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COMPARATIVE STUDY OF QUALITY AND POPULAR PRESS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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Abstract

The media conveys crucial information, speaks out, and spreads awareness of violations of human rights. Pakistani media plays a vital role in human rights, especially in cases of violence against women. The present research is based on print media and its role in violence against women. This is a comparative study of popular and quality press on violence against women in Pakistan. Data were collected from two national newspapers of Pakistan, Daily Dawn (Quality press), and Daily Khabrain (Popular Press), with the help of content analysis. Researchers collected data on a coding sheet with defined categories. Framing theory was used to support the study. The findings of the study revealed that the popular press (Daily Khabrain) presents more negative news about violence against women and portrays a negative image of women with a negative tone compared to quality press. Additionally, it has been discovered that quality press typically devotes very little space in their daily news publications to the problems that women face, which serve as the primary catalyst for violence against women in Pakistan.

Keywords: Women, Violence, Pakistan, Framing, News Treatment, Women's Rights, Quality and Popular Press

Introduction

Media is a cultural reality that changes social reality along with its reflection. Through the analysis of media reports on women, one can understand the social representation of women (Argon, 2017). Social stereotypes are enforced in our society internationally. Women are sometimes unaware of their biased attitudes. In Pakistan, women's access to media is not supported, which turns out to be an alarming problem for females. The media's portrayal of women shows continuous oppression and an image that they are objects of male satisfaction. Women occupy passive roles compared to men in the media and are often depicted as housewives. Employed women are shown under male subordination with little power (Ceulemans and Fauconnier 1979).

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Print media has highlighted the plight of women. Almost all magazines and newspapers have special columns for women. There are also exclusive magazines for women in almost all Pakistani languages, focusing on women as housewives, mothers, and dependents. Atrocities against women are portrayed naturally, and women are considered good enough only in embroidery, cooking, and home management skills.

Women are objectified for sexual attraction in the advertising world, and they are often depicted as household equipment's sole representations. The media has given significant support to indecent posters and billboards, which are pure examples of how women are treated (Bashiru, 2012, and Alam et al., 2019). Unfortunately, media often shows leniency when presenting news about women, contributing to bias against women that affects their image and development in society.

Violence against women has been the subject of numerous research projects. For millions of women worldwide, violence against women is an abhorrent reality. Pakistani society is a prime example of how violence manifests itself, with pervasive cultural, traditional, and social institutions that condone and sustain violence against women (WHO, 2013). Men view women as personal property, and they have complete control over every aspect of their lives, including their behavior and movements (Bhanbhro, 2013). In the family, tribe, community, and society, men have the authority to decide, and women must abide by those decisions. This study examines how the media frames the problem of violence against women.

Rationale

Violence against women is a pervasive issue in society, and the media plays a critical role in shaping public perceptions and responses to this problem. Understanding how different types of media outlets, particularly quality and popular press, frame and report on violence against women is essential. This study seeks to provide valuable insights into the portrayal of violence against women in the media, the extent of coverage, and the underlying factors contributing to this issue. By examining the news style and treatment of this sensitive topic, we can contribute to a more informed and nuanced understanding of media's role in addressing and potentially perpetuating violence against women.

Problem Statement

Violence against women remains a pressing concern in society, with its prevalence and impact affecting countless lives. The media, as a powerful disseminator of information and a shaper of public opinion, plays a pivotal role in either addressing or perpetuating this issue. However, it is unclear how different types of media outlets, specifically quality and popular press, frame and report on violence against women. Additionally, the extent to which different categories of violence are covered and the underlying factors contributing to the increased prevalence of such violence are not well-understood. Therefore, there is a need to investigate and analyze the print media's treatment of violence against women to shed light on how the media engages with this issue.

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Research Question

1. How do quality and popular press outlets frame the image of women and report on violence against women, and what factors contribute to variations in coverage and framing within the print media?

Objectives of the study

The overall objectives of this comparative study on violence against women are:

- To understand the framing of women's image in quality and popular press.
- To assess which category of violence is more extensively covered.
- To gain a deeper understanding of some of the underlying factors contributing to increased violence against women.
- To analyze the print media's news style regarding violence against women.

Hypotheses

H_1: Quality press portrays women's image more positively compared to popular press.

H_2: Popular press provides more coverage of the issue of violence against women.

H_3: Both quality and popular press offer less coverage of the issue of violence against women.

