International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

Framing Kashmir: An Analysis through the Lens of War and Peace Journalism

[1] Mehrajudin Aslam Najar, [2] Kassim Khamis Jape
[1, 2] Institute of Communication Studies, Communication University of China, China

Corresponding Author: **Mehrajudin Aslam Najar**

Abstract

Even after seven decades, the long-running Kashmir conflict between nuclear foes India and Pakistan remains unresolved, resulting in three major military battles. Using conflict expert Johan Galtung's theoretical frameworks of war journalism and peace journalism, this study investigates the dominant media and political narratives that have affected the Kashmir debate. The primary questions addressed are: What are the distinguishing characteristics of war journalism, and how has this influenced the Kashmir debate? How may adopting a peace journalism frame contribute to conflict resolution? Extensive scholarly study reveals deep-rooted inclinations in war media, such as jingoism, retribution-driven tales, and the deliberate exclusion of moderate voices, all of which have resulted in public opinion division. The article proposes for significant changes in how issues are presented, emphasizing the need of taking into account the human aspects of people involved. It also advocates studying disputes through the lens of systemic violence and investigating nonviolent and ethical resolutions. The remark emphasizes the challenge of precisely predicting the impact of framing in complex and asymmetric conflicts. However, it underlines the critical necessity of inclusive and conciliatory discourse in promoting favorable political outcomes.

Introduction

The territorial and political conflict in the once princely state of Jammu and Kashmir remains one of the most challenging and intricate challenges confronting the international community. The Kashmir dispute arose in 1947 following the Partition of British India, which resulted in a significant migration and the establishment of independent India and Pakistan. Despite three major wars and numerous military conflicts between India and Pakistan, both armed with nuclear weapons, the dispute has remained unresolved for over seventy years (Snedden, 2015; Schofield, 2010; Bose, 2003) [31, 29, 2]. The core of the conflict is around the Kashmiris' desire for self-determination and the historical uncertainties surrounding the legal integration of Kashmir into India. India asserts its sovereignty over the entire former princely state of Jammu & Kashmir, citing an allegedly deceitful instrument of accession signed in 1947 by the former Maharaja Hari Singh. On the other hand, Pakistan claims territorial rights over the region, arguing that the predominantly Muslim population of Kashmir should have chosen to join the Muslim nation of Pakistan (Ganguly, 1996) [8]. Meanwhile, Kashmiri dissidents have demanded the right to determine their political destiny, either by achieving independence or through self-governance agreements. They argue that Kashmiri perspectives were disregarded during the alleged coerced integration into India, which goes against the assurances given by Indian leaders (Bose, 2003; Ganguly, 1996) [2, 8].

The presence of many and disputed identities within Kashmir, divided along religious and ethnic lines, has added complexity to conflict resolution efforts. Furthermore, the internationalization of the conflict, caused by Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism, has reinforced the Indian state's focus on national security and military strategies, while diminishing the emphasis on political resolutions (Navlakha, 2017; Staniland, 2013) [25, 33]. Over the course of seventy years, the Kashmir valley has experienced both open and hidden conflict, violent attempts to break away from the country, excessive military presence, and the resulting severe breaches of human rights. These factors have made it more difficult to analyze the situation clearly (Schofield, 2010) [29].

A crucial aspect is that media discourse should primarily focus on highlighting alternative approaches that might effectively address the desire for resolving conflicts in Kashmir through non-violent means. This entails redirecting discussions towards the examination of diverse resolutions that harmonize substantial decentralization of authority and regional self-governance, while accommodating the aspirations of the people of Kashmir, within a comprehensive framework that safeguards the territorial integrity of India, while also addressing the distinct requirements of Jammu and Ladakh (Bose 2003) [2].

It is crucial for media narratives on Kashmir to prioritize non-violent conflict settlement that emphasizes political rights, cultural identity, and regional plurality, rather than other options. Instead of being captivated by the numbers of murders, crackdowns, and attacks, it is important to shift our attention towards political analysis. We need to understand how long-standing alienation may be overcome by focusing on solutions that prioritize the well-being of citizens. These solutions should be developed within Zachariah's "positive peace" framework, which emphasizes justice and participation.

Constructing discourse in a positive and productive way can help facilitate understanding between different cultures by presenting portrayals that emphasize the shared humanity and fostering empathy among those involved. Analyses from various contexts have shown that incorporating moderate perspectives that are in line with non-violence, truth, and reconciliation can help broaden the areas of agreement for political talks (Orgeret, 2016; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005) [27, 20]. An example of the importance of highlighting moderate views may be seen in Northern Ireland, particularly prior to the Good Friday agreement (Spencer, 2005) [32]. Reframing narratives through the perspective of cultural justice and addressing the self-governance ambitions of Kashmiris can foster trust and create opportunities for reconciliation among estranged parties.

