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Abstract

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Keywords: Framing Theory, Print Media, Taliban Regime, Content Analysis

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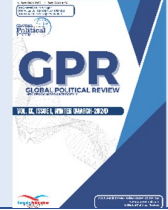
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Framing of Afghan Taliban Regime (2022) in Pashto Press: An Analysis of Daily Hewad & Daily Wahdat

Abstract

This research article is an attempt to understand the depiction of the Taliban government in two Pashto dailies Daily Wahdat (Pakistan) and Daily Hewad (Afghanistan). Using the mixed-method approach the current study investigates the way media organizations selectively portray different events and themes. The results show that both the dailies had focused on the conflict narrative & emphasized the controversial nature of the Taliban rule.

The Pakistani daily "Wahdat" is found to follow the narrative and persuasive strategies for news to shape public opinion however, the Afghanistan-based Pashto daily, "Hewad" tends to follow analytical and detailed stories for their audience. Both the dailies used numerous frames, techniques, and tones to demonstrate the impact of media framing on public discourse.

Keywords:

[Framing Theory](#), [Print Media](#), [Taliban Regime](#), [Content Analysis](#)

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Introduction

The geopolitical positions of Afghanistan and Pakistan have always gained significant global attention for their complex and complicated dynamics in international relations. Recently the takeover of the Afghan Taliban has highly impacted regional politics and global security issues (Smith, 2005). The media, which is considered as the 4th pillar of the state, has a vital role in shaping opinions, and occasionally questioning prevailing narratives in both these countries. According to Habib (2012), the Pashto press provides a huge coverage to those events that are often ignored in

the international media due to its linguistic and cultural proximity to the core of these events.

Entman (2007) found that narrative presentations in the media play a pivotal role in shaping public perception and opinion. It also has an indirect effect on policy choices.

Due to the very complex and complicated history of the Taliban in Afghanistan, from their birth in the '90s and decline in 2001 after the US invasion and the recent rebirth, it is nearly impossible for the media to portray a balanced picture of the events, regional current affairs, and geopolitics. However, this is only applicable to the



Pashto press, which serves a populace that has experienced the full impact of these turbulent events (Khalil, 2014).

The current project tends to compare the editorials of the two Pashto dailies, Daily Hewad and "Daily Wahdat." aiming to find the editorial tones, and the frames used and to identify the most prevailing frame and the position these newspapers take while covering any event relevant to the new Taliban government.

Background and Context

The strategic nature of South Asia, particularly Afghanistan and Pakistan, has experienced significant changes in recent decades. This region has garnered significant global attention due to its strategic importance and the numerous challenges it poses. Its historical, cultural, and political tapestry adds to its significance (Kaplan, 2011).

At the heart of this ever-changing geopolitical story lies the ascent and metamorphosis of the Afghan Taliban. Emerging in the early 1990s, the Taliban, made up mostly of ethnic Pashtuns, first appeared as a movement with the goal of bringing stability to a war-ravaged Afghanistan. The country was dealing with internal conflicts following the Soviet withdrawal (Rubin, 1995). Nevertheless, the initial localized movement quickly transformed into a powerful political and military entity, seizing control of Kabul and solidifying its authority by 1996. The Taliban's rule, known for its rigid adherence to Islamic law and its contentious policies, particularly regarding women and cultural heritage, attracted considerable attention and condemnation from the international community (Marsden, 1999).

Alongside the Taliban's journey, the media landscape in Afghanistan and Pakistan has also undergone significant changes. In Afghanistan, the period before the Taliban saw significant growth in the media landscape, although it was under strict state control. Under the Taliban regime, there were severe limitations placed on independent journalism, and television broadcasts were almost completely eliminated (Skuse, 2003). After the Taliban's fall in 2001, Afghanistan witnessed a surge in media activity, thanks to international aid that supported the establishment of numerous independent media outlets. These outlets were instrumental in keeping the Afghan people

informed and giving a voice to a variety of perspectives, despite facing obstacles such as censorship and risks to the safety of journalists (Johnson & Kaye, 2008).