Literature Review

Gavin and Kruis (2022), Studies show that as a result of media portrayals of violence against women, attitudes favoring domestic violence are spreading more broadly. Prior research has looked at the connection between violent media exposure and violent crime, but nothing has been done to comprehensively investigate the link between a particular type of violent media exposure and the commission of intimate partner violence. The current study uses data from a sample of 148 prisoners to examine the connection between exposure to various types of enjoyable violent media and the commission of intimate partner violence in an effort to close these gaps in the literature (i.e., conviction and self-reported). At the bivariate level, the findings demonstrate a significant positive connection between self-reported intimate partner abuse and exposure to entertaining television violence. However, multivariable modeling weakens this connection to insignificant levels. Endorsement of domestic violence beliefs and victimization experience were discovered to be the two characteristics that were the most efficient predictors of intimate partner violence. Potential policy ramifications are taken into account in light of the findings.

Irvine-Collin et al. (2022), This study examines a social marketing strategy designed to encourage sympathetic responses to peer disclosures of sexual assault and to increase knowledge of institutional support services offered at universities. Results from a survey of university students in Australia (n = 189) and subsequent focus groups (n = 11)

reveal that exposure to the campaign may boost students' perceived confidence in their ability to react compassionately to disclosures of sexual violence and increase awareness of formal support services offered by universities. These findings imply that social marketing could be a beneficial strategy in the response and prevention measures for sexual violence at universities. These results might provide guidance for upcoming university campaigns.

Lakho and Jamali (2020), The media around the world consistently portrays women as victims of a male-dominated society. Each nation has its own media laws governing the depiction of topics in the media, including print, electronic, and other forms of media, which makes the representation style and policy in global media unique. Thus, the goal of this study is to examine how the problem of women's violence has been covered in the prestigious Pakistani newspaper Dawn. The analysis of how violence against women is depicted in the media is another goal of this study. A content analysis method was used to analyze and examine how this topic is being represented in order to achieve these goals. The issue was noted in the November 2019 edition. The frequency, placement, violence reason, violence place, violence type, and violence method were the units of analysis that were observed in this study. Throughout the month, news was reported 18 times per day. Most news stories came from Punjab, a state of Pakistan. Gang rape was the most common form of violence against women that was recorded. As is often said, "a little information is a hazardous thing," and this style of too short coverage does not deal with what the theory of uses. A few of the units could not be noticed because the news provided was too brief to fulfill the demand of this study and the concept of instant satisfaction. The newspaper hasn't chosen a single problem that has affected Sindh, and the provincial issues are generally right on target. The publication has to update its representational and coverage policies.

Sutherland (2019), The amount of media coverage is a significant indicator of how far social and cultural norms have come in supporting or challenging the prevalence of violence against women in our culture. Therefore, the objective of the current study was to create a baseline image of the volume and type of reporting on violence against women in the major Australian news media. The mainstream news media covered the topic of violence against women extensively. It was uncommon to explicitly place women's violent experiences into a larger social framework. Few news stories mentioned where ladies could go for assistance. Additionally, news accounts frequently placed a disproportionate amount of focus on law enforcement, political, and criminal justice perspectives, marginalizing the voices of survivors, advocates, and other specialists. Despite the willingness of readers and journalists to engage with news about violence against women, it is not always the usual for reporting to advance public understanding of the problem.

Ahmed (2014), After the advent of feminism and feminist philosophy, violence against women has become a significant and contentious issue on a global scale. The current study examines how the media covers significant and ongoing problems with violence against women in Pakistan. The two most-watched news networks in Pakistan, Dawn News and Express News, are where the data is gathered. The content of news items that were broadcast about violence against women in Pakistan between January 2013 and April 2013 was analyzed. This descriptive and analytical study's goal is to examine the positive and negative effects of popular media on Pakistani women's rights and violence against them. The most widely used medium in Pakistan serves as the Universe for this

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study. The systematic sampling technique is applied. The descriptive approach is utilized to portray the research findings using SPSS, and statistical techniques are also employed to examine the link between the data obtained. Through the chi-square test, the hypothesis regarding these phenomena and their connections is examined. The study's conclusions show that Pakistan's top-watched news channels have a biased perspective on the problem of violence against women. It has been shown that media outlets typically devote relatively little time in their daily newscasts to the challenges that women face, which are the primary cause of violence against women in Pakistan.

Weldon and Htun (2010), This study makes an effort to explain how governments have responded to violence against women across countries and throughout time. Our theoretical approach focuses on the connection between the institutional setting and the mobilization of women's movements. However, we contend that the proportion of local and foreign influences changed over time and across different geographical areas. A worldwide standard addressing violence against women as a basic issue of human rights emerged between 1975 and 2005. This influenced how important domestic and international forces were in determining state policy. This indicates that nations that established laws against violence against women later than early adopters were more affected by international standards (like Canada and Australia). International effects eventually came to weigh more heavily than domestic considerations in our most recent cross-section. Our distinctive dataset enables us to demonstrate the potency of the overarching thesis as well as the ways in which the process differs between nations, regions, and time. Compared to theories that center on political parties, electoral systems, culture, religion, and the proportion of women in government, this analytical method sheds greater light on trends in how governments respond to violence against women over time and around the globe. However, this is not true in every area of women's rights. Women's mobilization and international institutions are particularly crucial because of the nature of the violence issue, which touches on women's standing as a group and the social value and significance of women's bodies. The relative lack of religious activism (in contrast to topics like abortion or family law) and advocacy on the part of organized economic interests like unions or chambers of commerce are other reasons why these variables are so important (as is the case for policies on parental leave and childcare).