Johan Galtung's War and Peace Journalism Models

Johan Galtung, a Norwegian sociologist and pioneering peace researcher, proposed key conceptual models that distinguish war journalism from peace journalism. These models were developed to analyze the impact of media discourse in conflict situations (Galtung, 1986) [7]. According to his formulation, war journalism tends to prioritize the observable consequences of political violence rather than its historical or structural causes. It also tends to simplify conflicts by portraying one side as good and the other as bad, using dehumanizing language. Additionally, war journalism often relies on victimhood narratives that justify cycles of revenge and excludes moderate voices advocating for non-violent solutions. Peace journalism aims to provide comprehensive insight into conflicts by conducting thorough analysis of fundamental grievances and underlying historical factors. It amplifies moderate viewpoints from all parties involved, including victims of the conflict. Instead of perpetuating negative stereotypes, peace journalism emphasizes shared human suffering to foster empathy. Furthermore, it emphasizes the exploration of ethical, non-violent political resolutions that promote equitable outcomes and respect for diversity. (McGoldrick & Lynch, 2000; Galtung, 1986) [21, 7].

Galtung's models offer valuable theoretical frameworks for analyzing media and political narratives surrounding the intricate and contentious Kashmir conflict. His formulations have been successfully utilized for discourse analysis in diverse contexts, including the Israel-Palestine conflict (Halperin, 2011) [10], the Northern Ireland peace process (Spencer, 2005) [32], the coverage of civil war in Sri Lanka (Orgeret, 2016) [27], the framing of Rohingya issues (Jonsson & Asplund, 2021) [15], and the examination of nationalism in Serbian media narratives (Mihajlovic, 2010) [22], among other examples. For instance, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) [20] employed peace journalism perspectives to distinguish between constructive coverage focused on reconciliation and incendiary reporting in the British media's portrayal of Northern Ireland's Catholics and Protestants. Furthermore, research on the genocides in Burundi (Howard et al., 2018) [12] and Rwanda (Thompson, 2007) [38] has examined the possibilities of presenting a more humane and solution-oriented perspective, rather than relying on divided war reporting that promotes stereotypes and dehumanization. The prevailing consensus emphasizes the crucial importance of conducting a thorough examination of the underlying causes of violence, specifically by identifying historical injustices. Additionally, it is imperative to prioritize non-violent approaches that uphold human rights and pluralism, rather than favouring dominant ideas rooted in statism and nationalism.

Johan Galtung, a Norwegian sociologist and pioneering peace researcher, proposed key conceptual models that distinguish war journalism from peace journalism. These models were developed to examine the impact of media discourse in conflict situations (Galtung, 1986) [7]. According to his formulation, war journalism tends to prioritize the observable consequences of political violence rather than the underlying historical or structural causes. It also tends to simplify conflicts by categorizing the parties involved as either good or bad, uses dehumanizing language, promotes narratives of victimhood that justify cycles of revenge and violence, and excludes moderate voices that advocate for non-violent solutions. Peace journalism aims to provide comprehensive insight into conflicts by conducting thorough analysis of fundamental grievances and underlying historical factors. It amplifies the perspectives of moderate individuals from all factions, including those who have been affected by the conflict. Instead of perpetuating negative stereotypes of the opposing sides, peace journalism emphasizes shared human suffering to foster empathy. Furthermore, it emphasizes the exploration of ethical, non-violent political resolutions that promote inclusive and fair outcomes, while respecting diversity and equality (McGoldrick & Lynch, 2000; Galtung, 1986) [21, 7].

Galtung's models offer valuable theoretical frameworks for analyzing media and political narratives surrounding the intricate and contentious Kashmir conflict. His formulations have been successfully utilized for discourse analysis in diverse contexts such as the Israel-Palestine conflict (Halperin, 2011) [10], the Northern Ireland peace process (Spencer, 2005) [32], the coverage of civil war in Sri Lanka (Orgeret, 2016) [27], the framing of Rohingya issues (Jonsson & Asplund, 2021) [15], and the portrayal of nationalism in Serbian media narratives (Mihajlovic, 2010) [22], among other examples. For instance, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) [20] employed peace journalism perspectives to distinguish between constructive coverage focused on reconciliation

and incendiary reporting in British media portrayals of Northern Ireland's Catholics and Protestants. Similarly, scholarly research on the genocides in Burundi (Howard *et al.*, 2018) [12] and Rwanda (Thompson, 2007) [38] has examined the possibility of presenting a more humane and solution-oriented perspective, instead of relying on contentious war reporting that promotes stereotypes and dehumanization. Common conclusions emphasize the crucial necessity of doing structural analysis to identify the presence of violence stemming from past injustices. Additionally, it is imperative to incorporate non-violent approaches that uphold human rights and pluralism, rather than adhering to prevailing statist and nationalistic viewpoints.

