JAMAL KHASHOGGI'S MURDER: EXPLORING FRAMES IN CROSS-NATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE

Saqib Riaz*
Babar Hussain Shah**
Mati ur Rehman***

Abstract

Present research study was aimed to examine the cross-national coverage and framing patterns about Jamal Khashoggi's murder in international media through focusing on newspapers. Khashoggi; an internationally acclaimed US based Saudi journalist was brutally assassinated at Kingdom's consulate in Turkey which created the global outcry. As the issue was made headlines worldwide for several months, the media from USA, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Turkey; the most substantially and politically involved countries presumably used certain framing patterns in their coverage. To find out the difference in coverage intensity and media frames, a content analysis based comparative study of US, Saudi and Turkish newspapers was conducted which is guided by the framing theory of Mass Communication. The results showed that the media from three selected countries dealt the same issue with significant differences in coverage and framing patterns. Conclusion based on the findings that such differences in cross-national coverage patterns were influenced by the respective state's ideology, interests, governance system, public narrative, or media settings. The study also explored some facts regarding freedom of expression and about journalists who have been targeted in reprisal of their professional work all over the world. The findings of the study elaborate that most of the newspapers used anti-Saudi frames in their coverage. So far as overall coverage is concerned Turkish and US papers provided a significant coverage to the issue while newspapers from Saudi Arabia provided least coverage to the issue as their media are highly state bound.

***Keywords*:** Khashoggi, Journalist murdered, Saudi Consulate, Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman (MBS), press freedom, Saudi-Turkey Spat, framing

Introduction

In late 2018, people from all around the globe were stunned by the shocking news about Jamal Khashoggi; an internationally acclaimed Saudi journalist who had been living in America and was assassinated at kingdom's consulate on 2nd of October 2018 in Turkey. The issue received worldwide media coverage and the news about this killing made

This work is Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial 4.0 International License.

* Saqib Riaz, Ph.D. Professor/Chairman, Department of Mass Communication, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan
** Babar Hussain Shah, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Department of Mass Communication, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan
*** Mati ur Rehman, Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Mass Communication, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan

headlines in international media for several months. Even though many other journalists were also killed in the same year but the plan to vanish Jamal Khashoggi was executed at a time when region was going through enormous changes in the view of Arab Spring. In post-Khashoggi scenario not only the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia but many other authoritarian regimes were also questioned about the fate of journalists and freedom of expression in their respective countries.[1]

The grave situation of freedom of expression in different parts of the world has been stated very explicitly, incidents of kidnapping or killing of journalists have not been rare in their nature during the recent hostile history. [2] Tragedies with media persons remained one of the most neglected issues within public eye. Journalists have been the victims of tragedies such as reprisal murders, killings in combat or crossfire and deaths on other dangerous or risky assignments such as reporting the protests and rallies that turn fierce. In 2018, as many as 56 journalists were vanished around the globe and at least 34 were targeted for murder. Jamal Khashoggi was one of those who were murdered in reprisal for their professional work. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ, 2020), 1369 journalists have been killed during 1992 to February 2020 and the rationale of these deaths is characterized as retaliation for their professional working.[3]

The issue of Khashoggi has created a distress among the Western Nations which had developed high expectations from Mohammed Bin Salman (MBS); the young heir of the Saudi Kings' throne, in view of his progressive reforms agenda and they started thinking about re-evaluation of their relations with Saudi Arabia. [4]Crown Prince was criticized for his alleged involvement in Khashoggi's murder plot and cover up practices. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia after repeated denials that it had anything to do with journalist's vanishing, in the end recognized that its officials were behind that abhorrent murder, yet guaranteed the Saudi royal family had no earlier information on any plan in this regard.

Besides Saudi Arabia, United States and Turkey were also physically or politically the most involved countries in the issue. Turkey: the country of crime scene took this issue seriously and responded vigorously by utilizing all political, diplomatic, and international organizational platforms. Being the regional rival of Saudi Arabia, Turkey highlighted the Khashoggi issue and politicized it in a way that pushed the Kingdom on back foot which defamed the Saudi leadership at regional as well as international arena. United States on the other hand faced a challenging situation during this crisis which had engulfed the Saudi Arabia, its close ally in the hostile region. Americans, including US Congress, civil society and media were expecting strong reaction from US government and demanding to impose sanctions on Saudis, while Trump administration did every possible effort to

---

1 Megan Specia, "Why Jamal Khashoggi's Killing Has Resonated," *The New York Times*, October 25, 2018, sec. World, accessed July 7, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/24/world/middleeast/jamal-khashoggi-killing.html.

