



The Relative Importance of Various Levels of Influences of Hierarchy of Influence Model across Provinces of Pakistan

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Abstract: This study examines the difference as perceived by the journalists on the relative importance of various levels of influences of Hierarchy of influence model across provinces”. To serve this purpose, a comparison of different levels of influences is performed. Different levels of influence can have an impact on a journalist and his/her output (news/media content). The study hypothesizes that “there is difference as perceived by the journalists on the relative importance of various levels of influences of Hierarchy of influence model across provinces”. Based on the findings, it is concluded that journalists' reporting in war zones is influenced at all levels. However, the ideological level is the most powerful in influencing journalists' reportage in war zones. Hence, we accept the hypothesis 2 that “there is difference as perceived by the journalists on the relative importance of various levels of influences of Hierarchy of influence model across conflict zones”. However, at the same time, we reject hypothesis 1 that “The individual and routine level influences are perceived stronger by the journalist as compared to other influences in conflict reporting”

Key words: Hierarchy of influence model, Peace journalism, Chi Square Test

1. Introduction

The concept of peace journalism emerged in the 1990s as a response to the growing trend of sensationalist and conflict-oriented reporting. Peace journalists believe that the media has a responsibility to provide accurate, balanced and impartial information that can help to build peace and resolve conflicts. They argue that the media should focus on covering stories that promote cooperation, collaboration and dialogue, rather than highlighting the most violent and destructive aspects of conflict (Heihir, 2012). Peace journalism therefore, seeks to promote a more nuanced understanding of conflict and to present solutions that can help to resolve it. The key elements of peace journalism include highlighting positive developments and achievements in peace building, promoting alternative perspectives and voices, and providing context and historical background for conflicts. It also involves working with diverse groups, including civil society organizations, community-based organizations, and advocacy groups, to provide a comprehensive and inclusive view of conflict. Peace journalists also prioritize the promotion of non-violent methods of conflict resolution, such as negotiation, mediation and consensus building (O'Connell, 2011). In conclusion, peace journalism is an important and growing field of journalism that seeks to promote peace, reduce violence and conflict, and advance social justice. It offers a powerful tool for shaping public opinion, influencing decision-makers, and fostering social change. By highlighting positive developments and promoting alternative

perspectives, peace journalism can help to build bridges and create greater understanding between people of different backgrounds and beliefs. Ultimately, peace journalism is a critical component of a larger effort to build a more peaceful, just and sustainable world.

2. Literature Review

The conflict reporting has been shown to be influenced by factors including an emerging public agenda (Khan, 2019; Klose, 2015; Lawrence, 2017; Michelis, 2018; Mills et al., 2012; Milojević & Krstić, 2018). Hussain & Rehman (2015) argued that conflict reporting is influenced by the degree of ignoring the issue in public agenda and the reaction of people to it. The news in such cases is likely to be pro-people. The author found that news reporting about the province of Baluchistan is an evident case of this scenario. Similarly factors such as economic and political influences also have been shown to influence news reporting from the conflict zones (Hanitzsch & Mellado, 2011).

There is also greater role of the political parties and other interest groups involvement in creating risk to the journalists. Such type of threats and conflict causes the news reports to other directions (Neupane & Zeng, 2014). According to Hanitzsch & Mellado (2011), there has been a growing interest among researchers in the field of mass communication to identify factors that shape the news because of the journalists' professional role and political views. Hanitzsch and Mellado's study may examine the ways in which political pressure and economic incentives can shape conflict reporting, while Tumber's study may explore the impact of conflict exposure on the psychological well-being of journalists. By delving into these arguments in greater detail, the author could better understand the ways in which these factors interact and shape journalists' work. Additionally, exploring these arguments in greater detail could also help to shed light on the challenges facing journalists in conflict zones, and inform the development of strategies to support them. For example, understanding the ways in which political pressure and economic incentives can shape conflict reporting could help to create an environment that supports independent and accurate reporting, while understanding the impact of conflict exposure on journalists' mental health could help to support their well-being. In conclusion, incorporating a more detailed exploration of the arguments made by Hanitzsch and Mellado and Tumber would greatly strengthen the author's thesis and provide a more in-depth understanding of the complex factors that shape conflict reporting. In a study Relly and Bustamante (2014) indicated that the strongest influences on conflict reporting arise from outside newsrooms. The forthcoming section focuses on the link between the news reporting from the conflict zones and journalist psychological well-being.

Despite its popularity, the model has seen critics in the literature. The model has been criticized to be US centric. The model has been criticized for placing the organization level above routines level as well as the model has failed to account for how one level can be empirically separated from another one and the accuracy of comparison between levels. According to Keith (2011), the model proposed by Shoemaker and Reese lack the discussions and importance of the newer media/internet. Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other genres of modern media have their specific importance and influence on journalists as well as on audience. Furthermore, the authors of the model Shoemaker and Reese have over the time realized the model does not address the needs of the modern age influences of technology on news reporting. In the 2nd edition of their book "mediating the message" (2014) by Shoemaker and Reese has stated that new technology-enabled changes in the media eco-system and have shifted old boundaries and encouraged new, more spatially oriented concepts, such as fields and networks. The model has also been criticized as findings from field research have nullified some of the assumptions of the model. For example, a study by Xu and Jin (2017) indicated that social institutional-level and social system-level factors as theorized in the model are not significant predictors of professional role perceptions.