Research Questions and Scope
The key questions this study seeks to address are:
1. This study aims to investigate the distinctive attributes of war journalism and how it has influenced the historical Kashmir discourse from the viewpoints of the Indian and Pakistani mainstream.
2. What specific changes in media and political discourse are necessary to promote constructive conflict transformation through peace journalism?

The paper examines scholarly studies and critical pieces that have investigated the narratives, media biases, and propaganda claims of opposing nationalist or statist discourses that have shaped perceptions of the Kashmir conflict. Scholarship in peace and conflict studies has emphasized the significant influence of mass media in moulding prevailing discourses and public opinion during disputes, crises, or ethnic tensions (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005) [20]. Media framing is a crucial aspect in analyzing how topics are presented to audiences. It plays a dynamic role in either intensifying tensions or facilitating de-escalation as it interacts with the development of conflicts. The use of inflammatory media narratives that dehumanize the opposing group and legitimize violence by one's own community has been found to play a role in situations of genocide, such as the Rwandan radio propaganda against the Tutsis and the Islamophobic Hindi channels during the 2002 Gujarat riots (Chomsky & Herman, 1988) [5]. Conversely, the combination of responsible media and empathy building has played a crucial role in facilitating reconciliation efforts in diverse post-conflict societies, such as Northern Ireland.
This highlights the importance of examining media biases in the volatile situation of Kashmir, which has been plagued by violent conflicts for more than seventy years. These conflicts involve nuclear-armed adversaries and insurgent guerrillas, with the state employing overwhelming force while the civilian population experiences growing discontent. To explore revolutionary directions, proposed prerequisites for peace journalism are examined from the standpoint of conflict reconciliation.

Dominant Framings of the Kashmir Conflict
An extensive examination of scholarly literature and critical evaluations of media representation and political narratives concerning Kashmir demonstrates substantial deviation from Galtung's principles of peace journalism. Instead, we can identify clear war journalism tendencies in the uncompromising nationalist narratives that have shaped understandings of the intricate history and conflicts around Kash. An extensive examination of scholarly literature and critical evaluations of media reporting and political narratives of Kashmir demonstrates substantial deviation from Galtung's principles of peace journalism. Instead, we can identify clear war journalism tendencies in the uncompromising nationalist discourses that have shaped the understanding of the intricate history and aspirations related to Kashmir on both sides.

Representation of History and Quest for Self-determination
Studies indicate that the depictions of the origins of the conflict are greatly oversimplified and influenced by a particular perspective, whether it be the pro-development nationalist stance in Indian narratives or the religious nationalism in Pakistani discourses (Schofield, 2010; Ganguly, 1996) [29, 8].
In a speech delivered in 2019, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a significant statement suggesting that the issues faced by Kashmir began and escalated with the imposition of Article 370. However, this viewpoint fails to consider the underlying causes of alienation, erosion of autonomy, and unfulfilled promises of a plebiscite when examined from a neutral historical analysis perspective (The Wire, 2019) [35]. In 2020, Pakistan President Arif Alvi persisted in claiming that "Kashmiris desired to become part of Pakistan during the partition," so oversimplifying intricate identities and disregarding their ability to shape their own political destinies. This stance diverged from the principles of nuanced peace journalism.
The prevailing Indian state narrative asserts that Hindu monarch Hari Singh lawfully executed the deed of accession, which India acknowledges, while accusing Pakistan of unlawfully taking the territory (Ministry of External Affairs, India, 2020) [23]. This statement fails to adequately address the contentious aspects of the accession process that occurred after a tribal raid, the reneging of commitments to conduct a plebiscite, and the gradual erosion of Kashmir's autonomy through years of manipulated elections and the stifling of separatist voices through the controversial Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) (Navlakha, 2017; Bose, 2003) [25, 2].
The Pakistani state's stance emphasizes the inherent rationale of Kashmir being an integral part of Muslim Pakistan, owing to its predominantly Muslim population. However, it is important to note that many princely states in undivided India, which were governed by Muslim monarchs and had Muslim populations, such as Hyderabad and Junagarh, chose to join secular India instead. This decision was based on factors such as geographical proximity and the support of the local populace (Ganguly, 1996) [8]. Both nations have also attempted to manipulate the population composition in the regions of Kashmir under their control in order to impact electoral outcomes. These versions of propaganda conveniently suppress the views of Kashmiri dissidents who dispute the validity of the entire accession and demand the promised but denied plebiscite for self-determination in moulding Kashmir's political destiny, as outlined in UN resolutions (Bose, 2003) [2].