2 Elana Beiser, *Hundreds of Journalists Jailed Globally Becomes the New Normal* (The New York Times, December 13, 2018)

3 Jennifer Dunham, *Murders of Journalists More than Double Worldwide* (New York: Committee to Protect Journalists, December 22, 2020).

4 Mark Lowen, "Jamal Khashoggi Murder: What Is Turkey's Game with Saudi Arabia?," *BBC NEWS*, October 24, 2018.

rescue the Saudis and advocated their stance despite the huge criticism within the country and from abroad.[5]

Jamal Khashoggi's Relations with KSA

Jamal Khashoggi remained close to the Kingdom's royals and had worked as an advisor and likewise served inside the royal court too. As a media person, he held noticeable positions in different Saudi media organizations and lost his job several times in a struggle to practice some freedom in journalistic expression[6]. Over years in the Saudi news media, he set up himself as a sort of informal representative for the royal family, which regularly wanted to talk through surrogates. His free streak and compassion for the Western point of view made him an extraordinarily significant, popular contact for foreign media and diplomats trying to comprehend the royal viewpoint, Later in 2017, Muhammad bin Salman was appointed as the Crown Prince of the Kingdom. After becoming heir to the throne of the King, he started taking actions to get an unmatched control over the power inside the realm and became the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia. To curb down any possible challenge of unwanted opposition or rivalry from within the royals, a crackdown was launched in the name of anti-corruption drive. From that point onward, Mr. Khashoggi who was once close to some regal office holders and had been enjoying prominent positions fell out of favor. In such a challenging scenario he opted to leave Saudi Arabia in the same year when MBS became the crown prince, he moved to the United States and joined The Washington Post as a columnist. He started to criticize the kingdom's crown prince, his policies regarding human rights, press freedom and actions against dissidents. Jamal Khashoggi had showed his fears of being targeted in the evident operations against dissenters that according to him was allegedly supervised by MBS[7].

Assassination, Investigations and Trial

For quite a long time, the Saudis had been attempting to bait Khashoggi back to the Saudi Arabia however these efforts remained ineffective. On September 28, 2018, he surprisingly visited the Kingdom's consulate in Istanbul to get the documents which can testify his separation from ex Saudi wife, with the goal that he could marry the Turkish lady named Hatice Cengiz. He was advised to come back to consulate on 2nd of October 2018 to collect the required papers. Jamal Khashoggi visited the consulate again on the given date however he never came out of the consulate building. He was vanished and his body was reportedly dismembered by a team of Saudi officials, who arrived from kingdom to execute the plan to target him. Turkish authorities named the team of Saudi

[5] Aljazeera, "Jamal Khashoggi Case: All the Latest Updates," *Www.aljazeera.com*, last modified February 19, 2019, accessed July 7, 2022, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/2/12/jamal-khashoggi-case-all-the-latest-updates.
[6] BBC.Com, "Jamal Khashoggi: All You Need to Know about Saudi Journalist's Death," *BBC.Com* (BBC, October 24, 2018), last modified October 24, 2018, accessed December 12, 2021, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45963642.
[7] Evan Ratliff, "The Story of Jamal Khashoggi's Murder and How the World Looked the Other Way," *INSIDER*, October 2, 2019.

agents as "hit squad" but the then US president Donald Trump called them "rogue elements"; as fed him by the Saudi government.

Saudi government after weeks of denials and contradictory statements regarding Khashoggi issue finally accepted that it was a planned murder, as it had been claimed by Turkish officials, but Saudis maintained that top leadership of the country was never aware of any plot to kill the journalist. Initially 18 suspects were arrested and 11 were criminally charged in connection with the Khashoggi's murder. It was reported *"The court sentenced 5 people to death and 3 more to prison on Dec. 23 for the murder of Washington Post contributing columnist Jamal Khashoggi"*, [8]while the two most senior officials accused in the case, together with an adviser were cleared of the crime. Saudi public prosecutor announced the verdict after yearlong confidential and closed-door hearings.[9]

Statement of the problem

The crisis emerged after the assassination of a journalist had not only endangered the Kingdom's international relations but also caused tension among Saudi Arabia, United States and Turkey. The media, from these most involved countries with certain coverage and framing patterns played very critical role during the whole situation which was needed to be investigated properly. In this regard, to avoid any possible knowledge gap this content analysis based comparative study was designed which is guided by the framing theory. The study would not only guide to find out the cross-national media coverage and framing patterns about the same issue, but it will also be very helpful to explore; how media was influenced by the respective country's national ideology, interests, governance system, public narrative, or media settings.