Pakistan's media landscape, however, has undergone a series of challenges and transformations. In the early 2000s, there was a notable change in media policies as they became less state-controlled. This resulted in a surge of private television channels and radio stations. With the advent of media freedom, a whole new set of challenges emerged. These challenges included the pressures of commercial interests and, at times, facing accusations of sensationalism.

The Pakistani media, especially the Pashto press, has been crucial in shaping public opinions on various issues, such as the intricate relationship with the Taliban (Husain, 2017). The complex narratives of the Afghan Taliban and the media's evolution in Afghanistan and Pakistan reveal a captivating tale of power dynamics, resistance, and representation.

Brief History of the Afghan Taliban

The Afghan Taliban, also referred to as the Taliban, rose as a powerful entity in the early 1990s. This movement originated in the Pashtun territories that extend throughout Afghanistan and Pakistan. It was mostly composed of religious experts and former Mujahideen combatants. The Taliban, led by Mullah Mohammed Omar, emerged as more than just a terrorist group. It was a socio-political reaction to the chaotic situation that engulfed Afghanistan after the Soviet Union's departure in 1989 (Rashid, 2000). Due to the disarray of the central authority and the competition of warlords for territorial dominance, the nation descended into a state of rampant lawlessness and internal strife.

Exploiting the public's strong desire for stability, the Taliban presented themselves as the champions of peace and justice. Their stated objective was to eradicate corruption and warlordism from the land and build a state controlled by their strict interpretation of Islamic Sharia law. In 1996, they swiftly gained power over Kabul, which marked the establishment of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Afghanistan saw profound changes during its governance. Although they successfully established a degree of order by suppressing conflicts among warlords, their administration was characterized by draconian actions. The prevailing norms included

severe punishments, public displays of capital punishment, and a strict set of rules to govern behavior (Gall, 2014).

Globally, the Taliban's governance was highly disputed. Their treatment of women, characterized by restricted liberties, compulsory burqas, and marginalization from societal participation, elicited worldwide censure. In addition, their deliberate demolition of cultural artifacts, including the Bamiyan Buddhas, exacerbated their international isolation.

The primary source of disagreement, however, revolved over their affiliation with radical organizations. Their choice to offer refuge to Osama bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda network set them on a path of direct conflict with the global world, particularly the United States (Gall, 2014).

Media in Afghanistan and Pakistan

Before the takeover of the Afghan Taliban, the country had a growing media industry, albeit, it was running under the control of the government. Different media outlets, including print and electronic, were accessible to the audience. These media organizations were offering people news, entertainment, and other relevant material. Nevertheless, the arrival of the Taliban in the mid-90s initiated a period of obscurity for the media in Afghanistan. Electronic media especially Television was considered to be inconsistent with Islamic values and thus was stopped from broadcasting. Newspapers that were running independently were shut down, and almost all the radio stations had to run under strict censorship, and could only transmit religious shows and propaganda related to the Taliban government (Ayazi, 2018). However, after 2001 the media in Afghanistan experienced a revival among the media outlets. The country found a huge increase in independent media outlets due to international support in the form of aid to promote democratization.

On the other hand media in Pakistan has experienced a very slow evolution, influenced by its specific political and social dynamics. Soon after the independence, the media in Pakistan was strictly observed by the authorities, resulting in censorship and the promotion of government-based propaganda.

Nevertheless, the early 2000s, during the General Pervaiz Musharraf regime, saw rapid

growth in the media industry, issuing licenses to dozens of private television channels, radio stations, and Newspapers.

Pakistani media organizations have been found to influence public discussions on a variety of subjects, including politics, governance, societal norms, etc. More importantly, its coverage of the government of the Taliban, encompassing both Afghan and Pakistani elements, played a vital role in influencing public perception.

