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## Constructing Kashmir:

Geopolitical Alignments and the Battle of Narratives in  
International Media

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## ABSTRACT

*This dissertation critically investigates how international media narratives on the Kashmir conflict are shaped by geopolitical alignments, revealing ideological encodings and hegemonic interests embedded in ostensibly neutral reporting. Positioned at the intersection of media studies and international relations, it addresses a scholarly gap by comparing coverage from news outlets in nations aligned with India (United States, United Kingdom, Israel) and those aligned with Pakistan (Qatar, Türkiye, China). Grounded in Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model, Antonio Gramsci's hegemony, and Edward Said's Orientalism, it examines how media reinforce or challenge power structures in framing the Kashmir dispute. The primary research question explores how geopolitically aligned media construct Kashmir narratives and the extent to which these reflect ideological and hegemonic agendas. The study employs a two-phase qualitative methodology and analyses 180 English-language news articles from 18 major outlets in these countries spanning 2010–July 2025, covering key events like the 2010 civilian protests, 2016 Burhan Wani killing, 2019 Article 370 revocation, and 2025 Pahalgam attack. Phase 1 uses content analysis to identify dominant frames, tones, and sources. Phase 2 applies Fairclough's critical discourse analysis to unpack textual, discursive, and socio-political dimensions. Findings reveal stark narrative divides. India-aligned media frame Kashmir as a terrorism/security issue, using terms like 'terrorists,' and citing state-centric sources, encoding hegemonic counter-insurgency narratives with Orientalist undertones, with many instances of neutrality. Pakistan-aligned media emphasise human rights, portraying Kashmiris as victims of 'oppression,' advancing counter-hegemonic discourses. These patterns reflect geopolitical biases, occasionally moderated for credibility. The study contributes to understanding media's role in perpetuating conflict through narrative control, advocating for critical media literacy and balanced reporting to foster empathetic, nuanced global perceptions of Kashmir, with implications for conflict resolution.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Kashmir conflict is one of the world's longest running and most contentious geopolitical disputes. Since 1947, India and Pakistan have been fighting for control over the region, fighting multiple wars, leading to almost a three-decades long insurgency (Bose, 2003). Besides being

geopolitically significant, Kashmir has been described as a South Asian battle of narratives and ideologies that have claimed tens of thousands of lives so far. Competing stakeholders have presented different stories about Kashmir's political status, nature of unrest, the will of the people, and the justifications for state actions. In this context, media representation becomes of paramount significance. How Kashmir and Kashmiris are being portrayed in news media can shape public opinion and influence international perceptions. These considerations have inspired this research interest which is to understand the role of media narratives in Kashmir conflict and how they may reinforce or challenge the existing power structures.

Media and communication scholars have long argued that news actively shapes audience perceptions by framing reality, rather than mirroring it (Goffman, 1974; Entman, 1993). Framing involves selecting certain aspects of an issue and making them salient in a news story to promote particular interpretations or solutions (Entman, 1993). In conflict situations, this means that news organisations might emphasise certain narratives, while marginalising others, eventually influencing how public evaluates responsibility and what solutions seem acceptable to them. Thussu and Freedman (2003) observe that news coverage of wars mostly centre around government narratives, ignoring alternatives. Such patterns raise critical questions in the context of Kashmir. Existing studies of the region's media coverage indicate that, historically, journalism on this geopolitical dispute has often amplified partisan frames. For instance, Sreedharan's (2009) analysis of Indian and Pakistani press coverage of insurgency in valley found that it worked to exacerbate the conflict rather than promoting peace, as outlets on both sides reinforce their government's positions. Yet, to date there is limited scholarly analysis of how international news organisations have covered Kashmir dispute.

This dissertation critically examines how global geopolitical relationships influence the coverage of the region in international media. In particular, it compares two sets of influential countries whose stances on Kashmir tend to align with opposing sides of the conflict. On one side are nations like the United States, the United Kingdom, and Israel, states that, especially in recent years, have maintained stronger strategic partnerships with India. On the other side are countries such as Qatar, Türkiye, and China, which have voiced support for Pakistan's viewpoint on Kashmir. Each of these groups tend to highlight certain facts while downplaying

others. These contrasting emphases raise an intriguing question: how can the same conflict be narrated in such different ways to the world?

This question is not just academic for me. It is deeply personal. I am a Kashmiri, and I have been a witness to the very realities that are so often debated on television screens and in newspaper columns abroad. I have lived through the communication blackouts, heard gunfire shots, and seen the resilience of ordinary people striving for dignity amid turmoil. However, when I consume international news about Kashmir, I sometimes feel I am reading about a place unrecognisable from my own lived experience. The stark disparity between what I have witnessed and what is being reported in various corners of the world compelled me to ask why are there so many Kashmiris in the global media, the 'Kashmir' of Indian-aligned narratives, the 'Kashmir' of Pakistan-aligned narratives, and where in all this is the Kashmir I know? These personal observations inspired a scholarly inquiry into the power structures and biases that underlie international reporting on this conflict.

Broadly, this study positions itself at the intersection of media studies and international relations, employing concepts of framing and critical discourse to examine how news is conditioned by national agendas. It contributes to the broader understanding of the geopolitics of media narratives. While existing scholarship has extensively analysed the Kashmir conflict and the propaganda exchanges between India and Pakistan, limited attention has been given to how third-party countries, particularly allies of either side, construct their coverage. By decoding these patterns, the dissertation demonstrates how global power alignments can subtly, and at times overtly, shape the narrative of political conflict.

### **Historical Background**

Since the British withdrawal from South Asia and the partition of the subcontinent in 1947, Jammu and Kashmir has remained a contentious region between India and Pakistan. Kashmir, a Muslim majority region under the Hindu ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh, was a Princely state. This created a highly sensitive situation as Singh's indecision on whether to accede to either dominion or remain independent led to significant consequences. According to Hussain, (1995), on October 22, 1947, Kashmir was invaded by tribesmen from the tribal areas of NWFP of Pakistan. On October 24, Maharaja approached India for help and eventually, on October

26, 1947, Instrument of Accession was signed, and Kashmir became a part of India. Lamb (1991) argues that this accession was procedurally questionable, suggesting that Singh's decisions were made under duress and that the Instrument of Accession might not have been signed on the date claimed. As Indian troops were deployed in Srinagar, the capital, first Indo-Pak war broke out (1947-1948) after which India took the issue to the UNSC. The UN resolution proposed ceasefire, withdrawal of troops and a plebiscite on January 5, 1949 (Sil, 2009). However, this promise was never fulfilled. Instead, the two countries signed the Karachi Agreement, brokered by the UNCIP and established a ceasefire line along the border. A part of Kashmir stayed under Pakistan's control and a part under India's (Sil, 2009). The nations fought three more wars in 1965, 1971, and 1999.

In the late 1980s, widespread dissatisfaction with governance and the allegedly rigged 1987 elections triggered an insurgency demanding either independence or union with Pakistan. By the 1990s, militants were fighting the Indian army under AFSPA, which allows warrantless searches, arrests, and even shooting on suspicion (Khan & Dar, 2017). These were among the bloodiest years, with hundreds of thousands of Kashmiris and hundreds of security personnel killed. Media access was tightly restricted, and most foreign coverage reflected India's counter-insurgency frame. The 21st century brought periods of calm but not lasting peace. A 2003 ceasefire between India and Pakistan failed to end unrest (Jacob, 2019).

In 2010, protests erupted after security forces killed several youths, widely described as the 'Kashmiri Intifada' (Sajjad & Hafeez, 2010). Larger demonstrations followed the 2016 killing of Burhan Wani, a militant icon, which left about 100 civilians dead and thousands injured (Anand & Kumar, 2016). International media covered Wani's death and the crackdowns by citing officials but also amplifying youth voices and human rights activists, with some reports stressing political grievances and India's heavy use of force. The most dramatic shift came in August 2019, when India revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status under Article 370 and imposed the world's longest communications blockade in a democracy (Masih *et al.*, 2019). Since then, global attention has grown. The recent April 2025 Pahalgam attack on tourists and subsequent India-Pakistan clashes brought the two states close to nuclear confrontation, further raising Kashmir's international profile.

# THEORETICAL CHAPTER

## Literature Review

### **Polarised Narratives and the Marginalisation of Kashmiri Voices**

The Kashmir conflict has generated contrasting media narratives. In domestic Indian and Pakistani press, the coverage is intensely polarised. Indian media labels Kashmiri militants as 'terrorists,' while Pakistani outlets depict them as 'valiant,' reflecting each country's stance on Kashmir issue (Bustamante, 2016). This polarisation has often relegated Kashmiri voices to the background, with both the states propelling their own propaganda over the aspirations of people of Jammu and Kashmir. As compared to local bias, international media might be expected to provide more balanced or 'neutral' reporting. However, a critical review of literature reveals that global coverage of Kashmir too is shaped by vested interests, influenced with ideological encodings and geopolitical leanings.

Numerous studies of international conflict coverage show that media organisations tend to portray their allies and adversaries in different light, often based on their own government's narrative (Mohyidin, 2021). For example, Western mainstream coverage of Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been widely criticised for bias favouring the Israeli narrative, while marginalising Palestinian perspectives. This bias is rooted in Orientalist and Imperialist attitudes, 'serving the interests of Western ruling political and economic elites' (Daher, 2024, para.1). Communication scholars Herman and Chomsky (1994) theorised this phenomenon as the 'propaganda model,' and state that media, influenced by elite interests, amplify 'worthy' victims' suffering with extensive, emotive coverage, while marginalising 'unworthy' victims, whose plight is ignored (as cited in Bazzi, 2021). This dynamic leads to double standards in international news where similar acts are labelled differently and give different emphasis based on who the perpetrators are. The terminology and framing shift to mirror Western strategic interest, highlighting Hall's (1980) observation that media encode dominant ideologies into their narratives. Indeed, research confirms that U.S. news outlets index their coverage to be in line with the official policy on international issues and rather than critically challenging government stance, they tend to adopt them, especially in times of crisis or conflict

(Mohyidin, 2021). While these studies effectively explain how media perpetuate power imbalances, they start debates on whether such biases are intentional or structurally embedded, highlighting the need for in-depth, contextual analyses that my research aims to provide.

### **Geopolitics and Divergent International Media Narratives**

Contrasting perspectives do emerge, however, from alternative or non-Western media. For example, Al Jazeera English, a Qatari news organisation, has been offering counter-narratives from war zones in the Middle East, emphasising civilian casualties and Arab perspectives that Western channels downplayed (Firdous, 2009). Such divergence indicates that media from different geopolitical contexts will construct conflicts differently. While some reinforce the status quo, others challenge it. In essence, news narratives are a battleground of ideologies. Western outlets, due to greater reach, may portray their reportage as the 'global narratives,' a form of media imperialism; however, emerging global south media have started to challenge this monopoly.

This broader literature on international media highlights one main point and that is: geopolitical alignment is a stronger predictor of how a conflict is framed in the news. Media often mirror their home country's diplomatic friendships and enmities in their stories. This sets the stage for examining the Kashmir dispute, through a comparative international media lens. The question that then arises is how have different international news organisations, embedded in distinct political contexts, constructed the Kashmir conflict narrative?

### **Existing Scholarship and Gaps in Global Coverage of Kashmir**

The Kashmir issue has often been referred to as a 'forgotten conflict' in world news, yet it does make international headlines time and again. A number of scholars have analysed media representations of Kashmir. However, much of the literature has focused on domestic Indian and Pakistani press. These studies show stark contrast between the two nations' reportage. Indian national media typically adopt a nationalist frame portraying Kashmir's unrest as Pakistan-sponsored 'terrorism' and emphasising territorial integrity.

On the other hand, Pakistani media blames India for denying Kashmiris fundamental rights (Kaul & Saxena, 2022; Shahzad *et al.*, 2021). Further, Rawan and Rahman (2020) conducted a comparative analysis of elite newspapers in both countries, revealing that these outlets selectively report facts to support their respective national narratives.

While informative, such studies examine inherently partisan domestic narratives. They do not address how ostensibly 'neutral' international media, those that are not direct stakeholders in the conflict, cover Kashmir. It is the latter that this paper targets, to see if foreign news organisations also carry ideological biases. Only a limited number of studies have scrutinised Kashmir's portrayal in global press, and their findings consistently reveal some influence of geopolitical alignment.

An early and frequently cited work by Ray (2004) examined U.S. print media coverage of Kashmir conflict from 1989-2003. Ray's content analysis of U.S. elite newspapers (The New York Times, The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times) reveal shifting coverage of the Kashmir conflict. Initially, the insurgency was framed as a violent separatist movement within India, with Kashmiri actors labelled 'armed militants' and India criticised for suppressing rebellion. Post-1999, amid India-Pakistan tensions, the narrative shifted to portray Kashmir as a nuclear flashpoint in their rivalry, with India as a legitimate state combating Pakistan-backed 'Islamic fighters.' Coverage consistently favoured official sources (Indian, Pakistani, U.S.) over Kashmiri voices and framed the conflict in reductive Hindu-Muslim terms, echoing Orientalist tropes. This aligns with Hall's (1980) concept of media encoding dominant ideologies, reflecting U.S. foreign policy interests by prioritising state narratives and casting the conflict as a global terrorism issue post-9/11.