Objectives

- To explore the difference in frames used by American, Saudi, and Turkish media regarding stories mentioning Jamal Khashoggi
- To evaluate the nature of coverage provided by the selected newspapers about the issue
- To highlight the dominant frames used by the newspapers of the study
- To compare the editorial coverage of the issue by the selected newspapers

Literature Review

Another study has also focused on the murder of Khashoggi in their article entitled "Framing a Murder: Twitter Influencers and Jamal Khashoggi Incident." It was extensive research that was primarily focused on role of twitter. Key influencers accounts revealed

[8] Reuters Staff, "Factbox: Who Are Saudis under Spotlight over Khashoggi's Killing?," *REUTERS*, December 23, 2019, accessed July 14, 2021, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-khashoggi-suspects-factbox-idCAKBN1YR1BQ.
[9] CNN, "Jamal Khashoggi Fast Facts," *Edition.cnn.com* (CNN, May 2, 2022), last modified May 2, 2022, accessed June 6, 2022, https://edition.cnn.com/2019/01/10/middleeast/jamal-khashoggi-fast-facts/index.html.

the important role of Qatari and Saudi as well in focusing the criticism of Saudi Arabi during the incident. Furthermore, it is pertinent to note that the activity of twitter got its peak when the then president of US Donald Trump about the possible severe punishment to Saudi Arabia[10].

In another study entitled as "The gruesome murder of Jamal Khashoggi: Saudi Arabia's new economy dream at risk" have focused on the repercussions of Jamal's murder on Saudi's economy as well. The outcomes of the study revealed that Saudi Arabi economy suffered a serious repercussion due to this murder and it has bas impact on Saudi's banks and other related sectors as well. It was further explored that oil and gas companies were not affected to greater extent perhaps due to reliance of other countries for their ever-increasing demands of fuel.[11]

Furthermore, an analysis of special report on murder of Jamal Khashoggi captioned as "Callamard report", and analysis of other related interdependent reports revealed that regarding the murder of Jamal US and Turkey have fulfilled most of the recommendations to a greater extent, yet Saudi Arabia has taken lesser or minimal steps to comply with the report which raises eyebrow for further discussion on the issue.

Above literature clearly indicates a room to conduct a study for exploring the role of traditional media about the murder of Jamal Khashoggi.

A theoretical framework gives a manual for finding solutions to questions detailed in a certain study. The theoretical framework provides scientific grounds for a research study. Furthermore, this framework is helpful in defining the variables and the constructs of the study as well.

Framing Theory

This study is in this way educated and guided by framing theory of mass communication. It is pertinent to notice that Framing theory is an extension of the theory of the agenda setting and hence framing some time is named as the second level of the agenda setting. [12]The term agenda setting was first time used by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in their work on the role of media during the period of election in the United Stated. They were of the view that media sets agenda of public through giving salience to certain issues

[10] Alexei Abrahams and Andrew Leber, "Framing a Murder: Twitter Influencers and the Jamal Khashoggi Incident," *Mediterranean Politics* 26, no. 02 (April 1, 2020): 1–13, accessed April 1, 2021, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13629395.2019.1697089.
[11] Jamal Bouoiyour and Refk Selmi, "The Gruesome Murder of Jamal Khashoggi : Saudi Arabia's New Economy Dream at Risk?" (April 26, 2022), accessed May 5, 2022, https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/search/index/q/*/authIdHal_s/jamal-bouoiyour.
[12] Saqib Riaz, "Agenda Setting Role of Mass Media," *Global Media Journal-Pakistan Edition* 01, no. 02 (2008).

in the list of certain issues, the more an issue is highlighted by the news the more it grabs attention by the masses as well.[13]

In agenda setting media pay special attention to certain issues while ignoring the others in the list. In the second level of the agenda setting, media frame certain issues in a particular frame by highlighting key aspects of the issue through giving it a frame.

Framing, as a theory alludes to how the media bundles and presents content of message to people in general, media features certain issues and afterward puts them inside a specific setting to magnify or debilitate certain meanings. In that way media practices a specific impact over how individuals see reality. The idea which drives framing theory is that the way an issue is covered in media can affect how it is comprehended by the audiences. Tetteh and King (2011) elaborated the framing theory as it explains the ability of media to affect the societal constructs. This theory recommends how a thought, matter or character is portrayed or framed in the media, impact how individuals consider that issue or character. It has been described that to frame a content means to pick few segments of an apparent reality and show them increasingly significant, for this purpose media include a particular bit of information about a primary subject of a story, which increases the striking nature of the matter. Enhanced significance of a piece of information increases the chance that the recipients of that information will memorize it.[14]

This is important to mention that the theory of framing is quite appropriate in the context of this study as it also make comparison between the media of different countries by exploring the slant (tilt) of the newspapers of the respective countries.