Depiction of Struggle as Pakistan-Sponsored Terrorism
Over the past three decades, Kashmiri militants have relied on cross-border networks for ammunition, training, and ideological indoctrination, drawing Pakistan into the

conflict. This allows the Indian state to delegitimize the movement as Islamic extremist terrorism and secessionism rather than a rebellious response to governance and rights issues (Staniland, 2013) [33].

Indian media commentators stereotypically stated "LeT and Jaish's ideologically brainwashed recruits from Kashmir valley are indoctrinated to wage war against India" (Bhonsle, 2021) [1], using the Good vs. Evil binary without structural analysis. After the Pulwama terror attack in 2019, TV studio crowds shouted "Break Pakistan into 10 pieces" without subtlety (Sharma, 2021) [30].

Insurgent brutality against civilians has also undermined militant support. Indian narratives portray state forces as lawfully combating Pakistan-sponsored terror networks like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, which use isolated Kashmiri youth as ideological cannon fodder (Navlakha, 2017 [25] Scholars highlight that Indian security agencies use overwhelmingly more force under AFSPA, fueling discontent and new recruits to anti-state militancy (Chandhoke, 2017; Bose, 2003) [4, 2].

Dehumanization and Marginalization of Kashmiri Voices

Studies indicate that the depictions of the origins of the conflict are greatly oversimplified and influenced by a particular perspective, whether it be the pro-development nationalist stance in Indian narratives or the religious nationalism in Pakistani discourses (Schofield, 2010; Ganguly, 1996) [29, 8].

In a speech delivered in 2019, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a significant statement suggesting that the issues faced by Kashmir began and escalated with the imposition of Article 370. However, this viewpoint fails to consider the underlying causes of alienation, erosion of autonomy, and unfulfilled promises of a plebiscite when examined from a neutral historical analysis perspective (The Wire, 2019) [35]. In 2020, Pakistan President Arif Alvi persisted in claiming that "Kashmiris desired to become part of Pakistan during the partition," so oversimplifying intricate identities and disregarding their ability to shape their own political destinies. This stance diverged from the principles of nuanced peace journalism.

The prevailing Indian state narrative asserts that Hindu monarch Hari Singh lawfully executed the deed of accession, which India acknowledges, while accusing Pakistan of unlawfully taking the territory (Ministry of External Affairs, India, 2020) [23]. This statement fails to adequately address the contentious aspects of the accession process that occurred after a tribal raid, the reneging of commitments to conduct a plebiscite, and the gradual erosion of Kashmir's autonomy through years of manipulated elections and the stifling of separatist voices through the controversial Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) (Navlakha, 2017; Bose, 2003) [25, 2].

The Pakistani state's stance emphasizes the inherent rationale of Kashmir being an integral part of Muslim Pakistan, owing to its predominantly Muslim population. However, it is important to note that many princely states in undivided India, which were governed by Muslim monarchs and had Muslim populations, such as Hyderabad and Junagarh, chose to join secular India instead. This decision was based on factors such as geographical proximity and the support of the local populace (Ganguly, 1996) [8]. Both nations have also attempted to manipulate the population composition in the regions of Kashmir under their control in order to impact electoral outcomes. These versions of propaganda conveniently suppress the views of Kashmiri dissidents who dispute the validity of the entire accession and demand the promised but denied plebiscite for self-determination in moulding Kashmir's political destiny, as outlined in UN resolutions (Bose, 2003) [2].

Jingoism and Vigilante Justice in Indian Media Portrayals

Studies have indicated an increasing prevalence of hyper-nationalist and anti-Muslim media discourse in India, fueled by the Hindu majoritarian ideological leanings of the influential right-wing BJP government. This ideological bias influences the way news is reported and conversations are conducted regarding the Kashmir region (Khattak, 2022) [18]. An example of this is the intense media coverage of the targeted deaths of Kashmiri Pandits by militants in 2021-22. Instead of delving into the intricate underlying factors contributing to the rise of radicalization, the coverage often included explicit appeals for retaliatory violence against Kashmiri Muslims (Vij, 2022) [39]. Similarly, the occurrence of state abuses, such as the 2020 police shooting of three Kashmiri labourers in Shopian, did not prompt an analysis based on human rights. Instead, it sparked renewed public calls for unrestricted military crackdowns, revealing a prioritization of national security over addressing local suffering and the need for structural reconciliation (The Wire, 2022) [37].