More recent analyses suggest that Western media narratives on Kashmir emphasise security and human rights but may change constantly in line with geopolitics. After India's controversial abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, global media attention increased dramatically. Suleman *et al.* (2022) conducted a content analysis of how The New York Times (US), and The Guardian (UK) framed Kashmir following the revocation. From August 5, 2019, to August 5, 2020, The New York Times and The Guardian published 113 news stories (54 and 59, respectively) and 17 editorials (8 and 9, respectively) on the Kashmir lockdown and

political fallout, with 13 and 11 front-page stories highlighting its significance, respectively. Coverage focused on eight frames: Human Rights, Pakistan-India, Law and Order, Democracy, Historical, Legal, Nation-State, and Other. Both critiqued India's clampdown, focusing on civilian hardships, detentions, and communication blackouts, especially in Human Rights and Democracy frames, while staying neutral on Kashmir's political status. The Guardian emphasised human rights slightly more; The New York Times balanced it with geopolitical angles. Editorials supported Kashmiri rights without endorsing secession or militancy. Coverage peaked early but waned, limiting sustained diplomatic pressure, reflecting Western media's ideological balance between human rights advocacy and neutrality. Furthermore, Malik (2020) studied Chinese media coverage of Kashmir. China is a strategic ally of Pakistan and claims part of Kashmir region under Indian control. The study found that Chinese English newspapers, Global Times and China Daily, framed the conflict in alignment with Beijing's foreign policy interests, emphasising Pakistan's stance while portraying India's action of revocation of Article 370 as unilateral and destabilising. Both newspapers predominantly focused on Chinese and Pakistani narratives.

Almost all studies invoke framing theory as a lens to analyse how news media define the Kashmir issue. Framing is understood as selecting certain aspects of reality and focusing on them to promote a particular interpretation (Kaul & Saxena, 2022). Further, a significant theoretical debate in this literature is whether media adopt a peace journalism approach (emphasising conflict resolution, people's voices, and context) or a war journalism approach (emphasising violence, propaganda, and zero-sum narratives). Several studies use Galtung's (1986) peace/war journalism model to evaluate Kashmir issue. For example, Siraj (2008) found that the American press favoured war journalism over peace journalism in covering the 2001–2002 Pakistan-India Kashmir conflict, using Galtung's model to highlight conflict and demonising language while framing Pakistan as a foe and India as a friend. These works contribute theoretically by showing how media discourse aligns with or challenges power extending beyond frame frequency counts to the qualitative rhetoric that shapes public understanding.

Although existing studies provide useful insights, the literature on international media coverage of Kashmir remains fragmented and limited. Most research looks at a single outlet or compares only two countries' media, usually focusing on specific events rather than longterm developments. As a result, there is no comprehensive comparative study that examines how multiple international media outlets from different geopolitical blocs construct narratives on the Kashmir conflict. A further limitation is the lack of critical theoretical engagement. Few studies apply Hall's encoding/decoding model, Gramsci's notion of hegemony, or Said's Orientalism to explain why coverage diverges and what this reveals about global power relations. Much of the literature relies instead on content or framing analysis, which identifies differences in coverage but rarely examines ideology, hegemonic interests, or the political consequences of seemingly 'neutral' reportage. This dissertation seeks to address these gaps.

### **Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Approach**

Building on the literature and gaps identified, this study is grounded in a critical theoretical framework that integrates Hall's encoding/decoding model, Gramsci's theory of hegemony, and Said's Orientalism. This framework will inform both the analysis and interpretation of the data, ensuring that the research question is approached with proper examination of power and ideology in media texts.

This paper adopts Stuart Hall's insight that media messages are not neutral but are encoded by producers with preferred meanings (Ross, 2011). In global news, journalists and editors, constrained by cultural contexts and organisational pressures, encode reports of the Kashmir conflict with particular emphases and frameworks. Hall's (1980) model acknowledges that audiences may decode in different ways, yet the 'preferred reading' often reflects the dominant ideology of the producing society. In this study, the concept becomes a working hypothesis: international news organisations encode Kashmir in line with their home country's diplomatic stance, whether pro-India, pro-Pakistan, or otherwise. By identifying recurring frames and linguistic choices, the encoded preferred meaning can be inferred. For example, describing militants as 'terrorists' rather than 'fighters' is a deliberate choice, steering readers toward a specific interpretation. Hall's

framework thus directs attention to cues such as word choice, source selection, and contextual framing that shape how the conflict is intended to be understood.

Hall's ideas also align with Gramsci's notion of hegemonic ideology, which explains why certain encodings dominate. Gramsci (1971) argued that the ruling class achieves dominance when its worldview saturates culture and becomes accepted as common sense. In international news, this can be seen in how global powers universalise their perspectives on conflicts. This paper applies Gramsci's theory at two levels. First, within each country's media, Kashmir coverage may reflect national hegemonic 'common sense' (for instance, U.S. media through a War-on-Terror lens, or Chinese media through a stability discourse). Such narratives legitimise political positions, whether India's territorial integrity or Pakistan's grievance, as sensible and necessary. Second, on a global scale, hegemonic narratives may transcend national contexts. Since the early 2000s, Kashmir has often been framed as a 'security problem,' 'terrorism' and 'nuclear risk,' while marginalising indigenous political struggle. This approach also considers counter-hegemony. Media from some non-Western states may resist dominant narratives, framing Kashmir instead as an anti-colonial movement deserving international solidarity. Gramsci's lens highlights these ideological struggles and asks which narratives gain global dominance and which are subordinated.

Said's (1978) concept of Orientalism provides a further critical perspective. Kashmir, with its Muslim-majority population under a Hindu-majority but secular state, is frequently reported by Western, non-Muslim media. In such reporting, Orientalist binaries may appear: 'civilised' versus 'uncivilised,' or 'modern state' versus 'unruly rebels.' Post-9/11 Islamophobia also shapes discourse, with Islamic movements often equated with extremism. This raises the question of whether reports on Kashmir 'otherise' Muslim Kashmiris or reduce their political demands to terrorism. Said's framework helps uncover these latent colonial attitudes in seemingly neutral accounts. At the same time, media from Muslim majority countries may display reverse Orientalism or pan-Islamic solidarity, romanticising Kashmiri resistance or demonising India. This study therefore

acknowledges both biases, recognising that Orientalism applies most directly to Western discourse, but analogous ideological filters can shape reporting in any context.

### **Research Questions and Objectives**

This study sets out to investigate the role of geopolitics in international media coverage of Kashmir conflict. The research question can be stated as follows:

*RQ: How do international media outlets from different geopolitically aligned countries construct narratives about the Kashmir conflict, and what does this reveal about ideology and global power dynamics?*

The primary objective of this research is to question the neutrality of international media reporting on Kashmir by uncovering the ideological and hegemonic subtexts in their narratives. Using content analysis and critical discourse analysis, the study identifies the frames and representations used by selected outlets and interprets them through the theoretical lenses discussed. In this way, it provides a systematic, theory-informed comparison across several international contexts, which has not previously been done for the Kashmir conflict.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This study employs a qualitative two-phase research design that combines content analysis and critical discourse analysis to investigate international media narratives on Kashmir conflict. In phase 1, a systematic qualitative content analysis is used to identify dominant frames, keywords, and source patterns across a broad sample of news articles. In phase 2, a CDA is applied to a subset of these texts to unpack the ideological meanings and power dynamics embedded in the language.

### **Research Strategy and Rationale**

This study adopts a multi-method qualitative design, reflecting the view that complex social phenomena like media discourse and conflict require a 'multi-methodical approach' (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, as cited in Maschinez, 2018). Content analysis was used first because it

provides a 'systematic, replicable' way to examine large text corpora (Stemler, 2000, p.1). Articles were coded for variables such as thematic frame, portrayal of Kashmiri actors, and quoted voices. This revealed dominant narratives and biases across outlets and countries. The second phase employed CDA to analyse deeper textual features such as rhetoric, metaphor, and context. CDA treats language as social practice and examines how discourse reproduces or resists power (van Dijk, 1998, as cited in Maschinez, 2018). The combination of content analysis and CDA is therefore justified by their complementary strengths.

For this study, several methodological options were considered. Audience reception studies, such as focus groups or surveys, were explored but ultimately set aside because they would have shifted the focus to Hall's 'decoding' side, while this research concentrates on how narratives are produced. Interviews with journalists or editors were also taken into account but rejected due to political sensitivities. More ambitious designs, including audience tracking or ethnographic newsroom studies, were also considered but found to be beyond the scope of this MSc project. In contrast, content analysis combined with CDA offered both the structure to identify patterns and the depth to interpret their meaning in a geopolitical context. Other methods were either impractical or did not directly address the research questions.

### **Strengths and Limitations of the Method**

Content analysis, through systematic coding, provides methodological rigour and allows patterns and trends in large data sets to be identified. Its transparency and replicability enhance the credibility of findings. A main limitation, however, is its reductionism. Complex texts may lose nuance when reduced to predefined categories (Columbia University Irving Medical Centre, n.d.). To address this, CDA is used to restore context and examine the ideologies and power structures embedded in discourse. CDA is itself criticised for researcher bias, as interpretations may be shaped by the researcher's perspective (Aydin-Düzgit & Rumelili, 2018). This study mitigates such risks by practicing reflexivity and grounding qualitative insights in the patterns first established through content analysis. The importance of media silence is one emerging insight from this methodological combination. The lack or minimal coverage of significant events in some foreign media outlets highlights differences in media attention and is an indicator of underlying editorial agendas or news values. Thus, even

challenges like uneven data distribution provide analytical value by revealing differing levels of media engagement.

### **Data Sampling and Selection of Media Texts**

This study examines English-language international news articles on the Kashmir conflict between 2010 and 2025, covering major events such as the 2010 civilian unrest, the 2016 killing of Burhan Wani, the 2019 abrogation of Article 370, and the 2025 Pahalgam attack. A random sampling strategy was applied to 18 major international news outlets to reduce bias and strengthen reliability. Although less common in qualitative research, random sampling was appropriate here to capture broader patterns in how Kashmir is framed by media aligned with different geopolitical blocs. Six countries were selected based on their geopolitical relations with either India (U.S., U.K., Israel): group 1, or Pakistan (Türkiye, China, Qatar): group 2. It is important to note that these countries do not openly side with India or Pakistan on Kashmir, but their broader geopolitical ties reveal alignments that place them into two blocs in this study. From each country, three prominent news organisations were chosen, yielding a total of 18. These include:

**U.S.:** The New York Times, The Washington Post, CNN

**U.K.:** BBC, The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph

**Israel:** Haaretz, The Jerusalem Post, The Times of Israel

**Türkiye:** TRT World (TRT Global), Anadolu Agency, Daily Sabah

**China:** Xinhua, China Daily, South China Morning Post

**Qatar:** Al Jazeera English, Gulf Times, The Peninsula

From each outlet, 10 news or feature articles were randomly selected through consistent keyword searches (e.g., 'Kashmir protest,' 'Burhan Wani,' 'Article 370,' 'Kashmir Militancy,' 'Kashmir Terrorism') in global databases such as LexisNexis and in each outlet's archive, resulting in a total of 180 write-ups. Opinion pieces were excluded to focus on narratives presented as factual reporting, since they typically do not reflect institutional stances. This

ensured that more subtle editorial positions embedded within news coverage were captured. Articles were further chosen to represent critical geopolitical moments, providing coverage of different stages of the conflict. For the CDA, two articles per outlet were purposively selected from the corpus of 180, based on features such as emotional language, portrayal of key actors, and evident linguistic bias.

### **Dealing with Limited or Inaccessible Data**

An important challenge emerged in sampling. Some organisations had very sparse archives on Kashmir or presented access difficulties. For instance, TRT World (Türkiye) was known for its extensive reporting on Kashmir. However, when attempting to access previous articles, it was discovered that TRT's pre-2024 archives became inaccessible due to a platform migration from 'TRT World' to 'TRT Global,' confirmed through personal communication with a TRT journalist. As a result, 10 randomly selected recent articles were used. Further, paywalls at The New York Times, The Washington Post, and Haaretz required subscriptions, while some archives such as Times of Israel, lacked proper search tools, requiring manual retrieval. In a few cases, shorter, less typical or wire reports were included to meet quotas because substantive staff-written articles were insufficient. This was transparently documented in the coding sheet.

### **Design of Research Tools and Analytical Procedures**

#### **Coding Frame Development (Content Analysis)**

The coding frame was developed to systematically capture the aspects of each article relevant to the research question. A combination of deductive and inductive approach was used. Deductively, the framework drew on established literature on media framing, Orientalism, and conflict journalism. The final coding frame focused on key dimensions of media narratives, beginning with the 'Main Frame,' and any secondary frame that reinforced or complemented the dominant frame. Each article's 'Headline Focus' was summarised to identify its central issue. Further, tone towards key actors, India, Pakistan, and Kashmir, was assessed on a three-scale point (Positive, Neutral, Negative). The coding also examined 'Actor Labelling,' noting whether Kashmiris were referred to using delegitimising terms like

'terrorists' or more neutral terms like 'militants.' The coding sheet also distinguished between 'Protest vs. Violence' framing, only in case of articles that mentioned demonstrations and checked for the use of 'emotionally charged language.' Moreover, source attribution section classified quoted voices and further recorded whether Kashmiri voices were directly included. The frame also included codes for loaded language, checking references to human rights abuses or state repression, and notes whether the article referenced Islam or religious identity (Y/N), foreign involvement (Y/N), or used visual framing (e.g. emotionally charged images). Another key variable, 'Representation of Violence,' captured whether violence was framed as state-led or non-state-led, or both. The article's overall framing was categorised as 'sympathetic,' 'critical,' 'balanced,' or 'pro-state' (pro-India), while geopolitical angle assessed whether the outlet's coverage leaned pro-Pakistan, pro-India, or neutral. Furthermore, open-ended fields for notes and article links allowed qualitative observations and ensured traceability. Inductively, the coding frame was revised after pilot testing 10 articles selected from different geopolitical groups (*See Appendix B*). This led to several changes. For example, addition of more categories to better understand the context. Further, existing categories were clarified with examples to ensure consistency.