Hypotheses

Following 5 hypotheses were shaped to answer the above-mentioned research questions.

H1. There will more likely be a significant difference in the framing of Jamal Khashoggi's murder related stories in the American, Saudi, and Turkish media.

H2. Turkish media is likely to provide more negative coverage towards Saudi Arabia on Jamal Khashoggi issue than others.

H3. The framing of Jamal Khashoggi's murder in Saudi media will more frequently be positive towards Saudi Arabia than other countries' media.

[13] Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald L. Shaw, "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1972): 176–187.
[14] Robert M. Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm," *Journal of Communication* 43, no. 4 (December 1, 1993): 51–58.

H4. This is more likely that US newspaper is to provide more editorialized coverage to Khashoggi's murder issue than other newspapers.

H5. The coverage intensity of Khashoggi's murder in Saudi newspaper will more likely be lesser than newspapers outside of the Kingdom.

Methodology

The research method that was used to conduct this study is content analysis, which was sought to evaluate and find out the dominant media frames. In content analysis technique the researcher evaluates the content in a quantitative manner through application of relevant of descriptive and inferential statistics.[15] The technique used suits to the nature of the study being conducted. This was also used to explore the coverage intensity and compare the frames used by the selected media in their stories about the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. The study was enriched through the use and analysis of three sampled newspapers as the primary sources of data. The study is primarily based on quantitative analysis technique.

Unit of Analysis

All the news stories and editorials about the Jamal Khashoggi's issue were selected from three chosen newspapers; each story and editorial were the units of analysis. This comparative analysis is also designed to explore the prominence of news based on story placement and story length.

Instrument

A code sheet was designed to collect and process the data in accordance with the objectives devised for this study. To find out the answers for research questions developed for this research work, numerical values were generated through this tool of analysis.

Population

All the leading English language newspapers (online edition) of the US, Saudi Arabia and Turkey are population of this study.

Rationale for Selection of Newspapers

Rationale for selecting the US, Saudi and Turkish English dailies as population for this study is the involvement or interests of these countries in the Khashoggi issue. The media from US and Turkey played a pivotal role to create a global outcry in this matter while

[15] Klaus Krippendorff and Mary Angela Bock, *The Content Analysis Reader* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2009)

blaming and criticizing the Saudi Arabia. Saudi media on the other hand tried to defuse the negative impression and highlighted the Kingdom's narrative.

The sampled newspapers were The Washington Post from US, The Arab News from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and The Daily Sabah from Turkey.

Furthermore, theses newspapers selected based on their subscription and availability both as it was not possible for the researcher to go for all the newspapers being published in the different parts of the world, e.g., The Washington Post was selected from the US as it is 6th largest circulated newspaper in the US and is conveniently available as well. Similarly, Arab News has been selected form Saudi Arabia which is largest subscribed newspaper in Saudi Arabia. Hurriyet Daily News and the Daily Sabah are top leading newspapers in Turkey. Due to higher rate of subscription and accessibility as well the Daily Sabah has been selected from Turkey. It is hoped that selection of newspapers from key stakeholders' countries is expected to provide an insight to the murder of Jamal Khashoggi.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique was adopted, and online editions of sampled newspapers were analyzed for the study. All the news items mentioning Khashoggi (Sections: World, Middle East, Nation, Politics) and the editorials of the three selected newspapers were used as unit of analysis. It was decided to conduct this study based on census. The reason was that the time-period selected for content analysis was not expanded too much, so the census technique was manageable for conducting this study.

The time selected for this study spans over three months; from 2nd October 2018 to 2nd January 2019. The rational for selecting this time period is that the Jamal Khashoggi was first reported missing on October 2, 2018, and was murdered on the same day. During this period the major investigations about the murder were almost concluded, the alleged perpetrators of the murder were arrested and put under trial in Saudi Arabia. Likewise, the tension amongst the countries indulged in controversy over Khashoggi issue was also defused to much extent during this time-period.