Pashto Press and its Significance in the Region

The regions with Pashto language as their primary language in South Asia, exhibit a tangible reflection of their cultural, linguistic, and historical wealth through their media environment. Pashto plays a significant role in the unity and bond between the Pashtoon ethnic group living on either side of the border. The language is mainly spoken in Afghanistan and the Pakistani regions immediately attached to the border.

Pashto newspapers or Pashto press across both countries aim to provide an opportunity for its audience to experience and access first-hand, recent and accurate news, and enjoy entertainment alongside education. Khan (2019) found that

“The localized approach guarantees that the information connects with the actual experiences, ambitions, and worries of the Pashtun community, frequently offering a level of detail and subtlety that could be disregarded in wider national or worldwide media platforms”

The Pashto press throughout the years has specifically focused on the issues of Pashtoons and those related to the Taliban due to their ethnic and cultural connections. It plays a crucial role in influencing the narratives around the Taliban, fluctuating between endorsing, criticizing, and reflecting upon them. The coverage of these newspapers has frequently understood the complexities of the Taliban's policies and the effects they leave on Pashtun society. It is hard to know the importance of these narratives, as they are capable of impacting public opinion on a large scale with numerous consequences, ranging from local elections to bigger national policy (Khan, 2019).

Daily Hewad

Daily Hewad is an Afghanistan-based Pashto daily newspaper that provides and helps the Pashtoon community access both national and international news. Founded in the late 20th century the daily aims to deliver trustworthy and accurate news and spread knowledge across the country. Commenting on the credibility of the newspaper Ahmadzai (2009) expressed that even in the tense political environment in Afghanistan, this newspaper has continuously followed and observed the journalistic ethics and has, therefore, received praise for its balanced reporting.

The daily with a diverse readership reaches almost all parts of the country including metropolitan and other distant parts and has been instrumental in shaping public opinion about crucial matters.

Over the years, Daily Hewad has received a good response from the audience and a reputation for being a credible and reliable source of information in Afghanistan's media industry (Rahmani, 2015).

Daily Wahdat

For the increasing need for quality Pashto journalism, Daily Wahdat was established in the early 21st century. This newspaper aimed to deliver and serve the Pashtun belt of Pakistan by providing them with recent and accurate news along with an analysis of burning issues. With the evolving media trends the newspaper has also changed its strategy of reaching a maximum audience by following different social media outlets (Khattak, 2018).

The newspaper has a huge readership in KPK and Balochistan, serving as a popular print media organization for Pashto speakers of Pakistan. The newspaper majorly focuses on subjects like urban growth, education, cultural happenings, regional politics, etc.

According to Khattak (2018), the details and sophisticated analysis of the newspaper about the Pak-Afghan relations, the Taliban, and related cross-border issues help its audience with a perspective both specific and well-informed. He further added that “the way this newspaper is playing its role for preserving and promoting Pashto culture and language has won the hearts of Pashtoon and has gained a notable position among the mainstream media organizations of Pakistan”.

Problem Statement

Editorial frames in the newspaper are some things which are highly read and followed among the readers for gaining a little bit more knowledge about an issue surpassing ordinary Journalistic point of views. One can have valuable suggestions on state policies & positions through these frames in the interconnected world of media and government. Keeping in view the position of the Taliban government, the regional print media outlets have played an outstanding role in providing vital insight into the state's position on the recent Taliban government.

Since there is a huge amount of research available on the subject in Urdu and English dailies, however, less attention is paid to the subject in Pashto press. Keeping in mind the importance of language and socio-cultural setting, the negligence is regrettable. Because it is the Pashto press that can help Pashtoons understand regional politics, events, and incidents through its simple and diverse narratives and frameworks.

The current students tend to fill this gap by explaining how the government of the Taliban is portrayed in the Pashto press, specifically in Daily Wahdat and Daily Hewad. The study provides insights into the portrayal of the Taliban and the effects it leaves on the whole area of Pashtoon both in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Significance of the Study

This issue is clearly demonstrated by the Taliban's ascent to power, which resulted in the removal of a democratic state and the establishment of a new form of governance (Smith, 2023).