### **Content Analysis Procedure**

A total of 180 articles were manually coded in this study using the framework described above. Each article was the unit of analysis, while certain variables could have multiple values per article. Coding was managed using spreadsheets. To ensure reliability, a second coder independently coded a random sheet of 36 articles (20%) (only key variables from the final coding sheet were analysed). Inter-coder reliability (Cohen's Kappa) across key categorial variables ranged from 0.69 to 1.0, with an average above 0.88 (*See Appendix C*), indicating substantially strong agreement and coding consistency (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020). Following coding, the data was aggregated to identity frame frequency by outlet and country. Given the sample size, emphasis was placed on meaningful proportional differences and notable patterns. These quantitative findings then informed the selection of texts for phase 2 CDA.

### **Selection of Text for CDA**

As mentioned in sections above, from the coded dataset, 2 feature articles per outlet were selected for CDA. These articles were chosen to represent dominant or particular ideological frames found in the content analysis. Some were selected for contrast, especially when they deviated from national diplomatic stance. The aim was to capture a spread across security-based, human- rights-based, and geopolitically oriented narratives, ensuring representation from both geopolitical groups.

### **CDA Procedure**

The selected articles were analysed using Fairclough's (1989) three-dimensional model of CDA, which examines discourse through three interconnected levels: text, discursive practice, and social practice. This framework provided a structured yet critical lens to explore the research question. At the textual level, the analysis focused on vocabulary, transitivity, modality, and lexical choices; particularly how Kashmiris and state actors were described. It also assessed rhetorical strategies and framing patterns. At the discursive practice level, the study examined how articles were constructed and whose voices were prioritised. Some attribution and intertextuality were analysed to understand which perspectives were legitimised or silenced. Finally, at the social practice level, each article was interpreted in its geopolitical and institutional context. Media outlet's national affiliations were considered in relation to how narratives aligned with or resisted dominant ideologies. This revealed how media discoursed reinforced or challenged broader power structures in the representation of the Kashmir conflict.

### **Ethical Considerations**

This study involved no human participants and relied solely on publicly available media texts, minimising traditional ethical risks. Nonetheless, university ethical approval was secured, all sources were cited accurately and responsibly. Further, sensitive content such as coverage of violence and propaganda was handled with academic neutrality and care. Additionally, confidential input from a TRT contact was anonymised to protect privacy. As a Kashmiri researcher engaging with deeply political and personal topic, I remained acutely aware of my background and biases, which could shape my interpretations. To manage this, I maintained

a reflexive journal, actively questioning my assumptions, and sought disconfirming evidences, especially during coding and CDA. I tried my best to not let personal views override the data, instead grounding all the claims in clear evidence. This reflexive approach, along with careful attention to ethics, helped ensure the research was carried out responsibly and fairly, resulting in a more reliable and credible study.

## **RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **Content Analysis**

#### **Dominant Frames and Themes**

The content analysis of 180 articles show a clear divide in how media from the two geopolitical blocs frame the Kashmir conflict. A difference lies in the primary frames used. Media in countries aligned with India relied heavily on a 'Terrorism/Militancy/Security' frame, depicting the conflict through militancy and counter-insurgency. Around 77% of UK articles and 63% of US articles focused on terrorism or security, mainly reporting militant attacks, clashes, and threats to stability. Israeli outlets showed a similar pattern, with about 60% of coverage using this frame. Headlines in this bloc typically highlighted violence by non-state actors, such as 'Militants Strike in Kashmir as Elections Approach' or 'Terrorists Spray Bullets into Crowd of Tourists in Kashmir.' Some articles did acknowledge human rights concerns, but overall, security dominated. About 11% explicitly used the word 'terrorist' for Kashmiri rebels, while two-thirds referred to them as 'militants,' firmly situating Kashmir in the global terrorism discourse. By contrast, media aligned with Pakistan leaned toward humanitarian and political frames. Outlets from Türkiye and Qatar often portrayed Kashmir as a human rights issue or a political struggle. About 40% of Turkish coverage used a 'Human Rights' frame, emphasising daily hardships, civil liberties, and life in a conflict zone, while roughly 30% of Qatari articles addressed similar themes. Headlines frequently reflected Kashmiri grievances. For example, Turkish outlets ran stories such as 'Indian Officer Kills 3 Unarmed Civilians in Kashmir to Claim Cash Reward' and 'India Restricts Laylat al Qadr Prayers at Kashmir's Largest Mosque,' explicitly attributing responsibility to Indian authorities.

Interestingly, none of the outlets in this bloc used the term ‘terrorist’ for armed rebels. Instead, they used alternatives such as ‘rebels,’ ‘militants,’ or ‘opposition commander.’

It is important to note that while terrorism vs. human rights framing is clear, it is not absolute. Chinese state media, though pro-Pakistan, emphasises strategic and geopolitical frames over human rights. Nearly 57% of these articles focused on security, geopolitical or diplomatic conflict, such as India-Pak border tensions, while only 10% invoked human rights. On the other hand, around 33% of U.S. and U.K. articles employed human rights or civil liberties frames. Outlets like The New York Times and The Guardian reported on issues like communication blackouts, pellet gun injuries, and media suppression, offering occasional critiques of India and aligning with more sympathetic views of Kashmir. None of Israeli articles used the ‘Human Rights’ frame.

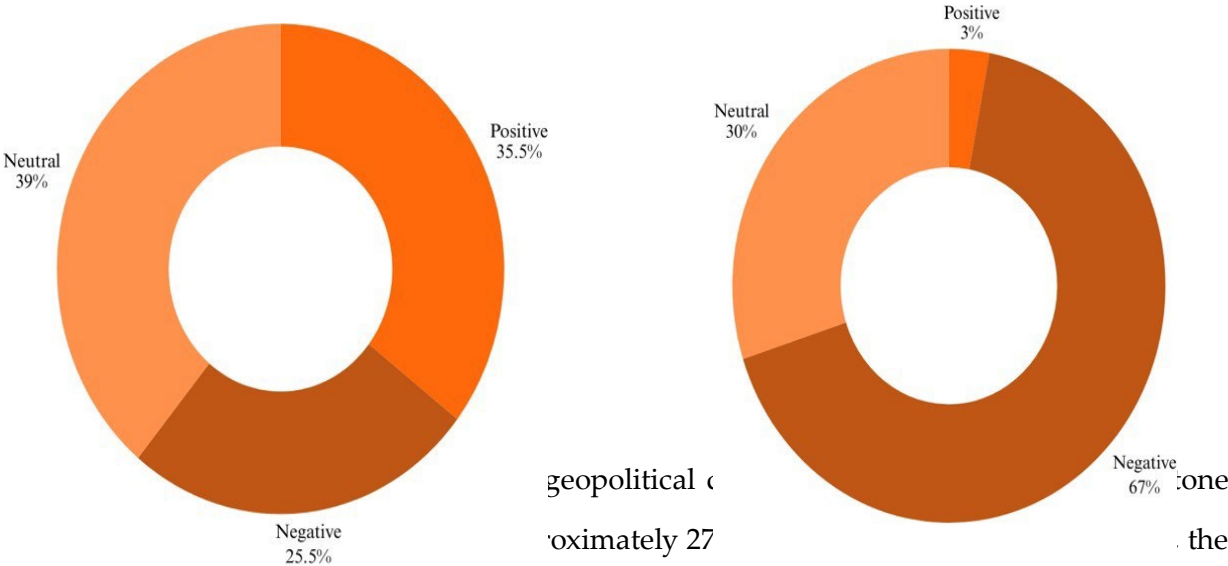
There were differences in diplomatic and political framing as well. Approximately 23% of Chinese articles and 20% of Turkish articles placed Kashmir in the context of world politics, referring to Pakistan’s diplomatic outreach, UN resolutions, and the revocation of Article 370. In order to present Kashmir as a challenge to international norms, Turkish media regularly cited organisations such as the UN or OIC. Chinese media, representing a geopolitical bloc viewpoint, connected Kashmir to larger Sino-Indian tensions. A more domestic or counterterrorism-focused narrative is suggested by the fact that only 9% of U.S., U.K., and Israeli coverage concentrated on international diplomacy, with most of the coverage focussing on internal events and localised violence.

### **Tone Toward India, Pakistan, and Kashmiris**

Approximately 67% of articles from China, Qatar, and Türkiye used negative tone for India, while only 3.3% were positive. On the other hand, only 25.5% of articles written by Americans, British, and Israelis were critical of India. Almost 35.5% of them presented India in a favourable light and justified its actions as counterterrorism measures (*See Figure 1*). Indian counterinsurgency efforts were particularly lauded by Israeli media. The UK saw more conflicting coverage, with The Telegraph repeating security narratives and The Guardian taking a critical stance. In fact, the pro-India aligned outlets were more likely to be neutral or

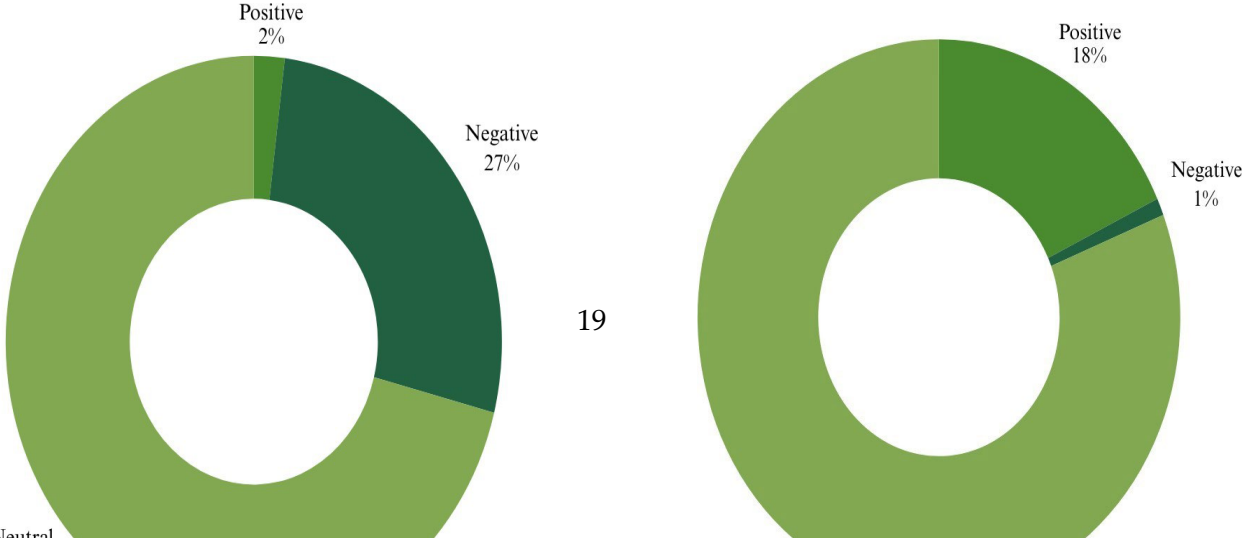
even positive about India's role. The dominant ideological position of each bloc is reflected in these patterns, which Gramsci might frame as media that reproduces hegemonic views.

**Figure 1: Tone towards the Indian State in both the groups**



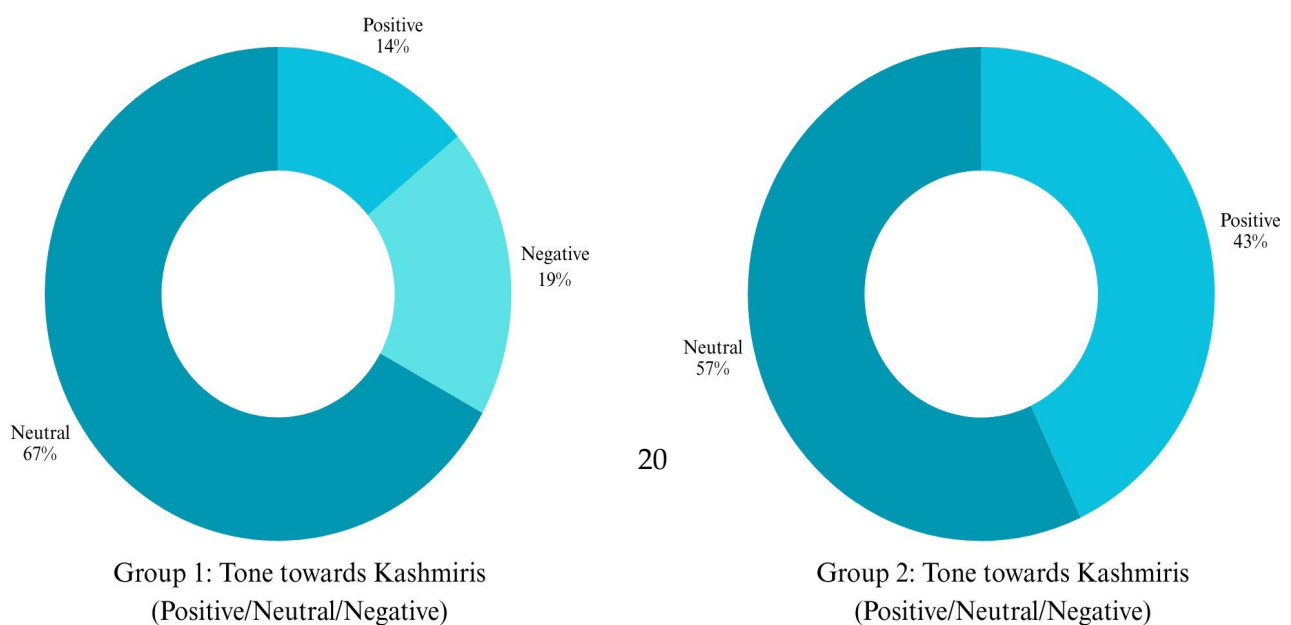
Group 1: Tone towards Indian State (Positive/Neutral/Negative) approximately 27% were positive, depicting the geopolitical context, associating it with terrorism (e.g., 'Pakistan-backed militants') and only 2% were positive. Israeli media were especially antagonistic, with many reiterating India's perception of Pakistan as a state sponsor of terrorism and none presenting Pakistan in a favourable light. In contrast, only one of the 90 articles from China, Qatar, and Türkiye made a mildly critical reference to Pakistan, and almost none of them were strongly critical of it. While about 18% were overtly positive, highlighting Pakistan's diplomacy or support for Kashmiris, the majority were neutral, reporting statements without passing judgement. Pakistan was mentioned positively in only 2% of Western and Israeli articles.

