale including positive or supportive, negative or unsupportive and neutral or balanced. Before data collection, impartial coders were trained for unbiased depiction of the content i.e. positive, negative or neutral. The coding sheet having with parameters of data analysis and said content supplied to coders.

The unit of analysis coded positive if the violent aspect of the conflict was not unnecessarily highlighted and published information was identical or similar in all the selected newspapers. It also categorized as supportive, if language (words) used was not increasing the intensity of the dispute
rather avoiding instigating or exposing any information that can encourage or provoke discrimination/hatred on the basis of race, ethnicity or nationality and gender disability of any individual/group involved in the dispute. Further, if the content was unbiased, avoiding sensationalism, not supporting any party, condemning fierce acts, focusing on peaceful resolution and suggesting negotiations to resolve the Kashmir conflict were considered supportive.

The content of chosen newspapers was labeled negative if it was triggering the dispute by giving partial coverage or only publishing the violent aspect of the conflict and distorting the situation. Further, the content is coded negative, if it was able to create intolerance or detestation over fundamental issues of race, ethnicity or nationality and gender disability of any individual/group involved in the dispute and provided unfair support to any party. If the coverage supporting armed activities and appreciating aggressive acts or ferocity of all stakeholders by presenting them heroes, was taken as negative.

Coverage of targeted newspapers was coded as neutral, if it didn’t fall in positive or negative group or boosting up the Kashmir conflict. Data is considered as neutral, if it gave a balanced or fair coverage to the issue.

**Findings and Analyses**

Findings of the study revealed that all the sampled newspapers published editorials/editorial notes, news stories and letters to editor during the chosen time period. Daily ‘The Times of India’ published 87 news stories on Kashmir conflict which is the highest in number. Daily ‘Dawn’ published 65 news stories whereas minimum coverage was given by ‘The New York Times’ which published 04 news stories during the selected time period (Table 1). Data reveals that maximum news coverage to the Kashmir issue was given by ‘The Times of India’ followed by ‘Dawn’ but ‘The New York Times’ slightly covered this issue.
Table 1 shows that news coverage by Daily ‘Dawn’ was most positive (31%) on the contrary one-fourth (25%) of news stories framed positively by Daily ‘The New York Times’ whereas, Daily ‘The Times of India’ remained at bottom of the list and presented only one fifth of the news stories that fell in positive category. Similarly, Daily ‘Dawn’ published most of the neutral news whereas Daily ‘The Times of India’ brought out 36% of neutral coverage and Daily ‘The New York Times’ did not publish any such news story on Kashmir conflict.

It is also pertinent to note that Kashmir conflict received minimum but negative coverage in Daily ‘The New York Times’ published from US. Data validates that maximum coverage by Daily ‘The New York Times’ was negative with 75%, whereas Daily Dawn gave minimum negative (15%) coverage to the issue in comparison to other two newspapers. Coverage by ‘The Times of India’ witnessed 44% negative regarding conflict resolution approach because the published material may impose worse effect on the conflict situation.

Table 1: News Stories published during October 2008 to December 2008 regarding ‘Kashmir Issue’ in selected newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News Stories</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Codes</strong></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dawn</strong></td>
<td>06</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Times of India</strong></td>
<td>08</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New York Times</strong></td>
<td>01</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: positive, negative and neutral categories are presented as ‘+’, ‘-’, ‘0’, respectively in the table.*
As far as the editorials/editorial notes are concerned, again ‘The Times of India’ published the maximum unit (05). On the other hand Daily ‘Dawn’ produced 03 and ‘The New York Times’ wrote only 01 editorial note (Table 2). This shows that maximum editorials/editorial notes appeared on the opinion pages of ‘The Times of India’ followed by ‘Dawn’ to discuss and impact the opinion of policy makers, experts and general public on Kashmir conflict. However, ‘The New York Times’ published only one editorial note, which indicates that it does not consider Kashmir conflict as a significant issue to be highlighted in the opinion pages. This also indicates the newspaper’s policy to keep the Kashmir dispute out of sight of the general public. Table 2 also reveals that Daily ‘Dawn’ published 33% and ‘The Times of India’ produced 60% negatively structured editorials / editorial notes on Kashmir issue during the selected time whereas ‘The New York Times’ ignored this issue altogether in its editorials but published 01 editorial note which was positively framed.