The aforementioned transformation has resulted in extensive perceptions of Afghanistan becoming a hub for terrorism and a cause of regional instability. The shift in Afghanistan's governance environment is a significant worry since it has several ramifications.

This situation has not only caused humanitarian difficulties, but has also increased security hazards, both in traditional and non-traditional aspects. The international community has responded to these changes with mostly cautiousness. Nations and global organizations have embraced a defensive stance, tackled not only the current crises but also

raised awareness about potential long-term consequences.

Research Questions

For a focused and comprehensive study on the portrayal of the Afghan Taliban regime in Daily Wahdat and Daily Hewad, the following five research questions are designed:

1. How many editorials related to the Afghan Taliban regime were published by Daily Wahdat and Daily Hewad during the specified period?
2. What specific narratives or themes dominated the framing of the Afghan Taliban regime in Daily Wahdat and Daily Hewad?
3. What is the tone of coverage in both Dailies i.e. positive, negative, or neutral towards the Afghan Taliban regime?

Literature Review

The manner in which the media depicts social protests often portrays these movements as unlawful or lacking legitimacy (Hertog and McLeod, 2001). They argued that this specific approach to conveying information may significantly impact the public's perception and the amount of success attained by these social movements. The study of these researchers explores "the influence of media framing on the public's perception of social issues and movements" which tends to investigate the level of popular support & opposition.

Research conducted by Wolfsfeld (2004) found that media and the narratives it shows to the world during a conflict are quite often influenced by certain political goals which sometimes increase and sometimes soothe tensions. This situation was seen during the Wolfsfeld study on the Palestine-Israel conflict because the media coverage of the conflict was observed favoring certain political goals and objectives of certain people or sides.

Fahmy (2010) during his study on the "media's depiction of the Iraq conflict" revealed that different perspectives on the same subject may lead to differences in public opinion about a conflict. The findings of the study further researcher further reveal the importance of media frames in molding public opinion about international affairs & more specifically about a conflict.

The findings of the study of Johnson and Fahmy (2010) revealed the influence of media frames on public perception, particularly in relation to the Taliban. both the researchers found that media frames that are more likely to focus on terrorism and violation of human rights are more likely to receive negative perceptions of people about the Taliban Government.

Media Framing in International Conflicts and Crises

The process of framing in media organizations is powerful to the extent that it influences the perception of the general public about the legitimacy and importance/need of military deployments (Althaus and Salamon, 2006). According to these researchers media framing focusing deeply on hazards and concerns related to national security wins the public support for the war.

Focusing on the Syrian conflict Baden and Meyer (2018) found that the framing often made things more easy, removing factors that could increase understanding. The same study emphasizes on media's significance in oversimplifying or distorting public perceptions of international conflicts.

While studying the Yemeni Civil War Livingston & Eachus (2019) explored that media frames during the war often exclude context-based information, specifically about the historical and political complexities of the region. They added that portraying the war in a particular way may sometimes lead to a twisted understanding of a situation.

Smith and Yamani (2021) examined that online social platforms help people to receive a broader and simpler perspective of complex situations as compared to traditional media. However, they warned the audience about the potential for echo chambers and selective exposure in social & digital media environments.

Likewise, Thompson & Lee (2022) studied media framing during the Ukraine-Russia war. The researchers found discrepancies in the depiction of the conflict, often showing the political point of view of the respective countries. The researcher also came up with findings that show the substantial disparity in media portrayal during global emergencies, impacted by national perspectives and geopolitical interests.