**Figure 2: Tone towards the Pakistani State in both the groups**



The representations of Kashmiris, whether they were militants, protesters, or civilians, showed a significant difference (See Figure 3). The tone of the Turkish, Qatari, and Chinese media was consistently sympathetic, with almost 43% of their articles portraying Kashmiris in a positive light and none of those categorised them as negative. Rest all were neutral. These media presented Kashmiris as oppressed people, facing human rights violation. By using personal accounts and emotive language, Turkish media regularly humanised civilians. Chinese and Qatari media similarly concentrated on Kashmiri grievances, though China's coverage was less extensive. However, the U.S., U.K., and Israeli media were significantly less empathetic. Only 14% of articles expressed a positive sentiment, 67% were neutral, and 19% were explicitly negative, frequently portraying protesters or militants as violent extremists. Often using phrases like 'angry mob' or 'terrorists,' these articles even questioned the intentions of the larger Kashmiri community, claiming that they were swayed by Pakistani propaganda or jihadist ideology. Although some Western articles acknowledged the suffering of civilians, the general trend was to undermine the legitimacy of Kashmiri problems.

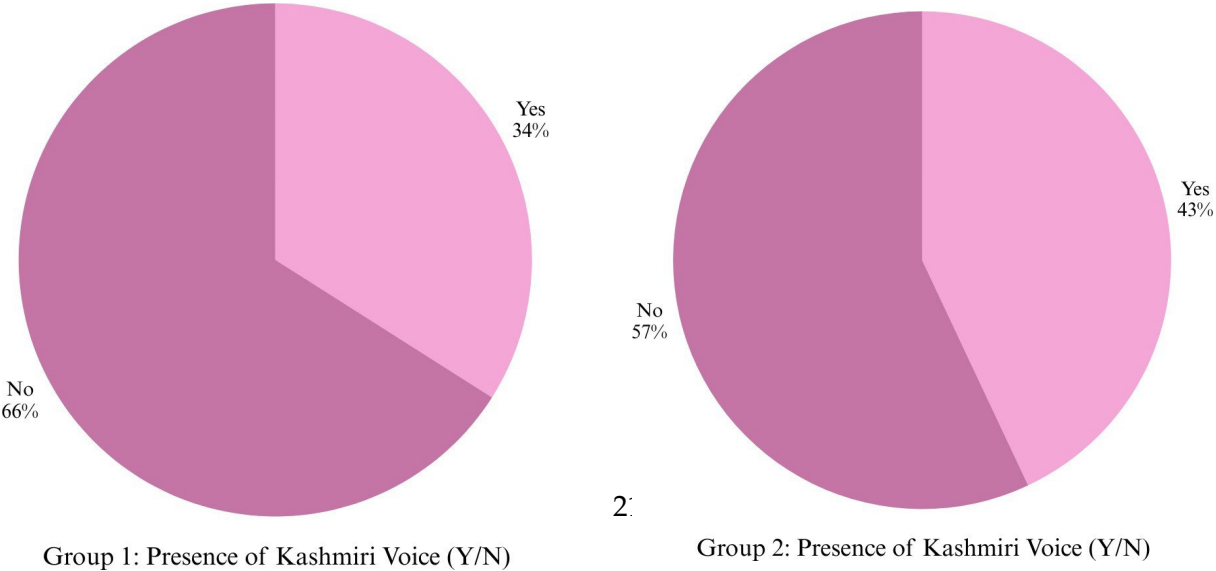
**Figure 3: Tone towards Kashmiris in both the groups**



**Sources, Voices, and Language**

Across geopolitical blocs, there were notable differences in the inclusion of Kashmiri voices (See Figure 4). Kashmiri viewpoints were given more prominence in media that supported Pakistan's narrative, which promoted a sympathetic, human-centered narrative. About 60% of the articles published by Turkish media included Kashmiri voices, frequently quoting locals, demonstrators, or reporters. In roughly 40% of their stories, Qatari media cited activists or impacted families and 70% in Chinese articles. Conversely, such voices were less likely to be quoted in outlets aligned with Indian narrative. Kashmiri voices appeared in about 40% of articles published by U.S. media, 30% by U.K. media, and about one-third by Israeli media. A state-centric narrative was reinforced by the Western and Israeli reports' increased reliance on official sources, including government spokespersons, military officials, and analysts. In the absence of Kashmiri voices, official statements, such as press releases from the Indian army or statements made by the US on terrorism, were usually used to frame stories. This reflects a larger ideological trend in the selection of sources. Pro- Pakistan media elevated subaltern voices to create a counter-hegemonic narrative that challenges India's official position, while pro-India outlets encoded a 'preferred reading' (Hall, 1980) that is consistent with hegemonic authority.

*Figure 4: Presence of Kashmiri voice in both the groups*



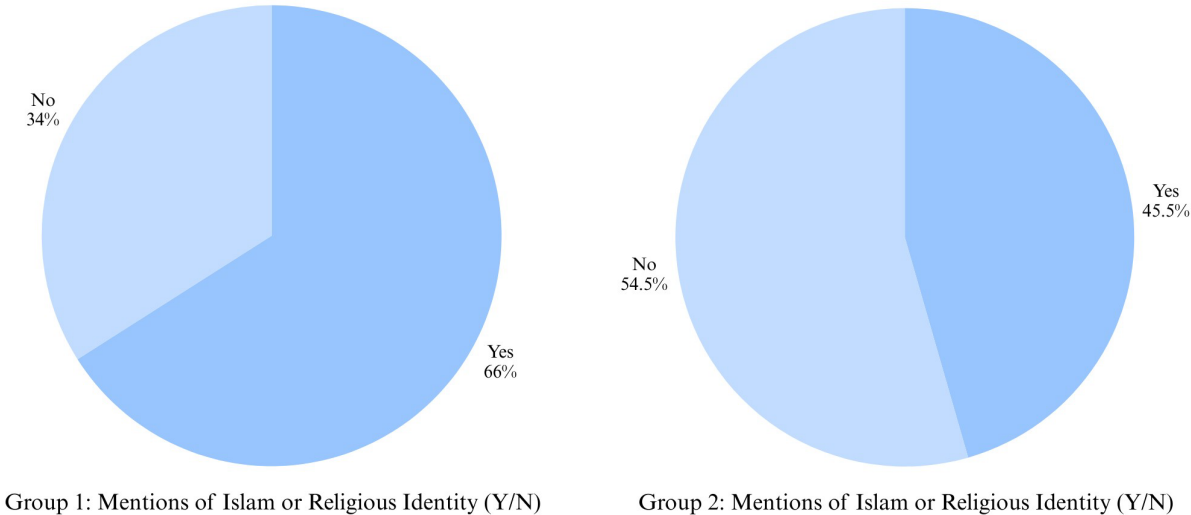
About two-thirds of the articles in the first group and 72% in the second group used vivid or emotive language. This language, however, had different goals and a different tone. Pro-Indian media frequently used emotive language to denounce militant violence, referring to victims who ‘screamed and pleaded for help’ and using phrases like ‘heinous act,’ ‘blood-soaked bodies,’ and ‘dastardly attack.’ In line with global war-on-terror narratives and, in certain instances, reflecting Orientalist portrayals, this framed militants as barbaric and justified harsh countermeasures. Pro-Pakistan media, on the other hand, evoked outrage at Indian actions and sympathy for Kashmiris by using emotive language. Terms like ‘massacre,’ ‘brutal oppression,’ and ‘open prison’ were used by Turkish and Qatari media to characterise India's role. Touching statements like ‘Our hearts are on fire’ and ‘helpless parents’ were also included. These depicted India as the ‘oppressor’ and humanised Kashmiris. Further, among the United States, United Kingdom, and Israel, 82.2% of articles contained imagery, frequently depicting protest signs, crowds, and security personnel, often emphasising unrest or militant activity. A similar 81% of articles in the other bloc had visuals showing Indian security forces in action, military checkpoints, and large gatherings.

### **Religious and Ideological References**

Religious identity featured prominently in the narrative, though its emphasis varied by region (*See Figure 5*). In more than 75% of their articles, U.S. media referred to Islam or the Muslim identity of Kashmir, often characterising it as a ‘Muslim-majority region’ or as being associated with ‘Islamist militant groups.’ This created a religious perspective on the conflict that was often in line with more general narratives of Islamic terrorism, which had an Orientalist undertone. In roughly two-thirds of their articles, U.K. outlets highlighted religion, either by mentioning militant ideologies or Hindu-Muslim tensions. 57% of Israeli coverage also mentioned religion. However, only about 23 percent of Chinese media articles mentioned Islam, eschewing religious framing in favour of a secular, state-focused approach that was probably influenced by China's sensitivities regarding its own Muslim population in Xinjiang. About 57% of combined coverage in the Turkish and Qatari media focused on religion,

frequently using Islamic references to highlight Muslim repression, invoke Ummah unity, or show solidarity.

*Figure 5: Mentions of religious identity in both the groups*



**Representation of Violence**

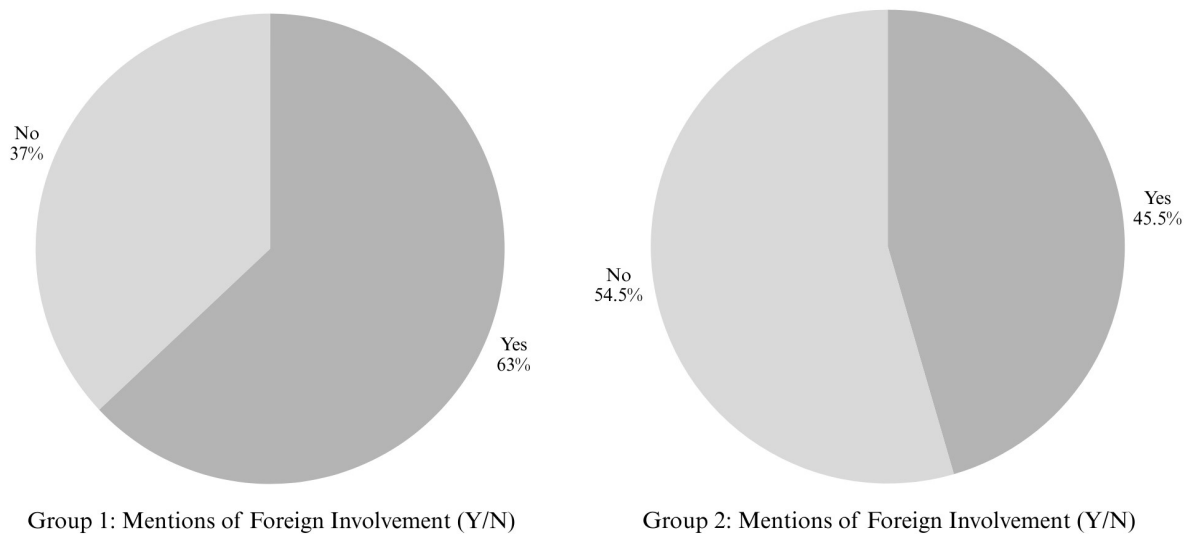
In the United States, United Kingdom, and Israel, coverage emphasised Indian state violence in 25% of cases, state vs non-state actor violence in 13%, non-state actor violence alone in 48%, remaining focused on Pakistani state’s role in violence. In Türkiye, China, and Qatar, Indian state violence was even more prominent (55%), followed by nonstate actor violence (22%), and state vs non-state (15%), remaining focused on Pakistan vs India. This suggests that while both blocs recognised state-perpetrated violence, it was foregrounded more consistently in group two’s reporting.