The researcher availed and utilized the online archives of the sampled newspapers to retrieve the data and employed one search item named 'Jamal Khashoggi'. This search item was selected after detailed search procedure by applying several relating terms, yet the term 'Jamal Khashoggi' produced the most appropriate results about the specified objectives of the research.

Procedure

Three frames were used for this study including Pro Saudi Arabia, Anti Saudi Arabia and Neutral. Frames reflecting positive signs towards Saudi Arabia in coverage pertaining to Khashoggi's murder by the selected newspapers were considered as Pro Saudi Arabia.

These positive signs include avoiding accusation against the Saudi top leadership, using the terms of unplanned murder and lower-level officials behind the crime, cooperation in investigation, removing the responsible officials from their posts, arrests of accused persons and putting them under trial etc. Likewise, the revelation of the overall positive image of Saudi Arabia and Crown Prince MBS was also analyzed as Pro Saudi Arabia frame. These positive revelations are reforms in the Saudi society, culture and economy, freedoms for women, lifting bans on athletics and allowing them to drive, opening the entertainment and tourism industry and banning the religious police. Crown prince's image as a young emerging Arab reformer was among the several positive tones analyzed as Pro Saudi Arabia frame.

Frames reflecting negative signs towards Saudi Arabia in the coverage of Jamal Khashoggi issue by the selected newspapers were considered as Anti Saudi Arabia. These negative signs include accusation against the Saudi top leadership, using the terms of planned or premeditated killing, gruesome murder, Saudi hit squad, killing team, assassination at the consulate, journalist dismembered, body cut into pieces, used bone saw, journalist's body not recovered, dissolved in acid, cover up the crime, Saudi top leadership involved, protecting high official, non-cooperative in investigation, audio tapes proofing last moment's miserable conditions of Khashoggi etc. Likewise, the revelation of the overall negative image of Saudi Arabia and Crown Prince MBS was also analyzed as Anti Saudi Arabia frame. These negative revelations are human rights violations, ban on freedom of expression, crackdown against dissidents and activists, arrests of royal members to avoid rivalry, power grabbing tactics and establishing unopposed authority by Crown Prince, Yemen war, diplomatic spat with Canada, blockade of Qatar and tension with Iran etc. were among the several negative tones analyzed as Anti Saudi Arabia frame.

Those published stories which are neither in favor nor against the Saudi Arabia were treated as having neutral frame. Likewise, a single story that has equally positive and negative tones towards Saudi Arabia was also placed in neutral category.

Results

The data was gathered through a code sheet and analyzed by using SPSS software. Different statistical techniques including mean, mode (frequencies) and Standard Deviation were adopted. The results were generated by utilizing the cross-tabulation method and one-way ANOVA statistics. The findings of this study were tested by Chi-square where the P value is equal to or less than 0.05.

As a result of searching the term 'Jamal Khashoggi' from the online archives of all the sampled newspapers, a population of 590 stories was generated that contained a total of 554 news and 36 editorials. Washington Post published 244, Arab News 96 and Daily Sabah 250.

Table - 1
Coverage of Khashoggi's murder in sampled newspapers mentioning unit of analysis

Story Type	Newspaper			Total
	Washington Post	Arab News	Daily Sabah	
News	209 (37.7%)	96 (17.3%)	249 (44.9%)	554
Editorial	35 (97.2%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.8%)	36
Total	244 (41.4%)	96 (16.3%)	250 (42.4%)	590

The data indicate that out of overall 590 stories, total 88 stories in all the sampled newspapers were reported as Pro Saudi Arabia with positive tone, 310 stories that mentioned Khashoggi's murder were reported with negative tone and treated as Anti Saudi Arabia. Similarly, total count for Neutral frame is recorded 192 during the time period selected for this study. This data analysis indicates that Jamal Khashoggi's murder issue was significantly framed in international media with the tones of Positive 14.9% (Pro Saudi Arabia), Negative 52.5% (Anti Saudi Arabia) and 32.5% Neutral.