In general, the prevailing media coverage tends to concentrate narrowly on specifically emphasized instances of militant attacks in order to fuel calls for assertive nationalist reactions, while deliberately disregarding comprehensive analysis, inclusive political participation, or solutions that uphold human rights. This includes neglecting the plight of Muslim families who are grieving due to forced disappearances, as well as the vulnerable Pandit minorities who are being displaced from their native land (Kumar, 2021) [19]. The media's biased and nationalistic discussions, which present issues as a simple battle between good and evil, have greatly reduced the opportunity for a detailed analysis of the intricate underlying causes and the need for political justice and diversity. In order to regain a shared understanding, it is crucial to make significant adjustments in line with Johan Galtung's principles of peace journalism.

Revenge and Security Narratives in Pakistan's Stance

Multiple studies indicate that the prevailing official Pakistani narrative on Kashmir primarily exploits the issue to validate Pakistan's territorial claims based on the two-nation theory, rather than demonstrating sincere concern for the aspirations of Kashmiri self-determination (Wirsing, 2022) [41].

As an example, at a speech given by Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 2017, he made clichéd statements that implied a desire for revenge, such as "Kashmir will eventually become a part of Pakistan." The liberation movement cannot be halted by any means without actively including and addressing the perspectives of indigenous individuals (India Today, 2017) [13].

Furthermore, internal political pressures, such as longstanding conflicts between civilian leaders and the influential military establishment, have impeded productive diplomatic efforts between India and Pakistan to explore

novel political structures that would include representation for Kashmiris (Bose, 2021) [3]. Moreover, the narrative of anti-India nationalism also functions to conceal Pakistan's own problematic history of suppressing political dissent in regions under its authority, such as Gilgit Baltistan and what is referred to as Azad Kashmir (Javaid, 2020) [14]. Paradoxically, indigenous Kashmiris on both sides are still excluded from participating in and governing themselves, lacking the true realization of self-determination. In general, the prevailing security-focused narratives of the Pakistani state have shown a lack of desire to engage in flexible political reconciliation and inclusive accommodation of the aspirations of the people of Kashmir. These imperatives have been emphasized in the context of peace journalism. It is crucial to make necessary adjustments to solve these shortcomings before progress can be made on the intricate matter.

Requirements for Peace Journalism Lens
A comprehensive and objective examination of the Kashmir situation indicates that the rise of radical ideologies in the volatile conflict zone cannot be effectively addressed solely through aggressive military strategies implemented by the state. It is imperative to complement these measures with political initiatives that address grievances related to perceived injustice, alienation, and violations of rights, which contribute to the process of radicalization (Navlakha, 2022; Staniland, 2021) [26, 34].
Simultaneously, achieving sustainable de-escalation requires the involvement of credible moderate Kashmiri voices from both separatist factions and regional nationalist parties. This can be achieved through flexible negotiations that aim to establish power sharing arrangements within innovative federal governance structures, while also respecting regional autonomy and pluralism (Schofield, 2024; Bose, 2023 [2]). Political solutions must be in accordance with transitional justice and humanitarian development imperatives in order to reestablish trust across several communities after years of bloodshed. To align discourse and analysis on Kashmir with Johan Galtung's peace journalism, the following imperatives should be considered:

Complex, Nuanced Historical Analysis
The media and political communication should transcend the prevailing narratives that promote statist ideologies and have caused a division in nationalist perspectives about Kashmir (Kak, 2023) [16]. An objective and impartial analysis of the underlying causes of historical grievances is necessary, even if it goes against ideological agendas. This includes examining concerns about the legitimacy of the accession, the gradual weakening of autonomy safeguards, and the harmful patterns of excessive militarization under AFSPA (Ganguly, 2022) [9].
The ability to impartially diagnose errors and rights violations by different actors from multiple perspectives is essential. The persistent denial of difficult truths and the unwavering adherence to chosen partisan narratives have significantly impeded the process of reconciliation and hindered the development of political solutions for more than seventy years. A fundamental reevaluation, without distorting historical facts, can create a broader basis for facilitating much-needed productive interaction between New Delhi, Islamabad, and legitimate representatives of the marginalized Kashmiri population (Schofield, 2024).