**Framing of Public Unrest and Foreign Involvement**

Across blocs, media portrayals of the unrest in Kashmir differed significantly. About 13% of articles from pro-India publications referred to protests as ‘violence.’ By using the word ‘protest,’ on the other hand, 32% of articles from pro-Pakistan bloc justified the unrest as peaceful resistance. Majority of articles had no mention of protests and articles mentioning protester violence were few and far between. ‘Protest’ vs. ‘riot’ is a linguistic choice that

indicates ideological alignment, with each bloc supporting the legitimacy or illegitimacy of Kashmiri dissent. Further, in coverage from the group one, references to foreign involvement appeared in almost 63% of articles. By contrast, outlets from group two mentioned foreign involvement in 45.5% of cases (*See Figure 6*). This indicates that Western-aligned media were considerably more likely to contextualise the conflict through the lens of external actors, whereas Türkiye–China–Qatar outlets tended to focus more on internal or regional dynamics.

**Figure 6: Mentions of foreign involvement**



### Overall Framing and Geopolitical Angle

Media from the United States, United Kingdom, and Israel most frequently adopted a balanced framing (52%), followed by pro-state/pro-India (27%), sympathetic to Kashmiris (17%), and critical of Indian State (4%). In contrast, Türkiye, China, and Qatar outlets most commonly used a sympathetic to Kashmiris frame (47%), followed by balanced (44%), critical of Indian state (4.5%), and pro-state/pro-India (4.5%). These results suggest that Western-aligned coverage leaned toward neutrality, while Türkiye–China–Qatar coverage showed a stronger alignment with Kashmiri perspectives (*See Appendix Figure A4*). For the geopolitical angle, the group one is 29% pro-India, 2% pro-Pakistan, and 69% neutral. On the contrary, the group two is 3% pro-India, 20% pro-Pakistan and 77% neutral (*See Appendix Figure A5*).

## Discussion

The results show that the geopolitical interests and alignments of the nations in which media outlets are based have a substantial influence on media narratives. Media from nations that support India, including the United States, the United Kingdom, and Israel, tended to present the conflict from a security perspective, stressing law and order, terrorism, and the separatist movement's lack of legitimacy. The media in Pakistan-friendly nations like China, Qatar, and Türkiye, on the other hand, framed Kashmir mainly as a human rights issue, emphasising self-determination, repression, and the suffering of Kashmiris under Indian rule. This dichotomy was evident across frames, tone, language, and source selection, reinforcing the hypotheses laid out in the literature review.

As expected, Western and Indian-affiliated media often used words like 'militant' and 'terrorist' to frame Kashmir in the context of the 'War on Terror' narrative, highlighting India's fight against insurgency. Israeli media coverage was especially consistent in reproducing this frame. India's role was directly criticised by Turkish and Qatari media, which placed a strong emphasis on human rights abuses and presented the conflict as a fight for self-determination. A more nuanced theory regarding internal variation within geopolitical blocs also held true. For example, some British media, especially the BBC and The Guardian, took a more balanced approach than the consistently pro-India Israeli coverage by highlighting the humanitarian costs of the 2019 lockdown rather than taking a purely pro-India stance. These variations suggest that while geopolitical alignment is a strong predictor of narrative construction, editorial orientation and historical context (e.g., Britain's colonial legacy in South Asia) also shape media narratives.

However, some findings were surprising and need to be interpreted. Despite Qatar's stance on Kashmir, Qatari media, especially Al Jazeera, did not only cover human rights and self-determination. They wrote about security and militancy-related incidents in about half of their articles. Given the prominence of violent incidents, this probably represents an editorial attempt to maintain objectivity and credibility. However, even in articles that focused on security, Al Jazeera's framing frequently contextualised militancy as a response to Indian policies, offering a sympathetic subtext. In a similar vein, Chinese media used the human

rights frame sparingly, despite China's alliance with Pakistan. Out of thirty articles, only three addressed humanitarian concerns. China's non-interventionist foreign policy and hesitancy to bring up human rights issues because of its own vulnerabilities are probably the causes of this subdued tone. Rather than appealing to emotion or morality, Chinese outlets favoured geopolitical and legalistic framings, denouncing India for violating UN resolutions or escalating tensions. Further, even though Western media generally aligned with India, they occasionally featured critical coverage, particularly when Indian actions were highly controversial. News reports on the communications blackout, use of pellet guns, and the 2019 lockdown demonstrate that even aligned media may temporarily deviate from dominant narratives in response to extreme humanitarian events. These deviations imply that journalistic norms, reputational concerns, and audience expectations can challenge or soften the influence of geopolitical alignment, leading to critical reporting moments even in reports that are generally favourable.

These findings strongly support Halls' encoding/decoding model, which views media messages as products of socio-political context of producers. Pro-India media encoded a 'preferred reading' of India as a 'legitimate' democratic state battling terrorism, expecting audiences to decode it in line with dominant security discourses. Conversely, pro-Pakistan media encoded narratives focusing on Kashmiri 'victimhood' and Indian 'oppression,' appealing to audiences who are likely to decode them through a justice-centered lens. The analysis further reflects Gramsci's concept of hegemony. Each geopolitical side constructs and disseminates narratives that aim to normalise its perspective as common sense. Thus, media operate as ideological apparatuses to serve broader political and cultural power structures. Furthermore, there are traces of Orientalism in how Western media often emphasise Islamic 'terrorism' and chaos in Kashmir, portraying it as a volatile, politically sensitive, and 'uncivilised' region requiring stricter control and regulations.

Methodologically, the content analysis was effective in identifying dominant patterns. However, there were difficulties with borderline cases; for example, neutral coverage on militant attacks could subtly lean towards sympathy or criticism depending on the context. Moreover, the selection of prominent English-language outlets likely captured dominant

national narratives, but more partisan or lesser-known media might have shown different patterns. Nonetheless, this focus was justified given the aim of analysing widely consumed global narratives. Although they were uncommon and had little impact on general trends, anomalies, like one Turkish news article that was sympathetic to India, show that media narratives are not uniform and call for more further research.

These implications of the differing narratives are significant. Different media show the Kashmir conflict in very different ways to people around the world. This polarisation affects what people think and can make geopolitical divides stronger, which makes dialogue and finding solutions harder. For example, people in Western countries might see India's actions as legitimate counterterrorism, while people in Muslim-majority or aligned states might see the same actions as brutal repression. This divergence in public perception can reinforce state policies and diplomatic stances, with each side feeling supported by international opinion. It may be essential to bridge this narrative gap for any future conflict resolution, which would require an acknowledgement of both security concerns as well as human rights issues. These findings also highlight the need for critical media literacy. Readers must be aware that news is never neutral. It is, in fact, subtly shaped by power, ideology, and foreign policy interests.

Overall, the content analysis reveals a noteworthy narrative divide in how international media construct the Kashmir conflict. Pro-India bloc media largely marginalise Kashmiri perspectives through security-centric framings, while pro-Pakistan bloc media highlight Kashmiri suffering and resistance, often neglecting security concerns of India. These narratives are not neutral accounts of events, but ideological constructions shaped by foreign policy interests, media traditions, and cultural worldviews. They reflect the power of media to shape global understandings of conflict, reinforcing or challenging dominant state narratives and, ultimately, influencing the political outcomes available for contested regions like Kashmir.

### **Critical Discourse Analysis**

The study examines outlets at three levels according to Fairclough's (1989) model: (1) Text (vocabulary, modality, rhetorical devices, framing of actors), (2) Discursive Practice (sourcing, voice prioritisation, intertextuality), and (3) Social Practice (broader ideological and geopolitical context) (*See Appendix F for Text Corpus*).

## Textual Analysis

Pro-India media used varied vocabulary and framing that oscillated between security-focused and human-interest angles. A strong counter-terrorism lexicon is evident in their reports. For example, The Jerusalem Post (2025) described the April 2025 Pahalgam attack in headline by stating that 'Pakistani terrorists gunned Hindu tourists.' Similarly, The Telegraph's (2019) headline, 'Killing of 'most wanted' al-Qaeda linked Kashmir militant sparks protest,' frames the unrest as a reaction to the death of a terrorist figure, sidelining the deeper causes of the protest. Such language indicated a clear ideological stance as explained by Hall's concept of encoding (1980), that aligns with the post-9/11 'war on terror' narrative, portraying Kashmiri militants as Islamist 'terrorists' threatening civilised order. This dominant narrative invites a preferred decoding that legitimises India's anti-insurgency actions as counterterrorism, reflecting a hegemonic security discourse (Gramsci, 1971). It is interesting to note that terms like 'Islamist' or 'Muslim' often appeared as adjectives for Kashmiri gunmen in these media, subtly reinforcing a global narrative that conflates Islam with terrorism. However, at the same time, these outlets also incorporated humanitarian and critical vocabulary when covering India's action in certain cases. For instance, the August 2019 communications blockade is described as 'virtual curtain,' while the headline says that it 'paralysed' Kashmir (CNN, 2019). The rhetoric of human rights violation is further emphasised through quotes from local media: 'No telephone lines are working... There is a virtual clampdown,' reports a Kashmiri editor (para. 3). The Guardian similarly adopts a slightly critical tone when reporting on a Kashmiri civilian used as human shield by the Indian army. However, the use of quotation marks for 'human shield' and the use of the word 'allegedly' before citing the situation indicates a more neutral reporting, not being blatantly critical of India's actions. The BBC (2017) explicitly notes 'anti-India feelings are running high' (para. 6) in Kashmiri towns like Hajin. This vocabulary is a rhetoric strategy to elicit subtle sympathy for Kashmiris and scepticism of Indian authority.

There is a noteworthy observation in Israeli coverage. Though generally pro-India in the use of language, there were certain instances when the reportage seemed neutral or derisive. In one interesting example of Haaretz (2017) article 'Israeli-made Sewage-stinking Weapon Not Smelly Enough to Deter Indian Protesters,' a subtle tone of sarcasm was noticed:

The Indian tolerance for smell, it appears, is too great for the almighty 'Skunk.' The test was carried out in Delhi, a dense megalopolis known well for its colorful stenches emanating from overflowing landfills, public toilets and the like' (para. 4).

This could indicate Orientalist undertone with Israel mocking India to assert superiority and to cast it as dependent and backward. Further, another important factor is naming and referential strategies that differ across the texts analysed. The pro-India outlets tend to use the term 'militants' for Kashmiri fighters, though the term 'terrorists' when reporting official statements, was also noticed. For example, the BBC (2017) refers to Burhan Wani as a 'popular militant leader' rather than terrorist, and The Telegraph (2019) describes the armed groups neutrally as 'rebel groups... fighting Indian rule since 1989' (para. 11). This more neutral lexicon (militant, rebel) versus the 'terrorist' label appears when these outlets shift from recounting violent incidents to exploring root causes or grievances. The Washington Post (2019, para.2) notes an 'armed struggle' that had seemed to be 'diminishing' until recent years, implicitly framing the insurgency in political terms rather than purely criminal ones. Such modulation of labels suggests an attempt to balance perspectives, acknowledging militancy's violence while also situating it in a broader political conflict. The overall textual pattern in this bloc is thus multivocal. It encodes both the hegemonic narrative of fighting Islamist terror and a critical narrative of an 'oppressed' population, allowing multiple readings.

In Pakistani aligned media, vocabulary and framing are overtly sceptical of India's actions and sympathetic to Kashmiri or Pakistani positions. Textually, these news organisations use the terms that delegitimise the Indian authority in Kashmir. For example, in Xinhua's news reports, the tone is factual but has a hint of contestation of legitimacy. One article (Xinhua, 2017) reports 'curfew-like restrictions in several parts of Srinagar' (para. 1), following the killing of a militant. The militant is not demonised and is identified by name and as a local, while emphasising the heavy-handed repose by 'hundreds of police and paramilitary troopers' (para. 3). Further, Xinhua gives a background context that 'a guerrilla war challenging New Delhi's rule is going on... since 1989' (para. 9). Terms like 'guerrilla war' and 'challenging... rule' cast the militants in almost valorised terms of armed resistance, sharply contrasting with bloc one's 'terrorist' language.

Similarly, TRT Global labels Indian actions in religious terms. An article (TRT, 2025) on banning prayers at Srinagar's Grand Mosque is headlined under the section 'ISLAMOPHOBIA.' Such diction portrays Indian authorities as persecutors of Islam, explicitly using an accusatory language rather than adopting a neutral tone. The TRT piece quotes the mosque's chief preacher condemning the 'insensitivity of those in power' (para. 2) that deprives Muslims of worship. The text thus frames India as 'Islamophobic,' and 'oppressive.' Another significant feature of the textual approach of this bloc's media is the foregrounding of calls for peace and dialogue and blaming India for escalation. China Daily (2019) states, 'China is opposed to any unilateral actions that complicate the situation in Kashmir,' (para. 1) quoting Foreign Minister Yi, who calls India's move 'challenging (China's) sovereignty' (para. 2) and warns it 'will result in a tense situation' (para. 4). Terms like 'unilateral,' 'challenged,' and 'tense' assign blame to New Delhi. The assertive modality and legalistic vocabulary ('will change the status quo') highlight China's stance that legitimacy lies in prior agreements. Similarly, Pakistan's view is legitimised. Further, SCMP's coverage is narrative-driven and emotive, illustrating the human impact of conflict.