Methodology Used

The researchers for this particular study used the mixed-methods technique because of its effectiveness in providing an easy understanding of media framing. The quantitative portion examined the published editorials in both newspapers, quantifying different frames like responsibility, human interest, conflict, morality, & economic frames. The same also includes assessing neutral, positive, and negative tones. On the other hand, the Qualitative analysis is dealt with through the comprehensive interpretation of the context and thematic analysis of the editorials. The usage of the mixed method technique helps in understanding the complexities of media framing in an easier and simpler way.

The population of the study includes all the editorials of both the Pashto newspapers however, a time period i.e. from September 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023, is taken as a sample. The time frame selected aims to show a crucial phase in the continuing story of the Taliban government in Afghanistan and its broader consequences.

Framing Analysis Parameters

The current research project deals with the following framings for the analysis of the editorial

Data Tabulation & Analysis

Table 1

Editorials Selected for Analysis

Time Frame	Daily Wahdat	Daily Hewad
September 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023	120 editorials	95 editorials
Total (N) = 215		

The above data which is taken from September 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023, reveals the interest and concern of both the dailies in respect to the Taliban government. A total of 215 editorials shows that both the dailies gave a substantial amount of coverage to the Taliban rule.

Findings of RQ1: Number of Editorials Related to the Afghan Taliban Regime

The statistics in the table above show that a total of 215 editorials were published by both dailies during the sampled time frame among which 120 editorials were published by the daily Wahdat & 95 by the

content, which is based on already existing theories of media framing:

1. Responsibility Frame

It explores how the newspaper's editorials assign blame or credit to the Taliban regime for different situations in the country.

2. Human Interest Frame

Refers to how issues are presented, and how the editorial emphasizes individual stories, experiences, and impacts on the general public.

3. Conflict Frame

This frame particularly shows how editorials show conflicts or tensions associated with the Taliban regime

4. Morality Frame

Moral messages, references to religious or cultural norms, or ethical judgments are seen in this frame.

5. Economic Frame

This frame investigates how the editorials deal with the economic aspects of the Taliban regime the actions they take and the policies they follow.

daily Hewad on the subject of the Taliban's new regime. The considerable volume of material that is focused on the regime demonstrates the significance of the regime in the conversations that are taking place in Afghanistan and Pakistan among the people and the media. The difference in the number of editorials may indicate that the two newspapers have different editorial tastes or that they have available resources that are different from one another.

Editorial Frames

The quantitative aspect of the data analysis was the process of coding and classifying the editorial material according to preset framing criteria, including responsibility, human interest, conflict, morality, and economic frames. The frequency of

each frame was documented, with the editorial's tone, which could be categorized as neutral, positive, or negative.

Below is a summary of the quantitative results.

Table 2

Distribution of Frequency of Editorial Frames in Daily Wahdat and Daily Hewad

Editorial Frame	Daily Wahdat	Daily Hewad	Total
Responsibility	55 (26%)	47 (22%)	102 (24%)
Human Interest	42 (20%)	38 (18%)	80 (19%)
Conflict	60 (28%)	65 (31%)	125 (29%)
Morality	30 (14%)	25 (12%)	55 (13%)
Economic	28 (13%)	34 (16%)	62 (15%)
Total	215 (100%)	209 (100%)	424 (100%)

Findings of RQ2: Dominant Narratives or Themes in the Framing

The above table shows the frequency distribution of Editorial Frames in both dailies. The data reveals that conflict frame is the prevailing perspective in both journals, accounting for 28% of Daily Wahdat and 31% of Daily Hewad, indicating a significant emphasis on the controversial and tumultuous features of the Taliban administration.

Both media regularly debate accountability and governance concerns relating to the Taliban administration, as shown by the substantial usage of the responsibility frame (24% collectively). The human-interest framing is prominently evident, as the media strive to individualize events and establish a connection with the readers. The economic aspect, although less common compared to other frames, nonetheless accounts for a significant proportion (15%), indicating the noteworthy economic consequences associated with the regime, which is a matter of concern.