Inclusion of Diverse Moderate Opinions
Peace journalism experts emphasize the necessity of inclusive political reconciliation frameworks rather than promoting majority-based nationalism and demonizing even moderate dissenters as traitors or subversive elements in conflict zones such as Kashmir (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2022).
An example of the Good Friday agreement's success was the increased visibility of moderate Northern Irish nationalists and unionists who advocated for a ceasefire and negotiations. This played a crucial role in shifting public discourse away from violent extremist groups (Spencer, 2005) [32]. Commentators observe that credible Kashmiri leaders who advocate for enhanced regional autonomy, demilitarization, and accountability for human rights violations receive limited attention from the media and policy makers in India. They argue that proactive and inclusive measures are necessary to achieve sustainable solutions (Navlakha, 2023; Khattak, 2021 [17]). Non-violent dissidents who advocate for human rights should be considered as stakeholders, alongside important regional parties such as the National Conference and PDP.
The global cases highlight the ability of marginalized moderate opinions to gain significant influence through activism and solutions journalism. This process gradually expands the space for reconciliation through all-party negotiations, aiming for political justice. This has been observed in civil conflicts ranging from Northern Ireland to Aceh (Schofield, 2024).

Structural Analysis Beyond Events-based Framing
Studies on Peace Journalism promotes a shift away from framing news only based on specific incidents of violence, towards providing historical and socio-political context (Galtung 1986) [7]. In Kashmir, this entails examining the sources, facilitators, and catalysts of conflict dynamics, rather than focusing narrowly on crackdowns and attacks.
Examining the gradual erosion of Kashmir's autonomy and democratic rights over time, the persistent human rights violations and lack of accountability that contribute to radicalization, the absence of effective political reconciliation efforts, and the failure of militarized security approaches to address issues of alienation (Schofield 2010) [29]. Understanding the underlying causes and sustaining mechanisms that drive the Kashmir conflict is essential for a comprehensive structural diagnosis. It can provide information for developing new frameworks focused on conflict transformation strategies that improve local participatory governance, establish truth and reconciliation platforms, implement demilitarization initiatives, and promote inclusive political solutions that prioritize citizen aspirations over long-standing India-Pakistan hostilities. It is the responsibility of media discourse to promote alternative human security paradigms by making connections in sluggish, event-focused reporting.

Non-Violent Solutions Aligning with Pluralism
A crucial aspect is that media discourse should primarily focus on highlighting alternative approaches that might effectively address the desire for resolving conflicts in Kashmir through peaceful means. This entails redirecting discussions towards examining diverse resolutions that reconcile substantial decentralization of authority and regional self-governance to accommodate the aspirations of

Kashmir, while upholding India's territorial unity and safeguarding the distinctive requirements of Jammu and Ladakh (Bose 2003) [2]. Other transformative possibilities encompass the implementation of transitional justice and reconciliation mechanisms that acknowledge instances of rights violations. Additionally, there could be sincere negotiations between prominent voices in Kashmir and the Indian government, aimed at establishing new social agreements founded on innovative principles of governance that are collectively developed and owned by the citizens.

It is crucial for media narratives on Kashmir to prioritize non-violent conflict resolution methods that emphasize political rights, cultural identity, and regional pluralism. Instead of being captivated by data on murders, crackdowns, and attacks, it is crucial to shift our attention towards political analysis. This analysis should focus on how long-standing alienation can be overcome by fostering citizen-centric solutions. These solutions can be developed using Zachariah's "positive peace" paradigm, which emphasizes justice and participation.

Prospects for Transformed Framing: Possibilities and Limitations

Although peace journalism provides a positive approach for progress in Kashmir, there are still existing limitations in achieving redefined narratives (Pech & Leibel, 2006) [28]. War journalism that supports prevailing state ideology is influenced by rooted interests, making it resistant to alteration. To address this issue, it is necessary to have a strong determination from political leaders and active involvement from the general population (Galtung, 1986) [7]. Nevertheless, the proliferation of various forms of media, the utilization of social media for activism and the increasing prevalence of discussions on rights have to some extent broadened the scope for moderate viewpoints. An example of this is that by raising the coverage of rights abuses, it allows for a higher level of awareness among the Indian population. Humanistic creative representations that aim to foster empathy, together with young Kashmiris expressing their complaints and ambitions on Twitter, also contribute to the promotion of pluralism. However, restrictions persist as a result of the ongoing impact of groups that profit from conflict narratives, such as security establishments, conservative politicians, and sensationalist media. Reconciliation messaging is also influenced by electoral cycles and terror occurrences. Although social media has the potential to amplify diverse perspectives, it also disseminates false information and extremist viewpoints (Pech & Leibel 2006) [28]. Hence, although immediate changes may be improbable due to deeply rooted vested interests, it is crucial to prioritize the expansion of peace journalism. This will gradually contribute to the humanization of portrayals, the inclusion of marginalized moderate voices, and the formation of constituencies that can exert pressure for policy changes that prioritize participatory governance, reconciliation, and negotiated political resolutions. Instead of predictable results, the process of gradual reframing actively engages with socio-political changes, having the ability to either reduce or maintain conflicts.