Hussain's (2023) article depicts scenes like children greeting a 'Pakistan army truck' and soldiers patrolling on Kashmir's revocation of autonomy anniversary, contrasting daily life with political tension: 'Muslim majority fear (becoming) a subservient minority' (para. 15). Quoting a local analyst, the 2019 changes are called a 'wholesale tearing down of the legal architecture' (para. 16). Metaphors like this and phrases such as 'youth anger catalysed a new wave of armed violence' (para. 19) frame India's policy as the trigger for unrest. An Associated Press (2016) piece (via SCMP) uses dramatic devices. For instance, Indian troops face 'a barrage of rocks, bricks and abuse' and a 'battle on two fronts' (para. 2). A villager proclaims, 'We're all militants now... men, women and children,' and 'stones are now the people's weapons,' (para. 5) romanticising resistance. This cinematic rhetoric valorises defiance and paints the Indian army as 'aggressors.' Furthermore, these news outlets avoid 'terrorist' labels, instead using 'suspected rebels' or 'militants,' and highlights Muslim victimhood. Additionally, outlets like Al Jazeera and TRT avoid pejoratives, opting for neutral or euphemistic phrasing. TRT's (2025) long-form article on the Pahalgam attack refers to it simply as 'the April 22 attack,' emphasising the 'renewed wave of hostility' (para. 5) toward Kashmiris rather than the

massacre itself. This downplaying contrasts sharply with bloc one's terror-centric language, signalling a deliberate textual silencing of militant culpability. News organisations often use terms like 'unilateral,' 'ban,' and 'crackdown' to delegitimise Indian actions while sympathetically portraying Kashmiri Muslims through poignant quotes and focus on their daily struggles. Thus, this reinforces an ideological narrative of India as aggressor and frames the dispute as a global human rights issue.

### **Discursive Practice**

In the news organisations aligned with India, sourcing is diverse. They quote government officials, militant statements, experts, armies, and Kashmiri civilians (though it is far less than in pro-Pakistan media). To decipher, in NYT's (2025) piece on the post-Pahalgam tensions between India and Pakistan, India's voice dominates early. There are quotes from the foreign ministry, prime minister, army, victims, while there is just one quote from Pakistan's foreign ministry. In CNN's (2019) Pulwama coverage, there is a formula of 'India blames, Pakistan denies,' which is also seen in other news outlets like the Washington Post. This attribution pattern maintains a veneer of balance, but prioritising Indian voices first subtly reinforces the framing of militancy as the root issue. However, Kashmiri voices are included in features. The BBC's (2017) Hajin report quotes locals alleging abuses: 'The army... beat us, seize our bikes and cars and ransack our houses,' (para. 7) and cites academics explaining rising extremism post-Burhan Wani. The Guardian's (2021) 'human shield' article includes families who 'rejected police claims' and staged protests. These counter-narratives, paired with references to human rights groups and past events like the 2010 unrest create intertextual depth. The BBC's (2016) phrase 'flashpoint for more than 60 years' (para. 5) embeds the issue in a historical conflict continuum. These outlets reflect their countries' leanings through voice prioritisation.

The Times of Israel's (2019) article titled, 'We won't give an inch: India faces defiance in 'Kashmir's Gaza,'" tries to relate Israel-Gaza conflict to India's conflict in Kashmir through a lens of terrorism and reinforces an Orientalist narrative (Said, 1978) of militant Islam as a global threat. Reporting on Indian policies often features discursive distancing. CNN (2019) notes it 'has not independently confirmed' (para. 12) a militant group's claim. Further, The Guardian (2021) highlights India's 'denial of civil liberties,' often citing NGOs or unnamed

observers, raising human rights concerns while maintaining neutrality. Even pro-India Kashmiri politicians' detentions are noted, questioning India's democratic image. This practice allows Western media to maintain plausible objectivity while seeding doubt about the hegemonic narrative of India as a democracy in Kashmir.

Finally, production and consumption contexts influence these discursive choices. With press freedom, journalists interview diverse voices. For e.g., Washington Post's (2019) interviews with students and ex-Chief Minister. These narratives, aimed at Western audiences, curate competing interpretations, terrorism vs. oppression, while slightly privileging state and expert voices. This subtly encodes hegemonic norms, suggesting that 'objective' analyses carry more legitimacy than local testimonies.

News media from the other bloc exhibit discursive practices aligned with Pakistan and critical of India. Source selection and voice are heavily skewed to official Pakistani or local Kashmiri voices critical of India, while Indian official perspectives are marginalised or filtered through scepticism. For example, The Peninsula's (2018) report on Kashmir Solidarity Day is focused only on quotes from Pakistani embassy in Qatar, highlighting the human rights violations in the region by India, without giving any voice to the Indian Side. The discursive pattern is to let Pakistani authorities and allied voices speak unchallenged.

Similarly, Pakistani minister Shireen Mazari's detailed account of Indian airstrikes and Pakistan's military response is presented in China Daily (2019) without Indian rebuttal, privileging Pakistan's voice while India is talked about but not heard. Likewise, Al Jazeera (2025) uses discursive technique of testimonials, quoting Kashmiri workers and residents describing 'harassment, physical assault and threats to leave' (para. 6). For example, a student is quoted as saying that it was extremely dangerous to travel outside of Kashmir and that he had to return to the valley after attacks on Kashmiri students. Indian officials appear only as antagonists. In another instance TRT (2025) report, a Hindu nationalist 'threatening' Kashmiris is mentioned, without being interviewed. When police called an assault a 'personal dispute,' TRT says police 'framed the incident,' while student groups linked it to 'anti-Kashmiri hostility,' (para.14) giving more weight to grassroots narratives.

Intertextuality is used to situate Kashmir within broader injustices. Further, China Daily (2019) reference the UN Kashmir report and resolutions, with Mazari citing abuses by ‘over 700,000 Indian security forces,’ (para. 8) legitimising Pakistan’s international framing against India’s bilateral approach. Additionally, the genre and style of discourse differ. Chinese outlets and Qatar’s Gulf Times mostly adopt an official register, brief, quote-heavy reports omitting Indian views but projecting neutrality. TRT, Al Jazeera and SCMP use investigative or narrative styles. SCMP’s AP piece reads as a human-interest story of villagers vs. soldiers; TRT uses subheadings like ‘Pattern of persecution’ and uses descriptive storytelling. These discursive styles engage readers emotionally and ethically, encouraging identification with Kashmiris and condemnation of Indian actions. The voices of international organisations or NGOs are included to provide external validation and analysis, reinforcing counter-hegemonic narrative. This oppositional, advocacy-based discourse contrasts with bloc one’s moderation, positioning these outlets as agents of alternative hegemony (Gramsci, 1971) that reshape common sense on Kashmir.

### **Social Practice**

At the level of social practice, pro-India media reflect post-9/11 Western ideologies that merge the War-on-Terror framework with liberal democratic values. This creates what Hall calls ‘ideological encoding,’ steering Western and pro-Indian readers to see Kashmir as a security issue. A main macro-narrative is the delegitimisation of Kashmiri militancy by framing it as Islamic terrorism. For instance, the Jerusalem Post (2025) ties violence to ‘Pakistan’s long history of sponsorship’ (para. 14) of jihadist groups and describes attacks as ‘nakedly sectarian,’ (para. 17) dismissing militants’ claims of secular resistance. This aligns with Gramsci’s notion of hegemony, where India and its allies shape dominant perceptions by framing the conflict as extremist violence rather than self-determination. Simultaneously, these outlets criticise India’s democratic shortcomings, aligning with somewhat liberal ideology. The Guardian (2021) describes Kashmir as ‘stripped of its semi-autonomous status in August 2019,’ under ‘full control of the central government,’ and marked by ‘denial of civil liberties.’ Such representations are in line with human rights rhetoric and carry Orientalist nuances that portray non-Western powers as prone to authoritarianism. These outlets assume a moral arbiter role, maintaining Western hegemonic ideals of democracy and civil rights.

Moreover, geopolitical alliances further shape these narratives. With India as a growing partner to the U.S., U.K., and Israel, media in these countries avoid language legitimising Kashmiri independence or a UN plebiscite. BBC (2016) describes Kashmir as 'claimed in its entirety by both India and Pakistan,' (para. 5) and CNN refers to it as the 'Indian-administered Kashmir,' affirming disputed status without questioning sovereignty. This narrative affirms India's territorial integrity while offering only limited criticism of its methods, framing hegemony through reformist rather than revolutionary discourse. At the same time, it echoes the Western stance of neutrality on sovereignty while quietly reinforcing the status quo. Audiences are encouraged to sympathise with Kashmiri suffering and reject extremism, but they are also positioned to accept that Kashmir's future rests with India and Pakistan rather than with Kashmiris themselves. The discourse therefore appears balanced, but ultimately frames Kashmir as a security problem to be managed through stability rather than structural change, reinforcing dominant Western hegemonic commonsense.

On the other hand, media leaning towards Pakistan promote a counter-hegemonic ideology shaped by geopolitical rivalry, post-colonial solidarity, and ties to the Islamic world. CDA shows that their portrayals are not just journalistic choices but part of a wider practice of ideological encoding that reflects their sponsoring states' worldviews. Chinese media, for instance, describe India's revocation of Kashmir's status as 'unilateral and illegal,' echoing Beijing's concerns over Ladakh and reinforcing a rule-of-law narrative aimed at isolating India diplomatically. In Gramscian terms, they seek to reshape common sense by presenting Kashmir not as India's internal matter but as a case of international injustice. Another layer is solidarity with the Muslim world, where Türkiye's TRT (2025) frames Kashmir as a Muslim struggle, using phrases such as 'Hindutva-fueled hostility criminalises their identity' (Para. 1). The hegemonic interest served is that of Pakistan (and Türkiye to an extent) in rallying Muslim public opinion. This reversal of Orientalism inverts the global terror discourse and places Hindu nationalists as 'barbarians' and Kashmiris as 'freedom fighters.' Similarly, China Daily's (2019) warnings about nuclear war position India as destabilising and China as a peace-seeking power, justifying its own regional posture. Further, these representations reflect a post-colonial critique, citing the UN and human rights bodies to invoke an internationalist discourse that once challenged colonial powers and now casts India as colonial in Kashmir. By

stressing the 'plight of the Kashmiri people' and their 'basic and fundamental rights,' they frame Kashmiris as oppressed and entitled to liberation or autonomy, aligning with Gramsci's vision of alternative hegemony. For instance, Gulf Times' (2018) article on lockdown in Kashmir mentions 'charismatic young leader's death' and 'countless more blinded by pellet fire following a crackdown' (para. 5). The absence of a terror frame in these reports is deliberate. It renders the protests organic and reasonable while depicting state force as excessive. At the same time, these narratives serve the hegemonic interests of Pakistan and its allies, illustrating Hall's view that audiences decode messages through their own ideological positions. For instance, Pakistani readers of TRT find validation of state rhetoric, whereas Western readers may question India's narrative without necessarily siding with Pakistan. This practice resembles advocacy journalism or soft power, extending state influence into the media. In doing so, the coverage challenges Indian and Western hegemony by featuring Kashmir as a story of injustice, resistance, and global responsibility, embedding it within wider ideological struggles.

## **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study has some clear limitations. By focusing only on 180 English-language articles from six countries, it cannot reflect the full range of global reporting on the Kashmir conflict. Further, dividing the countries into two geopolitical blocs helps in comparison but may oversimplify the more complex positions of individual outlets, and even countries as geopolitics and foreign affairs are continuously developing. Similarly, the CDA draws on only a few articles from each organisation, which provides depth but also limits the scope of the findings. Moreover, excluding non-English reporting further narrows the perspective, as domestic audiences may receive very different narratives. Finally, using the theories of Hall, Gramsci, and Said adds valuable insight but also involves subjective interpretation, which shapes how patterns and meanings are understood.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this dissertation has highlighted the profound influence of geopolitical alignments on international media narratives surrounding the Kashmir conflict, revealing how ostensibly neutral reporting encodes ideological biases that reinforce power structures. Through a comparative analysis of 180 articles from 18 outlets in India-aligned (U.S., U.K., Israel) and Pakistan-aligned (Qatar, Türkiye, China) countries, the study demonstrates stark divergences: pro-India media predominantly frame Kashmir as a terrorism and security issue, legitimising Indian counter-insurgency efforts while marginalising Kashmiri voices, whereas pro-Pakistan media emphasise human rights violations and self-determination, humanising Kashmiris and critiquing Indian ‘oppression.’ These patterns, uncovered via content analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA), underscore that media narratives are not mere reflections of events, but constructions shaped by national interests, echoing Hall's encoding/decoding model, Gramsci's hegemony, and Said's Orientalism. Theoretically, the research advances media studies and international relations by integrating these frameworks to expose the ‘geopolitics of media narratives,’ showing how hegemonic discourses, such as the post-9/11 War on Terror in Western outlets or counter-hegemonic solidarity in non-Western ones, subtly skew global perceptions, perpetuating conflict rather than fostering resolution. It challenges the myth of journalistic objectivity, highlighting how civilisational biases (e.g., Islamophobia) and strategic alliances distort representations, contributing to a fragmented ‘truth’ about Kashmir.

Methodologically, the mixed approach of qualitative content analysis for pattern identification and CDA for ideological depth proves strong, offering replicable rigor while addressing reductionism through reflexive interpretation. Inter-coder reliability and reflexive journaling mitigated biases, demonstrating the value of multi-method designs in dissecting complex discourses, particularly for sensitive topics like Kashmir. Empirically, the findings fill a gap in fragmented literature by providing a comprehensive, cross-bloc comparison over 15 years (2010–2025), revealing internal variations and anomalies. These insights have practical implications. They underscore media's role in shaping public opinion, potentially entrenching

diplomatic divides and hindering peace efforts. For journalists, it advocates critical self-awareness; for policymakers, it signals the need for narrative bridges to enable dialogue.