Noor (2004): A study on "Daughter of Eve: violence against women in Pakistan" indicates that the reasons against violence range from emotional to religious and honor-based factors. This survey shows that 80% of women are treated annually for various reasons at different levels, such as honor killings, acid burnings, and marital rape, which are also very common. Violence against women remains unchecked due to an inadequate legal system and the lack of implementation of women's rights acts. It also provides suggestions on how to prevent violence against women, such as promoting women's education, presenting a positive image of women to society, and emphasizing the important role of the police in protecting the rights and dignity of women.

Khafagy (2005): Khafagy's work indicates that collecting and analyzing information published on honor killings was used to gather data. The Egyptian NGO CWALA has two main objectives: providing legal counseling and legal aid for low-income urban women and fighting for women's rights against violence, including honor killings. The study shows that efforts to educate women about their basic rights, both in religion and law, can help overcome this societal issue. Moreover, training the police staff about

the dynamics of domestic violence and developing more effective laws against violence can be useful in combating violence against women in society. Even the active role of NGOs can be helpful in assisting women against violence and allowing them to have their proper place in society.

Media Discourse: Media discourse is a part of the process that includes how readers understand meaning and develop their opinions based on how journalists present information. Media framing means the way information is presented to the audience (Goffman, 1974). Framing is the scheme of interpretation that helps understand and recognize occurrences or life experiences. Framing means promoting certain aspects of visible reality and making them more defining and clearer in such a way that defines a specific problem, definition, causal interpretation, and moral evaluation (Cissel, 2012). Framing is the presentation of an idea for political reforms to draw the public's attention and show the biased attitude of one side (Entaman, 1993).

According to Chong and Druckman (2007), framing theory means the false presentation of any idea or project in the political framework. It means providing false information about a proposal in politics to misguide people. They further explain that framing theory is making something look different than it actually is. Fiske and Taylor give their point of view on framing theory in 1991, stating that framing is focusing on a piece of information or a particular issue in a more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable way for the audience. The audience receives the information, understands its meaning, acts on it, and stores it in their mind or memory.

Research Methodology

In this study, to understand the sensitive issue of violence against women, a content analysis method is used to collect data. The content of two national newspapers, Daily Dawn (Quality Press), and Daily Khabrain (Popular Press), is analyzed. Selected newspapers are examined by the researcher to collect relevant data on a coding sheet. Complete newspapers are selected, focusing on national news related to violence against women, within a set timeline of eight months. Qualitative and quantitative methods are employed to gather comprehensive information and quantify the number of cases related to violence against women.

In this study, Dawn and Khabrian are the selected samples for data collection. The researcher chose a sample size covering eight months, from January 1, 2022, to August 31, 2022, for data collection. The unit of analysis is specific women-related news within selected categories in Dawn and Khabrian newspapers. The researcher used a coding sheet to systematically collect and analyze data in the following categories:

Categories:

- Murder
- Suicides
- Honor killings
- Rape

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- Burnings

Results:

Comparative analysis of violence against women between Daily Khabrian and Daily Dawn:

Comparison of the total news in different categories in Daily Dawn and Daily Khabrian

Newspapers	Murder	Rape	Suicide	Honor killing	Burning
Daily Khabrian	117	69	40	17	6
Daily Dawn	68	11	19	24	8

Table 1: Comparison of Different Categories of Violence Against Women in Daily Dawn and Daily Khabrain Newspapers

Table 1 illustrates a comparison of different categories of violence against women in Daily Dawn and Daily Khabrain Newspapers. The table reveals that:

- **Murder:** Daily Khabrain Newspaper published 47% (117) of national news related to murder, while Daily Dawn published 52%. This indicates that Daily Dawn published more news about murder compared to Daily Khabrain Newspaper.

- **Rape:** Daily Khabrain published 28% (68) of national news related to rape, whereas Daily Dawn published 9% (11) of national news related to rape cases. This shows that Daily Khabrain Newspaper published more national news about rape compared to Daily Dawn.