3. Methodology

To arrive at an accurate estimate of the required number of samples, the Cochran formula is applied:

$$\begin{aligned} X &= Z^{(c/100)^2} r(100-r) \\ N &= N_x / ((N-1)E^2 + x) \\ E &= \text{Sqrt}[(N - n)x / n(N-1)] \end{aligned}$$

Where N represents the size of the population, r represents the proportion of responses that are of interest to you, and Z(c/100) represents the critical value for the confidence level c. The study samples were based on areas where

religious conflicts have been the phenomena happening in areas such as erstwhile FATA, Malakand Division, and the provincial Capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Data was coded using the standard coding procedure for quantitative data. The data was cleaned and explored to calculate the basic descriptive statistics and trends. Missing data and outliers were adjusted as per rules. Quantitative data analysis was carried out using statistical techniques for data analysis.

4. Results and Discussions

Since, this study hypothesizes that “there is difference as perceived by the journalists on the relative importance of various levels of influences of Hierarchy of influence model across provinces”. To serve this purpose, a comparison of different levels of influences is performed. Different levels of influence can have an impact on a journalist and his/her output (news/media content).

Table 1: Comparison of various levels of influences of Hierarchy of influence model

Questions	Average Agreement Index	Level of Agreement
Individual level influences	0.24	Low
Routine level influences	0.33	Moderate
Organizational influences	0.25	Low
The extra media level of influence	0.32	Moderate
The ideological level of influences	0.35	Moderate

Source: Authors own Calculation

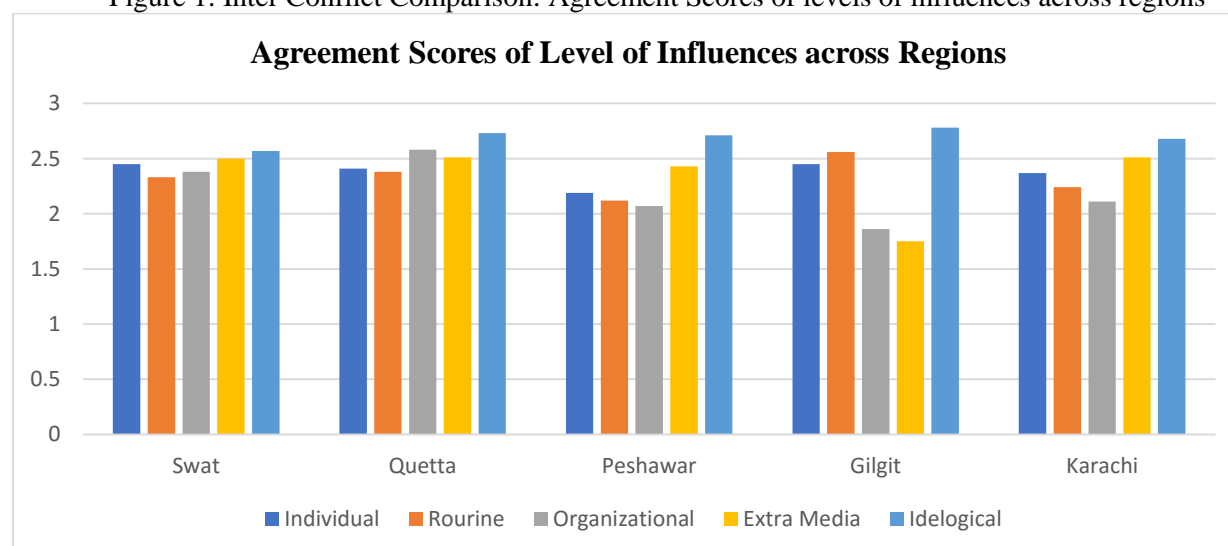
Based on the findings, it is concluded that journalists' reporting in war zones is influenced at all levels. However, the ideological level is the most powerful in influencing journalists' reportage in war zones.

Hence, we accept the hypothesis 2 that “there is difference as perceived by the journalists on the relative importance of various levels of influences of Hierarchy of influence model across conflict zones”. However, at the same time, we reject hypothesis 1 that “The individual and routine level influences are perceived stronger by the journalist as compared to other influences in conflict reporting”.

4.1 Inter Conflicts Comparison

This study is carried out in five conflict zones consists of 29 districts of Pakistan. The conflicts in these areas are, mostly, mix in their nature. Classifying broadly, it can be argued that conflicts in Pakistan are ranging from religious (Swat), to Sectarian (Gilgit), to routine level of influence (Peshawar) while in some areas, the nature of conflict is mix of religious and racism (Quetta) and ethnic, sectarian & religious (Karachi).

Figure 1: Inter Conflict Comparison: Agreement Scores of levels of influences across regions



Source: Authors own Calculation

5. Conclusions

This study hypothesizes that “there is difference as perceived by the journalists on the relative importance of various levels of influences of Hierarchy of influence model across provinces”. To serve this purpose, a comparison of different levels of influences is performed. Different levels of influences can have an impact on a journalist and his/her output (news/media content). Based on the findings, it is concluded that journalists' reporting in war zones are influenced at all levels. However, according to the findings of this study the ideological level is the most powerful in influencing journalists' reporting in war zones. This study *has implications for* journalists and journalism. Such studies can be very supportive for validation of diverse theoretical preposition of the influences of various level of hierarchy model with relevance to conflict area media coverage and reporting by adding more valuable insights into exiting literature. Journalist working in conflict zones must have some of the necessary qualities, might be inherent parts of a journalist's personality; others, gained through experience and discipline. The study not only asses to validate the theoretical preposition of the various influences in conflict reporting but it also adds to the literature to modify and develop the existing models of hierarchy of influence in conflict reporting. Further, this study suggests that media should enhance its integrity and credibility. Through fairness, unbiasedness and investigative reporting of any issue, the media can enhance its integrity and credibility. It can be achieved by reporting black as black and white as white. Certainly, media can enhance its prestige in presence of a lot of new media platforms. For this, the traditional media should take care of ethics, professional norms and ensure their implication.

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