Looking ahead, this study creates a number of new research avenues. Future work could examine and compare domestic and international media coverage and contrast internal narratives with external ones. Audience reception studies would help determine how these narratives are interpreted across different publics, revealing whether the intended 'preferred readings' are accepted, contested, or reinterpreted. A discourse analysis of social media could also reveal how official narratives are reinforced or challenged in user-generated content. Additionally, expanding the scope to include media from other geopolitically significant countries, such as Russia, Iran, or Saudi Arabia, could add further depth to the current research design. Further, longitudinal studies could track whether and how narratives evolve in response to significant turning points, such as policy changes, international condemnation, or major incidents of violence. Ultimately, this study calls for a more empathetic, multiperspective approach to conflict reporting, urging scholars and practitioners to dismantle hegemonic silos for a fuller grasp of Kashmir's realities.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Figures

Figure A1: Comparison of tone towards Kashmiris between group 1 and 2

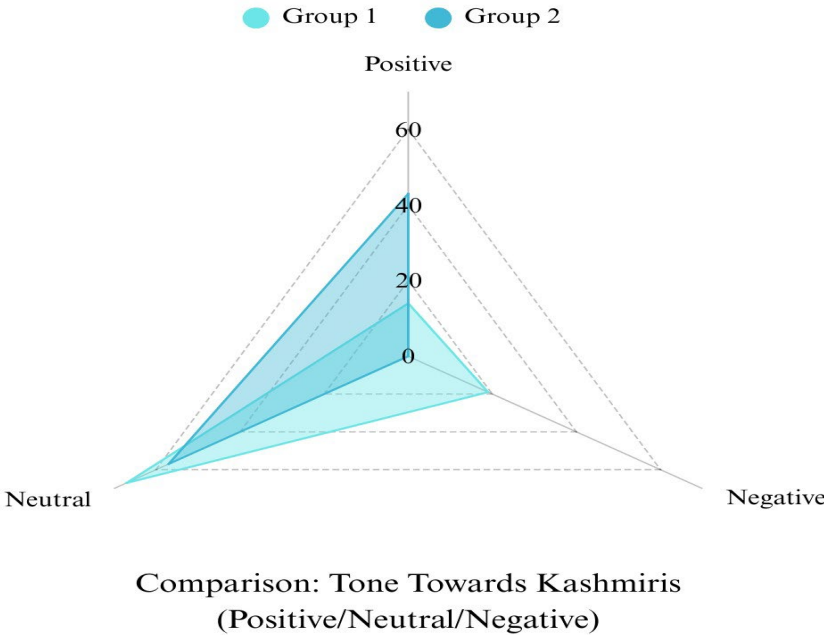


Figure A2: Comparison of tone towards Indian State between group 1 and 2

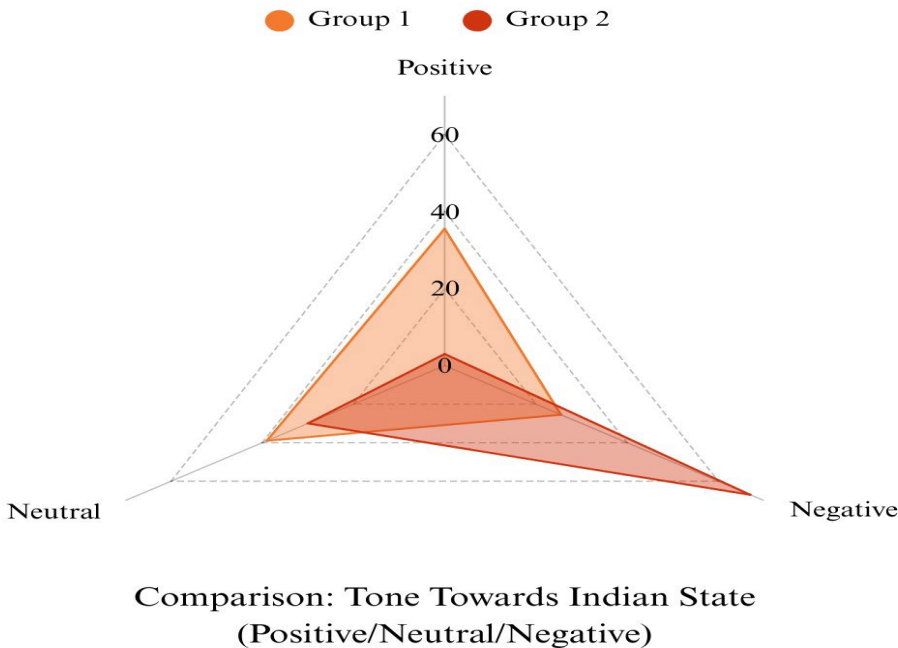
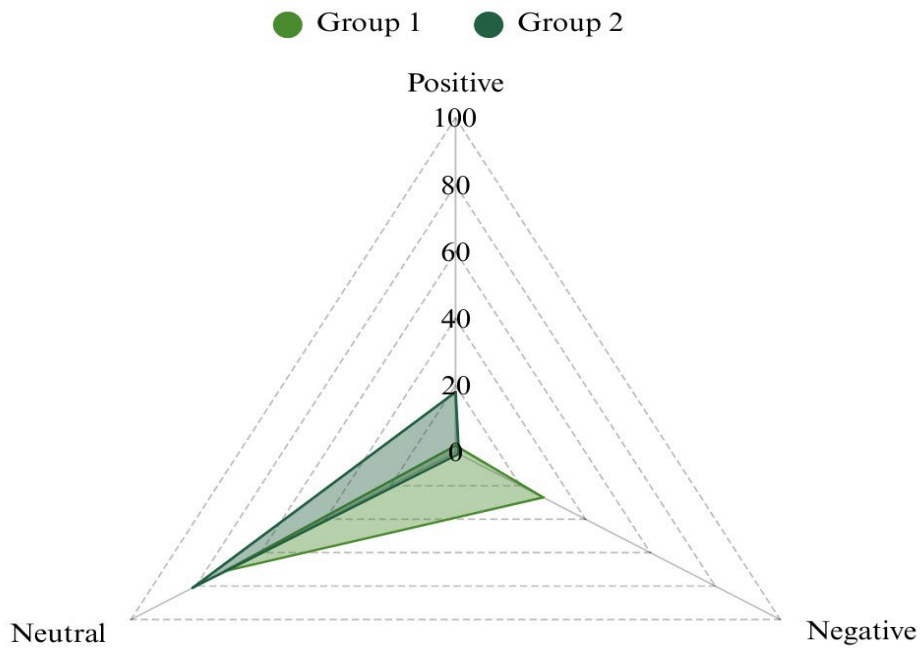
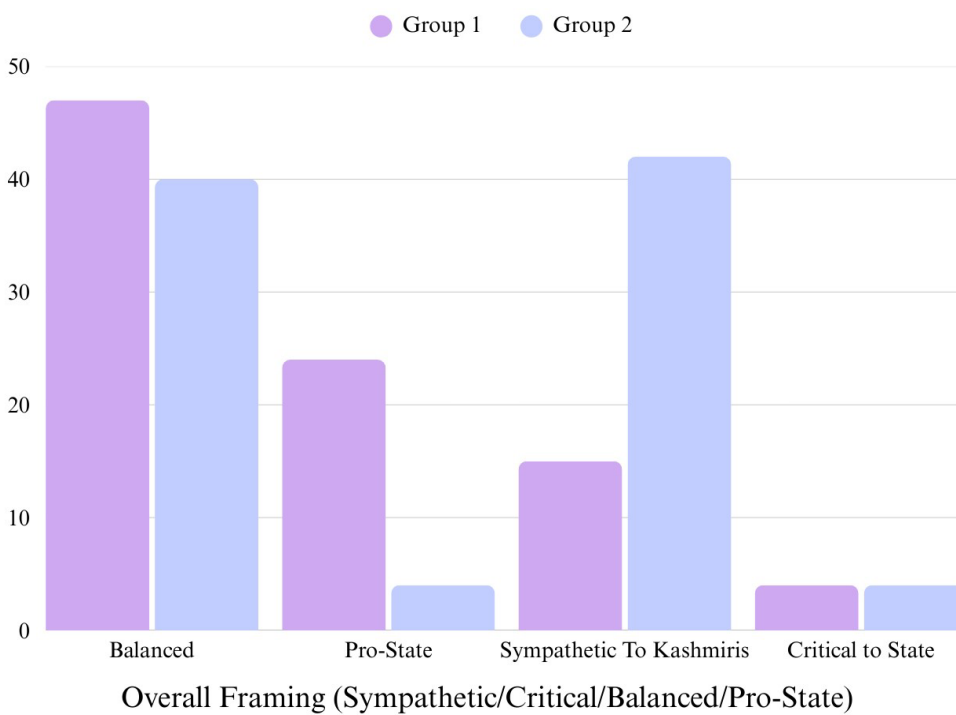


Figure A3: Comparison of tone towards Pakistani State between group 1 and 2



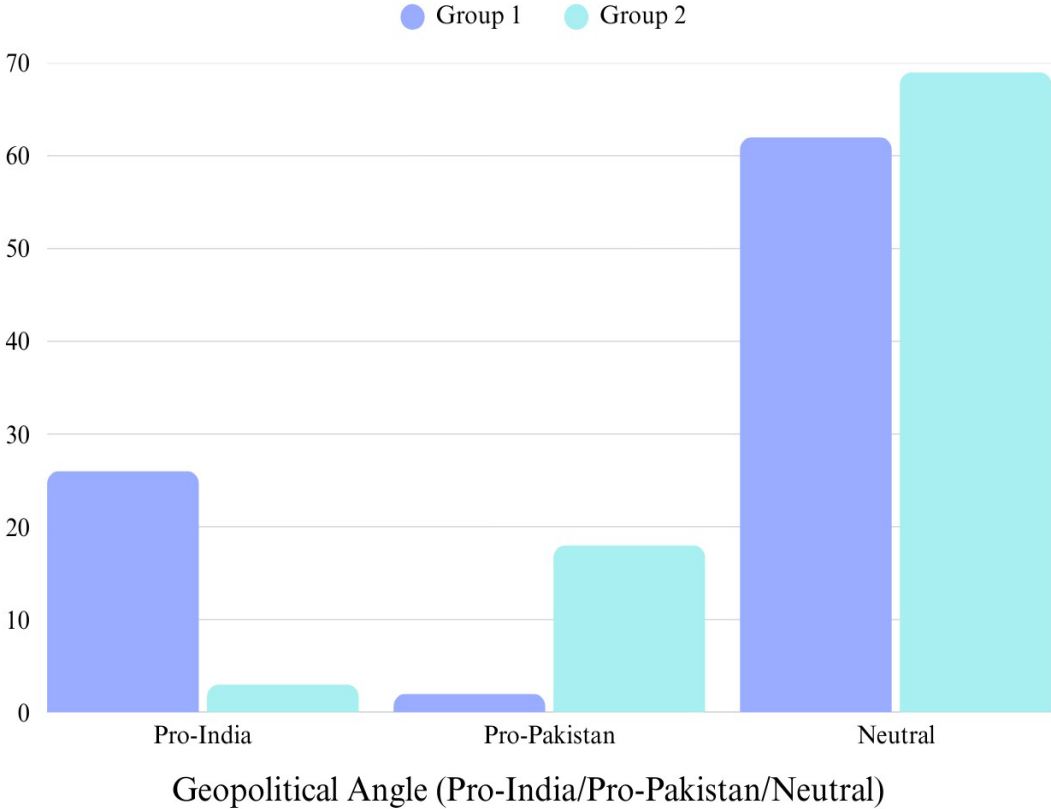
Comparison: Tone Towards Pakistani State  
(Positive/Neutral/Negative)

Figure A4: Comparison of overall framing between group 1 and 2



Overall Framing (Sympathetic/Critical/Balanced/Pro-State)

**Figure A5: Comparison of geopolitical angle between group 1 and 2**



**Appendix B: Coding Frame**

*B1. Initial coding frame*

Variables and Coding

Instructions

**1. Article No.**

- **Definition:** Unique identifier for each article.
- **Categories:** Numeric (e.g., 1, 2, ...).
- **Rules:** Assign sequentially from dataset. No interpretation required.

**2. Article Title**

- **Definition:** Full title of the article.
- **Categories:** Open text.
- **Rules:** Copy verbatim from source.

### 3. Publication Date

- **Definition:** Date of article publication.
- **Categories:** Date (DD-MM-YYYY).
- **Rules:** Use source date; mark 'N/A' if unavailable.

### 4. Media Outlet

- **Definition:** Name of the publishing news organization.
- **Categories:** Open text (e.g., The New York Times, Al Jazeera English). §
- **Rules:** Use full name as published

### 5. Country of Origin

- **Definition:** Country where the outlet is primarily based.
- **Categories:** United States, United Kingdom, Israel, Qatar, Türkiye, China, Other.
- **Rules:** Determine based on outlet's headquarters or ownership (e.g., Al Jazeera → Qatar).

### 6. Headline Focus

- **Definition:** Central issue or event emphasised in the headline.
- **Categories:** Open text (5–10-word summary).
- **Rules:** Summarise key actors, actions, or outcomes (e.g., 'Security Forces Kill Protesters').

### 7. Main Frame

- **Definition:** Dominant interpretive lens of the conflict.
- **Categories:** Human Rights, Terrorism, Security, Geopolitical Conflict, Other (specify).