Table – 2
Overall coverage with frames in the sampled newspapers

Frame	Newspaper			Total
	Washington Post	Arab News	Daily Sabah	
Pro Saudi	19 (3.2%)	67 (11.4%)	2 (0.3%)	88 (14.9%)
Anti-Saudi	140 (23.7%)	0 (0.0%)	170 (28.8%)	310 (52.5%)
Neutral	85 (14.4%)	29 (4.9%)	78 (13.2%)	192 (32.5%)
Total	244 (41.4%)	96 (16.3%)	250 (42.4%)	590

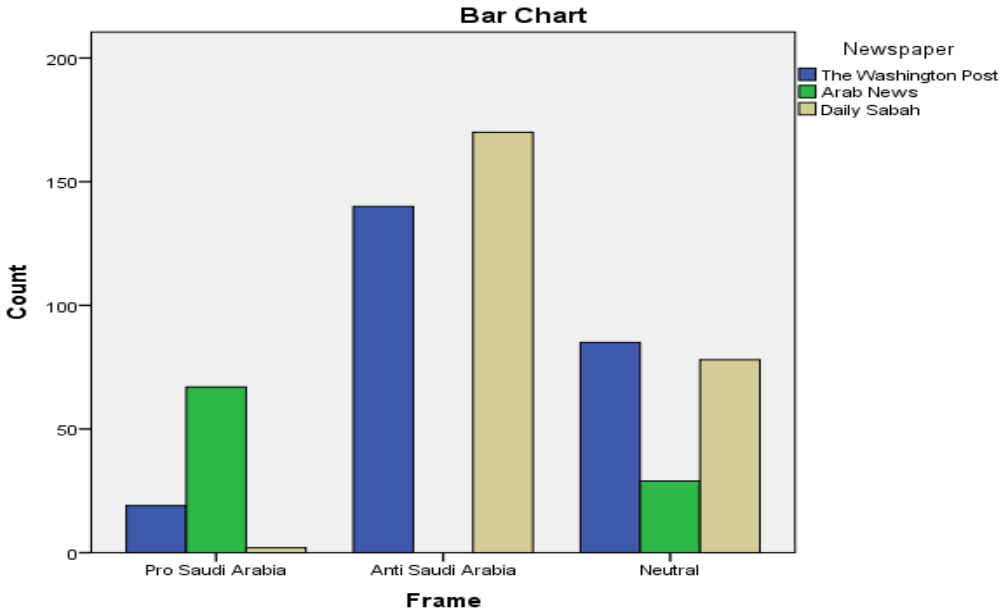


Figure 1. Framing patterns in selected newspapers

Analysis and Discussion of Results

The results of all the data analysis are arranged here in accordance with each hypothesis.

H1: There will likely be a significant difference in the framing of Jamal Khashoggi's murder related stories in the American, Saudi, and Turkish media.

It was found that Jamal Khashoggi's murder issue was differently framed in international media with the tones of Positive (Pro Saudi Arabia), Negative (Anti Saudi Arabia) and Neutral. The data indicate that overall, 590 stories that mentioned Khashoggi's murder were published in all sampled newspapers, out of these 88 (14.9%) stories were reported as Pro Saudi Arabia with positive tone while 310 (52.5%) were reported with negative tone and treated as Anti Saudi Arabia. Similarly, total count for Neutral frame was recorded 192 (32.5%) during the time period selected for this study. This shows a significant difference in the framing of Jamal Khashoggi's murder related stories in sampled newspapers. To verify the results a statistical test named Chi-Square was conducted which supported the first hypothesis.

Table – 3
Chi-Square Test to Measure the Frames

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	299.123[a]	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	283.399	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.364	1	.546
N of Valid Cases	590		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14.32.

H2: Turkish media is likely to provide more negative coverage towards Saudi Arabia on Jamal Khashoggi issue than others.

The Turkish newspaper Daily Sabah published overall 250 stories with Khashoggi's mentions during the three months period out of which 170 stories depicted negative tone towards Saudi Arabia; these are 68 % of its total coverage about the Khashoggi issue and 28.8 % of the overall (52.5 %) negative tone used by the selected newspapers. Whereas Pro Saudi Arabia frame is concerned, this paper published only 02 stories depicted positive tone towards Saudi Arabia, for details see table 4.1 above. This data analysis with Chi-square test approved that there was a significant difference in Anti Saudi Arabia frame, so our 2nd research hypothesis; H2 is also supported.

H3: The framing of Jamal Khashoggi's murder in Arab will more frequently be positive towards Saudi Arabia than the other countries' media.

The Saudi newspaper Arab News published total of 96 Khashoggi related stories during the selected time period, 67 out of these were recognized as Pro Saudi Arabia which are 69.79 % of its overall coverage about the selected topic. The overall stories with positive tone in all sampled newspapers were analyzed as 14.9 % out of which 11.4 % Pro Saudi Arabia stories were published in Arab News. This data analysis based on Chi-square statistical test testified our 3rd research hypothesis; H3 as supported.

H4: This is more likely that US newspaper is to provide more editorialized coverage to Khashoggi's murder issue than other newspapers.