Table 2: Editorial/Editorial Notes published during October 2008 to December 2008 regarding ‘Kashmir Issue’ in selected newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dawn</td>
<td>+0</td>
<td>-0</td>
<td>+0</td>
<td>-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times of India</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Times</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: positive, negative and neutral categories are presented as ‘+’, ‘-’, ‘0’, respectively in the table.
Table 3 illustrates that number of ‘letters to the editor’ published in ‘The Times of India’ ‘Dawn’ and ‘The New York Times’ were 11, 05 and zero respectively. Important to note is that US newspaper did not print even a single ‘letter to the editor’ which reflects that there may be no or minimum level of awareness of the issue among the general public in USA. Additionally, the content of 64% ‘letters to the editor’ published by ‘The Times of India’ described this issue negatively. However, Daily ‘Dawn’ published this unit but 20% of them fell in negative category.

Table 3: Letters to the Editor published during October 2008 to December 2008 regarding ‘Kashmir Issue’ in selected newspapers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letters to the Editor</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Codes</strong></td>
<td>+0</td>
<td>0 -</td>
<td>+0 -</td>
<td>+0 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dawn</strong></td>
<td>01 0 0</td>
<td>02 0 0</td>
<td>01 0 0 1</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Times of India</strong></td>
<td>04 0 0 5</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 1</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New York Times</strong></td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* positive, negative and neutral categories are presented as ‘+’, ‘-‘, ‘0‘, respectively in the table.

Overall findings depict that the selected newspapers gave negatively framed or neutral coverage to the issue in its news stories as compared to positive/supportive to resolve the dispute peacefully. Similarly, less space was devoted to opinion pieces i.e. editorials/editorial notes on the issue and the published were also tended to be framed more as war journalism instead of peace journalism. It is apparent from the data that ‘The New York Times’ gave minimum coverage and ‘Dawn’ gave maximum and neutral coverage to the issue.
whereas most of the time ‘The Times of India’ stayed negative while covering Kashmir dispute.

Findings indicate that all the selected newspaper more or less covered the Kashmir issue but nominally framed positively with reference to conflict resolution. The selected print media, invariably highlighted violence that potentially aggravates the conflict. They failed to emphasize on the peaceful alternatives but anticipated more violence. Among all the targeted newspapers, minimum coverage of Kashmir issue was found in ‘The New York Times’. The newspaper’s policy is quite obvious from the findings. The less coverage of the issue particularly on opinion pages (editorial/editorial notes) and absence of letters to editor depict the priorities of the paper. It is important to mention that because of the too little coverage of Kashmir issue, the level of its awareness among the general masses is very low as not even a single letter to the editor was found in the paper.

Although ‘Times of India’ gave maximum coverage to the issue but most news stories were treated negatively, this coverage instead of suggesting peaceful solution to the conflict intensified violence in Kashmir. Therefore, the study concluded that ‘The Times of India’ followed the policy of its government thus, its approach was biased and negative towards portraying the issue. Most of the time, the coverage remained negative and did not present any peaceful resolution of the conflict. Kashmir conflict was not treated as an international issue by Indian press that is affecting peace of South Asian region in particular and the world in general.

Therefore, it can be said that Indian press is widening the gap between Pakistan and India. On the contrary, Daily ‘Dawn’ adopted neutral approach and published more neutral news stories, editorials/editorial notes and letter to editor as compared to other selected newspapers but failed to forcefully highlight the need of conflict resolution and hardly suggested any possible peaceful solutions for Kashmir conflict. ‘The New York Times’ did not give due coverage in creating awareness among the public about importance and sensitivity of this
conflict. Thus, it can be argued that none of the newspapers was following the conflict resolution approach or playing a significant role towards normalization.

Nevertheless, print media coverage to Kashmir conflict confirms that due importance and preference was not given to it. Consequently, Pakistani, Indian and the audience from the world over were not aware of sensitivity of this issue and thus do not show antagonistic concern about its solution. On the contrary, with reference to the negative press coverage, it concludes that media is disseminating frustration and intolerance among readers. Hence, press coverage of concerned countries can be the fearsome weapon in enhancing violence. Such media propaganda and disinformation shapes public opinion and feelings accordingly. It may push the state of affairs to more destructive and apprehensive situation.

This study observed that contemporary press coverage of Kashmir dispute generally follows inappropriate approach to cover conflict. Though dialogue between Pakistan and India was initiated several times but due to various reasons the peace process hit snags, for instance, Mumbai attacks took place during December 2008, resultantly the dialogue and measures for confidence building clogged for unlimited time. Hence, Kashmir conflict resolution went on the back burner and Indian press while supporting their Government’s point of view beefed-up with the negative reporting. Previous studies also revealed that media tends to reflect their government stands particularly in case of conflict. A country’s media does not likely to remain neutral in a conflict involving its government.