- **Burning Cases:** Daily Khabrian published 2% (6) of national news related to burning cases, while Daily Dawn published 6% (8) of national news about burning cases. This demonstrates that Daily Dawn reported more national news regarding burning cases compared to Daily Khabrian.

- **Honor Killings:** Daily Khabrian published 7% (15) of national news related to honor killings, whereas Daily Dawn published 18% (24) of national news about honor killings. Daily Dawn reported more news on honor killings compared to Daily Khabrian.

- **Suicide Cases:** Daily Khabrian Newspaper published 16% (40) of national news related to suicide cases, and Daily Dawn published 15% (19). This shows that Daily Khabrain Newspaper published 1% more news compared to Daily Dawn.

Comparison of the Tone of News Between Daily Dawn and Daily Khabrain Newspapers:

Tone	Daily Khabrian	Daily Dawn
Positive	16	6
Negative	223	70
Neutral	10	54

Table 2: Comparison of the Tone of News Published by Daily Khabrain and Daily Dawn

Table 2 outlines the comparison of the tone of news published by Daily Khabrain and Daily Dawn. The table reveals the following:

- **Positive Tone:** Daily Khabrain Newspaper uses 6% (16) positive tones, while Daily Dawn uses 5% (6) positive tones. This indicates that Daily Khabrain Newspaper uses 1% more positive tones compared to Daily Dawn.

- **Negative Tone:** Daily Khabrain uses 90% (223) negative tones, and Daily Dawn uses 54% (70) negative tones related to issues of violence against women. This shows that Daily Khabrain uses a significantly higher number of negative tones compared to Daily Dawn.

- **Neutral Tone:** Daily Khabrain Newspaper uses 4% (10) neutral tones, while Daily Dawn uses 41% (54) neutral tones. This demonstrates that Daily Dawn uses a substantially higher number of neutral tones to present news about violence against women compared to Daily Khabrain Newspaper.

Comparison of Treatment Style Between Daily Dawn and Daily Khabrian:

Newspapers	Daily Khabrian	Daily Dawn
Supportive	216	15
Opposite	132	62
Neutral	101	53

Table 3: Different Treatment Styles Related to Violence Against Women News Used by Daily Khabrain Newspaper and Daily Dawn

Table 3 illustrates different treatment styles related to violence against women news used by Daily Khabrain Newspaper and Daily Dawn. The table provides the following insights:

- **Supportive Treatment Style:** Daily Khabrain uses a 7% (16) supportive treatment style, while Daily Dawn uses 11% (15). This shows that Daily Dawn employs a more supportive treatment style compared to Daily Khabrain Newspaper.

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- **Opposite Treatment Style:** Daily Khabrain Newspaper uses a 50% (132) opposite treatment style, whereas Daily Dawn uses 48% (62). Daily Khabrain Newspaper employs a slightly higher amount of the opposite treatment style compared to Daily Dawn.

- **Neutral Treatment Style:** Daily Khabrain Newspaper uses 43% (101) neutral treatment style, while Daily Dawn uses 41% (53). This indicates that Daily Khabrain Newspaper uses a slightly higher amount of the neutral treatment style compared to Daily Dawn.

Hypotheses Approved/Rejected:

- **H_1: Quality press positively portrays women's image as compared to popular press:** This hypothesis is partially approved based on data analysis. Quality press portrays women's image positively, and Daily Khabrain newspaper treats women's news in a supportive way.

- **H_2: Popular press gives more coverage to the issue of violence against women:** This hypothesis is approved because Daily Khabrain newspaper covers more stories on violence against women than the Quality press.

- **H_3: Quality and popular press give less coverage to the issue of violence against women:** This hypothesis is approved because Daily Dawn newspaper covers fewer stories on violence against women than the popular press.

Conclusion

The role of the press in presenting the issues of violence against women in Pakistan appears rather lethargic and biased. Violence against women receives extensive coverage in newspapers, with the portrayal of violence being dramatized. Khabrain newspaper provides more news related to violence against women on both the front and back pages, while Dawn provides less news in those pages and presents it in a neutral way. Quality press should give more coverage to women's news in a positive way. They feature more news about murder as a result of honor killings, killings by in-laws, etc. Newspapers highlight the darker aspects of society related to the treatment of women in social, economic, and moral aspects. This sometimes affects the role and development of women in society.

In contrast, women are playing more active leadership roles in politics and civil society. They oppose extremist ideologies and advocate for a different vision for Pakistan based on peace, security, and development, unlike other Asian nations like Bangladesh, India, and Afghanistan.

It seems that ending press depictions of violent news would not be sufficient to address the issue of how violence is presented in the media. Instead, our culture needs to reach a tipping point where it can accept women's equality and, consequently, reject representations that show women as submissive, degraded, and dehumanized.

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