The Washington Post published overall 244 stories on Khashoggi issue out of which 209 were news stories which are 85.6 % of its total coverage and 37.7 % of overall news stories published by all the sampled newspapers. While the number of editorials on

Khashoggi's murder issue published in the Washington Post was 35, this is 14.3 % of its total coverage and 97.2 % of the overall editorial coverage given to Khashoggi's murder in three selected newspapers. This data analysis shows that the American newspaper provided 97.2 % of overall editorialized coverage to Khashoggi's murder among all the selected newspapers. The statistical test shows that the Chi-Square value was 49.357 and the P-value is .000 which was less than .05. So, the statistical findings rejected the null hypothesis in this regard and in this way our 4th research hypothesis; H4 is proved as supported.

H5: The coverage intensity of Khashoggi's murder in Saudi newspaper will more likely be lower than newspapers outside of the Kingdom.

All the sampled newspapers from USA, Saudi Arabia and Turkey published an overall of 590 stories on the topic which included 554 news and 36 editorials related to Khashoggi issue. Out of these 590 stories the Washington Post published a total of 244 stories; 41.4% of overall coverage and Daily Sabah published 250 stories; 42.4% of overall coverage on the topic. Whereas the Saudi newspaper Arab News published a total of 96 stories which are 16.3% of overall coverage about Khashoggi's murder during the selected period. The data shows that there was a difference in overall coverage of Jamal Khashoggi's murder in international media; the coverage intensity in Saudi Arabian newspaper was assumed as more significantly lower than newspapers outside of the Kingdom. So, the statistical test shows that the Chi-Square value was 7.733 and the P-value was.021 which is less than .05. Therefore, it testified the assumption in this regard and our 5th research hypothesis; H5 also stands as supported.

The results show that the overall coverage and framing patterns about the Khashoggi issue during the selected time-period were significantly different in US, Saudi and Turkish media. The dominant frame in combined coverage contained the Anti-Saudi Arabia tone, whereas the positive tone remained very low in ratio as compared to other frames. Similarly, according to the analysis of framing within newspapers, the Turkish media provided more negative coverage towards Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, the Saudi media used more positive tone in its coverage on Khashoggi's killing. While the US media maintained more Neutral tone than others and provided more editorialized coverage to the issue. So, this is quite clear that our assumptions about significant differences among the framing patterns and overall coverage is proved by the results of this study.

Conclusion

Media played a very critical role during the Khashoggi crisis that needed to be analyzed properly. In this regard sampled newspapers were selected from the countries those were the most relevant to this issue in a way that; Khashoggi was a Saudi national and based in USA, whereas murdered in Turkey. The study revealed that while Turkey and United States were trying to utilize Khashoggi issue as a bargaining opportunity, the Saudis at the same time were struggling to find an escape from the crisis that was created by their own. Media from the respective nations apparently became party on this matter; as a result, the intensity and framing tones of news related to Jamal Khashoggi's murder were noted different significantly in cross-national media coverage. Saudi and Turkish media clearly took the line of respective country's political stance on the issue, whereas US

media followed relatively an independent streak which is the reflection of a liberal democratic system in United States. The findings of the study show that the media generally support the national narrative on a particular international issue. However, in USA case the circumstances are slightly different as compared to Turkey or Saudi Arabia. The USA being a liberal democratic society witnessed multifaceted response on Khashoggi issue. The Trump administration supported the Saudi regime during the crisis by declaring it an important strategic and business ally while the US Congress, civil society and media on the other hand opposed the government's stance and demanded sanctions and other strict actions against the Kingdom. The coverage intensity and framing about the Khashoggi's murder in the Washington Post have shown the same patterns, so it was rightly presumed and has been witnessed that the US media though didn't support the government's stance but followed the national narrative which was based on society's overall diversified response. While analyzing its results and findings it is concluded that the study in hands revealed and supported the notion that media despite all proclaimed objectivity not only slant the public opinion in their coverage un-intently but use frames under specific agendas accordingly either to protect certain interests or malign some others

Recommendations

As this study proved the assumed hypothesis regarding the magnified tilt in news coverage in accordance with the political motives, it is strongly recommended that though the biasness can never be avoided completely yet the objectivity in media coverage should not be compromised with such an extent.

The study acknowledges the important role of media in conflicting situations, it is therefore suggested that media should not become a party in any politically motivated conflict as it is against the journalistic ethics.

Framing is not always intentional; some time journalists with certain background information in their minds slant an issue knowingly or unknowingly. To understand this phenomenon, there should be proper trainings and awareness programs for media persons to promote responsible journalism.