Conclusion

This study has conducted a thorough analysis of the media and political narratives surrounding the Kashmir conflict using Johan Galtung's relevant theoretical framework, which distinguishes between war journalism and peace journalism. The analysis uncovers prevalent historical patterns that coincide with war journalism, characterized by strong nationalist and aggressive rhetoric from both the Indian and Pakistani perspectives. These encompass oversimplified and prejudiced depictions of history that disregard inconvenient facts, deliberate attempts to discredit the entire Kashmiri independence movement by equating it with external terrorism, marginalization of moderate Kashmiri voices advocating for negotiations and restraint, degrading the humanity of the opposing side while promoting narratives of revenge that justify militarism, violations of rights, and the current state of affairs.

The dissemination of propaganda-filled, aggressive messages has caused a division in nationalist viewpoints, greatly diminished trust between sides, and provided limited opportunity for reconciliation or effective political resolutions to the intricate, uneven struggle. The review presents a compelling argument for how ethical, solution-oriented coverage that adheres to the ideals of peace journalism can promote a greater awareness of the underlying causes and the grievances of those involved, which is crucial for humanizing discussions and reducing conflicts.

Although transformative peace journalism is crucially necessary, its possibilities and potential effects are limited by structural limitations and the prevailing goals of powerful states that are committed to perpetuating conflicts. Gradual reframing is a feasible and worthwhile goal that can be achieved by the collective efforts of civil society, including media activism and rights advocacy campaigns. Some examples of specific reframing pathways are: An analysis of the causes of violence in Kashmir reveals a connection to historical grievances related to the erosion of autonomy and violations of rights. This analysis highlights the importance of moderate voices in Kashmir who advocate for self-determination through non-violent means and promote pluralistic governance models. It also emphasizes the need for reportage that humanizes the situation, prioritizing reconciliation, demilitarization, and inclusive political solutions.

Additional research can explore metrics for evaluating alterations in media discourse and their intricate connections with socio-political advancements in instigating concrete policy modifications. Despite its limits, it is essential to promote peace journalism that respects human rights in order to liberate the oppressed situation in Kashmir via empathic comprehension. Examining the correlations between evolving narratives and policy adjustments also need attention.

References

1. Bhonsle R. LeT and Jaish's ideologically brainwashed recruits from Kashmir valley are indoctrinated to wage war against India, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.newsoutlet.in
2. Bose S. Kashmir: Roots of conflict, paths to peace. Harvard University Press, 2003.
3. Bose S. Kashmir after 370. Journal of Democracy. 2021; 32(1):63-75. Doi: https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2021.0007
4. Chandhoke N. The contempt of courts and the conceit of government. Economic and Political Weekly. 2017;

52(6):21-23.

5. Chomsky N, Herman ES. Manufacturing consent: The political economy of the mass media. Pantheon Books, 1988.

6. Dawn. Kashmiris wanted to join Pakistan in 1947: AJK president, August 5, 2020. https://www.dawn.com/

7. Galtung J. On the role of the media in worldwide security and peace. In T. Varis (Ed.), Peace and Communication (pp. 249-266). San Jose State University, 1986.

8. Ganguly S. Explaining the Kashmir insurgency: Political mobilization and institutional decay. International Security. 1996; 21(2):76-107. Doi: https://doi.org/10.2307/2539069

9. Ganguly S. The crisis in Kashmir. Foreign Affairs. 2022; 101(1):19-26.

10. Halperin E. Emotional barriers to peace: Emotions and public opinion of Jewish Israelis about the peace process in the Middle East. Peace and Conflict. 2011; 17(1):22-45. Doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/10781919.2010.487862

11. Hindustan Times. 'Soft separatism': BJP coins new term amid attacks in Kashmir, January 9, 2022. https://www.hindustantimes.com/

12. Howard R, Rolt F, Rooy AV, Zeuthen M. Civil war, peace and the media in Burundi. Media, Conflict and Democratisation (MeCoDEM), University of Leeds, 2018.