Comparing the frame of both the dailies the researchers found that daily “Wahdat” has highly

focused frames like responsibility, human interest, and morality frames while Daily Hewad, had more concerns about conflict and economic frames. morality frame is frequently used between both newspapers, suggesting a desire to take up the ethical and moral issues of the Taliban rule.

Both the newspapers deeply follow & use the conflict frame which shows the problematic character of the Taliban regime and the consequences it brings for the stability of the region. On the other hand responsibility and human-interest frames in both the dailies reveal the focus on governance problems and the human aspect of political advancements.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The researchers also conducted a thorough qualitative analysis of the published editorials of the sampled time period. This analysis (Content analysis) included the understanding of the contexts & narrative used in the editorial, focusing on the used language, and different themes used.

Thematic Analysis

Table 3

Themes Identified in Editorials

Theme Category	Description	Daily Wahdat	Daily Hewad
Political Governance	Discussions on the Taliban’s governance style	38	31

Theme Category	Description	Daily Wahdat	Daily Hewad
Human Rights	Coverage of human rights issues under the regime	18	22
International Relations	Focus on Afghanistan's global diplomatic ties	21	18
Cultural Impact	Impacts on Afghan culture and society	11	9
Economic Situation	Economic conditions and policies	32	15

The data in the above table reveals that focusing on Political Governance (Tabliban Governance) daily Wahdat published 38 editorials however, Daily Hewad published 31 editorials. These statistics show the notable editorial concern of both the newspapers over the Tablian regime and their approach to governance.

Daily Hewad showed more interest in discussing and including Human rights issues in their editorial (22 editorials) as compared to Daily Wahdat (18 editorials). This data primarily shows that the issues of human rights during the Taliban regime are more important for Daily Hewad than Daily Wahdat.

Both journals have shown similar levels of interest in Afghanistan's diplomatic ties with other nations worldwide, with Daily Wahdat publishing 21 editorials and Daily Hewad publishing 18. The significance of Afghanistan's international affiliations after the Taliban's assumption of power is evident in this aspect.

The theme of cultural impact had the least attention in both media, with Daily Wahdat publishing eleven editorials and Daily Hewad featuring nine. While not the primary focus, this suggests that there is a certain level of involvement with the many ways in which the government influences Afghan society and culture.

Daily Wahdat dedicated a substantial portion of its coverage (32 editorials) to the economic conditions and policies of the Taliban regime, surpassing the coverage of Daily Hewad (15 editorials) by a large margin. More precisely, this highlights a notable concern raised in the Daily Wahdat over the economic consequences that may arise from the Taliban's control.

Analysis of Narrative Styles

The narrative style used by the two dailies was examined and the following results are attained from the editorials.

Table 4
Narrative Styles in Editorials

Narrative Style	Characteristics	Daily Wahdat	Daily Hewad
Storytelling	Use of personal stories or anecdotes	33	21
Analytical	In-depth analysis of policies or situations	27	34
Descriptive	Detailed descriptions of events or policies	34	28
Persuasive	Editorials intended to persuade the reader	26	12

The Daily Wahdat used storytelling as its predominant narrative method, with 33 editorials, whilst the Daily Hewad had 21 editorials using this approach. Therefore, this suggests that Daily Wahdat has a stronger tendency to personalize news by including tales and human experiences, maybe with the aim of enhancing reader engagement and empathy.

Compared to Daily Wahdat's publishing of just 27 editorials, Daily Hewad has a stronger

predisposition towards analytical narratives, suggesting that the newspaper prioritizes providing in-depth analysis and understanding of policies and events. This might be an instance of an editorial strategy that seeks to foster a readership that is well-informed and contemplative.

The use of descriptive narratives was comparable across the two journals, with Daily Wahdat slightly surpassing Daily Hewad in terms of editorials (34 editorials) compared to Daily Hewad

(28 editorials). The use of this storytelling technique, distinguished by comprehensive documentation, demonstrates a commitment to meticulousness and lucidity in explaining events or policies.