The study shows that a single issue had rattled many states and jeopardized the regional alliances; the modern world is very sensitive about freedom of expression and human rights issues. In this regard, countries like Pakistan need to respond more responsibly while dealing with media to avoid any bad fame in international community.

Free and responsible media are considered as strength for a democratic system, press freedom should be protected and measures to promote free and responsible media must be encouraged by governments as well as media organizations and journalists.

Governments are suggested to take this study into consideration while devising or reforming their media policy and avoid curtailing freedoms.

It is suggested to conduct research on the coverage of Jamal Khashoggi murder in the leading news channels of the world.

A critical discourse analysis of leading newspapers of the globe is also recommended for the future research.

A study to explore intermedia agenda between social and conventional media on Jamal's murder can be an interesting area to work on.

Bibliography

Abrahams, Alexei, and Andrew Leber. 2020. "Framing a Murder: Twitter Influencers and the Jamal Khashoggi Incident." *Mediterranean Politics* 26, no. 02 1–13. Accessed April 1, 2021. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13629395.2019.1697089.

Aljazeera. 2019. "Jamal Khashoggi Case: All the Latest Updates." *Aljazeera.com*. Aljazeera,

BBC.com. 2018. "Jamal Khashoggi: All You Need to Know about Saudi Journalist's Death." ,. *BBC.com*. BBC.. Accessed December 12, 2021. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-45963642.

Beiser, Elana. 2018. *Hundreds of Journalists Jailed Globally Becomes the New Normal*. The New York Times.

Bouoiyour, Jamal, and Refk Selmi. 2022. "The Gruesome Murder of Jamal Khashoggi : Saudi Arabia's New Economy Dream at Risk ?"Accessed May 5, 2022. https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/search/index/q/*/authIdHal_s/jamal-bouoiyour.

CNN. "Jamal Khashoggi Fast Facts.2022." *Edition.cnn.com*. CNN, May 2, 2022.. Accessed June 6, 2022. https://edition.cnn.com/2019/01/10/middleeast/jamal-khashoggi-fast-facts/index.html.

Dunham, Jennifer. December 22, 2020.*Murders of Journalists More than Double Worldwide*. New York: Committee to Protect Journalists

Jamal Khashoggi Case: All the Latest Updates. 2019. *Www.aljazeera.com*. Last modified. Accessed July 7, 2022. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/2/12/jamal-khashoggi-case-all-the-latest-updates.

Klaus Krippendorff, and Mary Angela Bock.2009. *The Content Analysis Reader*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications

Lowen, Mark. 2018. "Jamal Khashoggi Murder: What Is Turkey's Game with Saudi Arabia?" *BBC NEWS*.

Milanovic, Marko. 2019. "The Murder of Jamal Khashoggi: Immunities, Inviolability and the Human Right to Life." *SSRN Electronic Journal*.

Specia, Megan.2018. "Why Jamal Khashoggi's Killing Has Resonated." *The New York Times*, sec. World. Accessed July 7, 2022. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/24/world/middleeast/jamal-khashoggi-killing.html.

Ratliff, Evan. 2019. "The Story of Jamal Khashoggi's Murder and How the World Looked the Other Way." *INSIDER*

Ravale Mohydin, Tarek Cherkaoui, and Ravale Mohydin. 2019 "Murder in the Consulate: The Khashoggi Affair and the Turkish-Saudi War of Narratives." *The Political Economy of Communication* 07, no. 02 28–59. Accessed 2022. http://www.polecom.org/index.php/polecom/article/view/111/328.

Riaz, Saqib. 2008. "Agenda Setting Role of Mass Media." *Global Media Journal-Pakistan Edition* 01, no. 02 (2008).

Specia, Megan. October 25, 2018. "Why Jamal Khashoggi's Killing Has Resonated." *The New York Times*, sec. World. Accessed July 7, 2022. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/24/world/middleeast/jamal-khashoggi-killing.html.

Samir El-Falaky, May. 2019. "Murder in the Consulate: The Grammar of Transitivity in the Headlines of News Reports about Jamal Khashoggi." *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 10, no. 3.

Staff, Reuters. 2019. "Factbox: Who Are Saudis under Spotlight over Khashoggi's Killing?" *REUTERS*, Accessed July 14, 2021. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-khashoggi-suspects-factbox-idCAKBN1YR1BQ.

YAHYA, ISEP. 2019. "Media Framing and Framing by Politicians." *Journal of Government and Politics* 10, no. 1