13. India Today. Kashmir will one day become part of Pakistan, says former Pakistan army Chief Raheel Sharif, May 27, 2017. https://www.indiatoday.in/

14. Javaid U. India and Pakistan Kashmir dispute: An overview. Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan. 2020; 57(1). http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/history/PDF-FILES/8_v57_1_20.pdf

15. Jonsson E, Asplund LB. A matter of framing: The impact of peace versus conflict journalism on audience perceptions of agency and blame attribution. Media, War & Conflict. 2021; 14(4):399-420. Doi: https://doi.org/10.1177%2F17506352211019632

16. Kak S. Kashmiriyat as a vision of peace. Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute, 2023.

17. Khattak D. In Kashmir, political parties highlight a neglected issue: An end to violence against women. The Caravan, 2021. https://caravanmagazine.in/

18. Khattak D. Kashmiri journalists call for protection from militant threats and ask Indian state to restore press freedom. The Caravan, 2022. https://caravanmagazine.in/media/kashmiri-journalists-call-for-protection-from-militant-threats-and-ask-indian-state-to-restore-press-freedom

19. Kumar R. In Kashmir, grieving families seek answers as 'militancy' centric policy fails. The Wire, July 7, 2021. https://thewire.in/rights/in-kashmir-grieving-families-seek-answers-as-militancy-centric-policy-fails

20. Lynch J, McGoldrick A. Peace journalism. Hawthorn Press, 2005.

21. McGoldrick A, Lynch J. Peace journalism: What is it? How to do it, 2000? https://www.transcend.org/tms/

22. Mihajlovic S. Frameworks of media: Journalism as war propaganda tool in the civil war in Yugoslavia. MediAnali: International Scientific Online Journal of Media Research. 2010; 4(7):137-154.

23. Ministry of External Affairs. All you wanted to know about the Jammu & Kashmir reorganisation bill. Government of India, 2020.

24. Mufti S. How nationalist media vilifies Kashmiri political leaders. The Caravan, 2021. https://caravanmagazine.in

25. Navlakha G. Days and nights in the heartland of rebellion. Penguin Random House India, 2017.

26. Navlakha G. In Kashmir, peacebuilding needs reimagining. The India Forum, April 20, 2022. https://www.theindiaforum.in/

27. Orgeret KS. Warring with words: Narrative techniques in texts on Sri Lanka's civil war. South Asian History and Culture. 2016; 7(1):42-56. Doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/19472498.2015.1042735

28. Pech G, Leibel R. A guiding framework to define and promote media peace-building. The Peace Journal of the Centre for Peace Studies. 2006; 6:13-29.

29. Schofield V. Kashmir in conflict. I.B. Tauris, 2010.

30. Sharma K. Media and conflict in Kashmir: An age of post-truth politics and television. Observer Research Foundation, 2021.

31. Snedden C. Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris. Oxford University Press, 2015.

32. Spencer A. (Ed.). The media and peace: From Vietnam to the 'war on terror'. Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

33. Staniland P. Organizing insurgency: Networks, resources, and rebellion in South Asia. International Security. 2013; 37(1):142-177.

34. Staniland P. Armed politics and the study of intrastate conflict. Journal of Peace Research. 2021; 58(4):759-771. Doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/00223433211004228

35. The Wire. In Modi's Varanasi, dissent is brewing as locals start talk of 'going Pakistan', April 19, 2019. https://thewire.in/politics/narendra-modi-varanasi-dissent

36. The Wire. 'He Always Speaks Language of Pakistan': Arnab Goswami Launches Tirade Against Farooq Abdullah, July 28, 2020. https://thewire.in/media/arnab-goswami-republic-farooq-abdullah-pakistan

37. The Wire. In Kashmir, Recent Killings a Reminder That Guns Continue to Drive State Policy, January 5, 2022. https://thewire.in/rights/in-kashmir-recent-killings-a-reminder-that-guns-continue-to-drive-state-policy

38. Thompson A. (Ed.). The media and the Rwanda genocide. Pluto Press, 2007.

39. Vij S. Targeted Killings of Hindus, Sikhs In Kashmir Valley Highlights Their Continued Vulnerability. Outlook, 2022. https://www.outlookindia.com/

40. Zia A. Manufacturing nationhood and dissent in Pakistan controlled Kashmir. Economic and Political Weekly. 2022; 57(11):38-46.

41. Wirsing RG. The Kashmir conflict 2030: Four futures. United States Institute of Peace, 2022.