Compared to the 12 editorials published by Daily Hewad, Daily Wahdat issued 26 editorials that were more inclined to have persuasive storylines. When editorial content is used for the purpose of persuasion, it signifies an active attempt to sway the opinions or perspectives of readers about certain issues.

When analyzed using Framing Theory, these narrative styles are influential elements that shape the manner in which each newspaper presents its content. The Daily Wahdat prioritizes analytical narratives as a means of engaging with the public, while the Daily Hewad favors storytelling. Although Daily Wahdat's content seems to be presented in a manner that is easier to understand and emotionally impactful, Daily Hewad offers a more knowledgeable and intellectually stimulating approach.

Assessment of Tone

Table 5

Tonal Analysis of Editorials

Tone	Explanation	Daily Wahdat	Daily Hewad
Neutral/Objective	Presenting information without obvious bias	47	35
Critical/Negative	Critical or negative portrayal of the regime	32	39
Supportive/Positive	Positive or supportive portrayal of the regime	41	21

RQ3: What is the tone of coverage in both Dailies i.e. positive, negative, or neutral towards the Afghan Taliban regime?

The Daily Wahdat published a total of 47 editorials, whereas Daily Hewad published just 35 editorials with a neutral or objective perspective. This finding suggests that Daily Wahdat may have a somewhat greater tendency to deliver facts in an impartial and equitable way, maybe with the intention of providing a more informed rather than opinionated portrayal of the Taliban rule.

Unlike Daily Wahdat, which only produced 32 editorials, Daily Hewad has published 39 editorials thus far, showing a stronger tendency to describe the Taliban rule in a critical or unflattering way. This finding implies that Daily Hewad should consider adopting a more discerning position towards the Taliban regime, emphasizing its deficiencies and disagreeable traits rather than focusing on its favorable attributes.

Results

Using the mixed method technique this study tended to explore the portrayal of the Taliban regime in the Pashto press i.e. Daily Wahdat and Daily Hewad. The study aimed to understand the approach of both dailies toward portraying a highly tense and crucial political event of the current time.

Additionally, this research reflects on the broader social context within which these newspapers operate.

The quantitative exploration gave an insight into the number of editors and the diversity of its content. Keeping in mind the findings of the tables Daily Hewad has published a higher number of editorials as compared to Daily Wahdat.

The data also revealed that both newspapers majorly focus on the conflict frame, emphasizing the troublesome nature of the Taliban regime. On the contrary, Daily Hewad shows more concern about conflict and economic frames compared to Daily Wahdat, focusing on human interests and responsibilities. The difference in subject between these media shows their unique approaches to attracting an audience, albeit working within the same political scenario.

Additionally, the tone analysis provides more evidence to further substantiate these results. The results unveiled that The Daily Wahdat is more likely to follow tones like objective and neutral, however, it has been seen to follow critical, negative, and sometimes positive & supportive tones in order to follow a balanced approach. On the other hand,

Daily Hewad is more interested in giving critical & more negative coverage to the government & its policies.

The qualitative analysis clearly shows the rhetorical techniques and narrative used by both the newspapers. Daily Wahdat has been found to have an interest in narratives & captivating stories which shows the policy of the paper of establishing a deeper connection with the audience. And this is somehow achieved through the presentation of complex political topics in an easy and relatable way. Similarly, Daily Hewad is known for its inclinations towards an analytical & descriptive approach. The paper gives comprehensive and detailed information

to its readers regarding the portrayal of any event, political situation, or policy.

Using the framework of Framing Theory, the data received illustrate the strategic choices taken by both the dailies in portraying the Taliban government. The positive nature of media framing is seen in the story style, tone, and themes used between both newspapers.

The findings also suggest that the depiction of the Taliban government in both dailies has a complex interplay of thematic selections, storytelling techniques, and tonal preferences. The aim is not only to educate & engage audiences but also to contribute to the creation of distinct media frames.

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