The study by Lee in 2010 also concluded that this was not surprising to discover the strongest war journalism framing in the reporting of Kashmir issue by Indian and Pakistani media. They are embroiled in territorial battle over Kashmir for more than six decades and their press coverage continues to adopt a knee-jerk style of conflict reporting, with little consideration for long-term peaceful perspective. Lee mentioned that these
two states have a long account of enmity, having fought three wars including two over Kashmir in 1947 and 1965 with slight progress in peace negotiations. The Kashmir conflict is possibly the major acrimonious that involves not only the disruptive factor of religion but also the minefield of national sovereignty. Enmities hardened over time, and it is debatable if the press is playing a contributory role in resolving the issue. The findings of present study supports the above mentioned conclusion.

It has been observed that generally media is the only source of information in absence of direct contact. In current scenario, when circumstances are tense between Pakistan and India, peoples’ media dependency for latest information increased heavily and unavoidably. United States has an arbitrator’s role in resolving Kashmir issue, as urged by Pakistan, but the findings confirmed that ‘The New York Times’ a representative of American print media did not confer a noticeable coverage to the issue. Another important point is that whenever ‘The New York Times’ covered the issue, mainly it favored India’s view point regarding Kashmir dispute instead of publishing independent, unbiased and impartial opinion. Most of the news (75%) in ‘The New York Times’ were negatively framed which confirmed that United States print media does not follow peace journalism. This result coincides with the earlier studies regarding conflict resolution approach, for instance to some extent, it is not surprising that traditional frames of war journalism prevailed more in line with foreign wire services than locally written news. Western news agencies tend to report violence and conflict more saliently than any other news stories from developing countries.

The findings proved that press while covering Kashmir issue followed the socio-political agenda of its own country. It would also be imperative to understand that large but negative coverage cannot make any difference or enhance the pace of peace process. However, fair and positive coverage by independent and influential newspaper with
The findings of this paper accomplished that press coverage of the Kashmir conflict was inclined towards highlighting violence more instead of its resolution. Thus, media legitimized aggression by constant negative coverage and generally ignored the peaceful resolution of the conflict therefore, can be viewed although print media has potential to resolve conflicts by augmenting peace process; newspapers of all the selected countries were not giving due coverage to the issue and playing their role positively and effectively for the conflict resolution.

**Conclusion**

This study offered a quantitative contribution to the Kashmir issue resolution which has received mostly anecdotal or normative discussion. By applying the Galtung’s concept of war/peace journalism, the study analyzed the content of print media of Pakistan, India and United States. On the basis of the content analysis, it can be concluded that the Kashmir issue was not highlighted with positive approach by the print media; rather it was negatively structured or neutral most of the time. During covering Kashmir conflict, print media of each country has set frames according to their socio-political context and covered the issue accordingly and highlighted violence and militancy, nationalism and patriotism, biasness towards some parties, etc.

The coverage of the conflict is dominated by war journalism, which indicates that the value of peace journalism is not realized. India and Pakistan, embroiled in a decades-old territorial clash over Kashmir, have demonstrated through Pakistani and Indian newspapers that print media continues to adopt an imprudent, unreflective type of coverage of conflicts, with a minor consideration for long-term and peaceful solutions. Thus, the strong war journalism by Indian and Pakistani newspapers is not surprising. Therefore, the study concludes that print media was not used effectively and
efficiently for Kashmir conflict resolution and peace building in the region. On the contrary, the role played by the media was more capable in increasing intensity of the conflict and eventually to anticipate suggestions for peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute.

Many a times, in conflict theatres media ignores the conflict resolution approach. It does not remain neutral and emerges as a party to the conflict. It sells negative stories that capture public attention rather than analyzing and putting forward a balanced view in conflict theaters. Therefore, the study suggests to media practitioners that structural changes are required for peace journalism to evolve into a feasible, mainstream approach to news coverage of conflict. News and opinion writings instead of following hard news patrons are more likely to be framed at peace building and conflict resolution approach. One of the logical implications is that media organizations must modify notions of news values for reporting conflict.

The findings clearly outline challenges posed by established media content writing norms on conflict resolution and need of incentives for media to engage in peace journalism. Peace journalism does not often attract commercial interest, which leaves it to or other donors. Developing media initiatives with a sustainability plan is a key to long-term success and peace. Sustainability must include not only a strategy for necessary actions but also plan for funding. To recognize and encourage the peace journalism/journalists, peace awards may also be announced by the media or other organizations. The findings may also assist media study institutions and training centers in preparing customized peace journalism programs and building a case for offering such courses.

Notes


3 ibid


14 Lee, Ting Seow. and Maslog, Crispin. 2004. War or peace journalism? Asian newspaper coverage of conflicts. Paper presented at the...
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