- **Rules:** Identify based on primary focus (>50% content). Example: Civilian deaths from state forces → Human Rights; militant attacks → Terrorism.

#### 8. Secondary Frame (if any)

- **Definition:** Additional frame complementing the main one.
- **Categories:** Same as Main Frame, or N/A.
- **Rules:** Code if significant (20-50% content). Example: Main Frame 'Terrorism' with Secondary 'Security.'

#### 9. Tone towards Kashmiris

- **Definition:** Sentiment toward Kashmiri actors (civilians, protesters, militants).
- **Categories:** Positive (sympathetic), Neutral (factual), Negative (delegitimising).
- **Rules:** Assess via language (e.g., 'oppressed victims' → Positive; 'violent mob' → Negative).

#### 10. Tone towards Indian State

- **Definition:** Sentiment toward Indian government or military.
- **Categories:** Positive, Neutral, Negative.
- **Rules:** E.g., 'justified response' → Positive; 'excessive force' → Negative.

#### 11. Tone towards Pakistan

- **Definition:** Sentiment toward Pakistan's government or role.
- **Categories:** Positive, Neutral, Negative.
- **Rules:** E.g., 'sponsor of terrorism' → Negative; 'diplomatic efforts' → Positive.

#### 12. Actor Labelling (Y for Terrorists/Militants/Rebels)

- **Definition:** Terms used for non-state armed actors.
- **Categories:** Y (list terms, e.g., Terrorists/Militants/Rebels), N/A.

- **Rules:** Code 'Y' if labelled; specify terms (e.g., 'Terrorists' implies delegitimation).

### 13. Sources Quoted

- **Definition:** Types of sources directly quoted.
- **Categories:** Govt, Army, Civilian, NGO, Int'l, Other.
- **Rules:** List all applicable; prioritise direct quotes (e.g., 'Indian Govt, Civilian').

### 14. Presence of Kashmiri Voice

- **Definition:** Direct quotes from Kashmiri civilians/protesters.
- **Categories:** Y (yes), N (no).
- **Rules:** 'Y' only for direct quotes; exclude officials/militants unless identified as local.

### 15. Notes

- **Definition:** Additional observations or anomalies.
- **Categories:** Open text.
- **Rules:** Note biases, unique quotes, or missing context (e.g., 'No Kashmiri voices').

### Instructions:

- **Coding Process:** Read article twice (overview, then coding). Use source link; note access issues.
- **Tool:** Enter data in Excel for organisation and aggregation.
- **Reliability:** Pilot test; refine categories post-pilot.
- **Bias Mitigation:** Ground codes in text evidence; note assumptions in 'Notes.'

**Scope:** Designed for quick application, with deductive categories based on literature (e.g., framing, Orientalism).

## *B2. Final coding frame*

### Variables and Coding Instructions

#### 1. Article No.

- **Definition:** Unique identifier for the article.
- **Categories:** Numeric (e.g., 1, 2, ...).
- **Rules:** Assign sequentially from dataset.

#### 2. Article Title

- **Definition:** Full title of the article.
- **Categories:** Open text.
- **Rules:** Copy verbatim; note truncations in 'Notes.'

#### 3. Publication Date

- **Definition:** Date of publication.
- **Categories:** DD-MM-YYYY
- **Rules:** Use source date; convert to consistent format; mark 'N/A' if missing.

#### 4. Media Outlet

- **Definition:** Name of the news organisation.
- **Categories:** Open text (e.g., The New York Times, Anadolu Agency).
- **Rules:** Use full name

#### 5. Country of Origin

- **Definition:** Country of outlet's primary base/ownership.
- **Categories:** United States, United Kingdom, Israel, Qatar, Türkiye, China, Other.
- **Rules:** Based on headquarters (e.g., Xinhua → China). For multinational outlets, prioritise primary affiliation.

#### 6. Link

- **Definition:** URL to the article.
- **Categories:** Open text (hyperlinked if possible).
- **Rules:** Copy directly.

## 7. Headline Focus

- **Definition:** Central issue or event in the headline.
- **Categories:** Open text (5-10 words).
- **Rules:** Summarise key actors/events (e.g., 'Security Forces Kill Protesters'). Avoid interpretation.

## 8. Main Frame

- **Definition:** Dominant lens through which the conflict is presented.
- **Categories:** Human Rights, Terrorism/Militancy, Security, Geopolitical Conflict, Diplomacy, Political (e.g., Elections/Autonomy), Law & Order, Religious/Communal Tensions, Other.
- **Rules:** Code based on primary focus (>50% content). Example: Civilian injuries from state forces → Human Rights; militant attacks → Terrorism/Militancy. Clarified in pilot to handle overlaps (e.g., 'Terrorism/Security').

## 9. Secondary Frame (if any)

- **Definition:** Complementary frame to the main one.
- **Categories:** Same as Main Frame, or N/A.
- **Rules:** Code if significant (20-50% content). Example: Main Frame 'Terrorism/Militancy,' Secondary 'Geopolitical Tensions' if Pakistan's role is emphasised.

## 10. Overall Framing

- **Definition:** Holistic stance of the article toward the conflict.
- **Categories:** Sympathetic (to Kashmiris/victims), Critical (of specific actor), Balanced (equitable views), Pro-State (supports official narrative).

- **Rules:** Assess via balance, language, and sources. Added 'Sympathetic' post-pilot to capture humanising narratives (e.g., focus on civilian suffering). Example: 'Sympathetic to Kashmiris' for articles emphasising victimhood.

#### 11. Geopolitical Angle

- **Definition:** Alignment with a geopolitical stance.
- **Categories:** Pro-India, Pro-Pakistan, Neutral.
- **Rules:** Infer from framing, tone, sources (e.g., prioritising Indian officials → ProIndia). 'Neutral' if balanced or no clear bias.

#### 12. Tone towards Kashmiris

- **Definition:** Sentiment toward Kashmiri actors (civilians, protesters, militants).
- **Categories:** Positive (sympathetic), Neutral (factual), Negative (delegitimising).
- **Rules:** Assess via adjectives (e.g., 'oppressed' → Positive; 'terrorists' → Negative).

Pilot clarified to consider mixed portrayals (e.g., civilians vs. militants).

#### 13. Tone towards Indian State

- **Definition:** Sentiment toward Indian government/military.
- **Categories:** Positive, Neutral, Negative.
- **Rules:** E.g., 'counterterrorism success' → Positive; 'repressive crackdown' → Negative.

#### 14. Tone towards Pakistan

- **Definition:** Sentiment toward Pakistan's government/role.
- **Categories:** Positive, Neutral, Negative.
- **Rules:** E.g., 'sponsor of militancy' → Negative; 'diplomatic outreach' → Positive.

#### 15. Actor Labelling (Y for Terrorists/Militants/Rebels)

- **Definition:** Terms for non-state armed actors.
- **Categories:** Y (specify terms, e.g., Terrorists/Militants/Rebels), N/A.

- **Rules:** Code 'Y' if labelled; list all terms (e.g., 'Y (Militants/Terrorists)'). Pilot clarified distinctions (e.g., 'Terrorists' more pejorative than 'Rebels').

#### 16. Protest vs. Violence Label

- **Definition:** Framing of unrest/dissent in articles mentioning demonstrations.
- **Categories:** Protest (peaceful/resistance), Violence (riot/clash), Protest turned Violent, N/A.
- **Rules:** Code based on language (e.g., 'peaceful march' → Protest; 'riot' → Violence). Pilot added 'Protest turned Violent' for state-escalated events.

#### 17. Representation of Violence

- **Definition:** Attribution of violence in the narrative.
- **Categories:** State (e.g., Indian forces), Non-state actors (e.g., militants), Both, Indian State vs Pakistani State, N/A.
- **Rules:** Identify primary perpetrator(s). Example: Militant attacks → Non-state; civilian deaths by forces → State. Pilot added 'Indian State vs Pakistani State' for cross-border framing.

#### 18. Types of Sources Quoted

- **Definition:** Categories of quoted sources.
- **Categories:** Multi-select: Govt, Army, Civilian, NGO, Int'l, Other.
- **Rules:** List all that apply; prioritize direct quotes. Example: 'Indian Govt, Civilian, NGO.'

#### 19. Presence of Kashmiri Voice

- **Definition:** Direct quotes from Kashmiri civilians/protesters/separatists.
- **Categories:** Y (yes), N (no).
- **Rules:** 'Y' only for direct quotes; exclude officials unless identified as local.

#### 20. Emotionally Charged Language

- **Definition:** Use of vivid/emotive words to evoke response.
- **Categories:** Y (list 2-3 examples), N/A.
- **Rules:** Code 'Y' if present (e.g., 'massacre,' 'brutal'); quote examples. Pilot emphasised capturing human rights/repression terms (e.g., 'atrocities').

#### 21. Visual Framing (if image present)

- **Definition:** Narrative role of images/videos.
- **Categories:** Open-text (e.g., 'Mourning families'), N/A.
- **Rules:** Describe images and their emotive impact (e.g., securitized vs. humanising).

Added post-pilot for ideological analysis.

#### 22. Mentions of Islam or Religious Identity

- **Definition:** References to religion in conflict context.
- **Categories:** Y (yes), N (no).
- **Rules:** 'Y' if tied to conflict (e.g., Muslim-majority Kashmir, Islamist militants).

Added post-pilot to capture Orientalist framing.

#### 23. Mentions of Foreign Involvement

- **Definition:** References to external actors (e.g., Pakistan, UN).
- **Categories:** Y (yes), N (no).
- **Rules:** 'Y' for non-local involvement; note context in 'Notes.'

#### 24. Notes/Miscellaneous Observations

- **Definition:** Additional insights or anomalies.
- **Categories:** Open text.
- **Rules:** Record biases, unique quotes, or gaps (e.g., 'Aligns with Indian narrative; no civilian voices').

#### Instructions:

- **Coding Process:** Read article twice (overview, detailed coding). Use links; note access issues in 'Notes.'
- **Tool:** Use Excel for data entry and aggregation.
- **Reliability:** Pilot tested on 10 articles; 36 article inter-coder reliability targeted (Cohen's Kappa >0.75). Categories refined for clarity (e.g., added 'Sympathetic' in Overall Framing).
- **Bias Mitigation:** Ground codes in text; note assumptions in 'Notes.' Cross-reference with literature (e.g., Hall's encoding/decoding, Said's Orientalism).
- **Inductive Refinement:** Pilot revealed overlaps (e.g., Terrorism/Security); clarified terms with examples.
- **Ethical Notes:** Handle sensitive content neutrally; focus on analysis, not advocacy.

### **Key Differences (Initial vs. Final)**

1. Final frame includes 'Link,' 'Overall Framing,' 'Geopolitical Angle,' 'Protest vs. Violence Label,' 'Representation of Violence,' 'Emotionally Charged Language,' 'Visual Framing,' 'Mentions of Islam/Religious Identity,' and 'Mentions of Foreign Involvement' to capture ideological and visual dimensions (post-pilot).
2. 'Overall Framing' added 'Sympathetic' to reflect humanising narratives; 'Main Frame' expanded to include Diplomacy, Political, etc., for nuance. 'Protest vs. Violence' clarified with 'Protest turned Violent.'
3. Pilot testing added examples (e.g., 'massacre' for emotionally charged language) and handled overlaps (e.g., Terrorism/Security).
4. Initial frame was simpler for quick application; final frame is more comprehensive, aligning with critical discourse analysis (e.g., Fairclough).

### **Appendix C: Cohen's Kappa Calculations**

**NOTE: Only Key Variables from the Final Coding Sheet were Analysed**

#### **7. Articles given to the second coder (two per outlet)**

**Al Jazeera**

1. Article 91: India's Kashmir clampdown continues four years after Article 370 abrogated
2. Article 92: Troops deployed in troubled Kashmir

### **Anadolu Agency**

1. Article 161: With pellets lodged in eyes, Kashmiris fear going blind
2. Article 162: India kills '5 militants' along Kashmir de facto border

- **BBC**

1. Article 31: Nine die in Kashmir protest clashes
2. Article 32: Kashmir protests over Burhan Wani leave 36 dead

- **CNN**

1. Article 21: 5 Indian soldiers among 7 killed in Kashmir gun battles
2. Article 22: Kashmir attack that killed 37 soldiers deadliest in years

- **China Daily**

1. Article 141: China backs probe into Kashmir attack
2. Article 142: China calls for peace, dialogue on Kashmir

- **Daily Sabah**

1. Article 171: Rigid curfew imposed across Kashmir to prevent anti-India protests
2. Article 172: Clashes erupt in Kashmir after 13-year-old boy killed

- **Gulf Times**

1. Article 109: Indian-administered Kashmir to hold first local polls in a decade
2. Article 110: Kashmir in lockdown amid fears of unrest

- **Haaretz:**

1. Article 89: India and Pakistan Agree to a Cease-fire in U.S.-mediated Talks
2. Article 90: First Official Death in Indian Kashmir Protests; Pakistan Warns of Seeds of War

- **Jerusalem Post**

1. Article 61: India's October 7: Ambassador J. P. Singh speaks to 'Post' on terror attacks in Kashmir
2. Article 62: How Islamist militant groups in Pakistan's foreign policy affected the Kashmir conflict

- **SCMP (South China Morning Post)**
  1. Article 131: More than 10 dead after India, Pakistan exchange fire in Kashmir
  2. Article 132: 'Haunting silence' grips Kashmir as India-Pakistan clash keeps tourists away
- **The Daily Telegraph**
  1. Article 51: Terrorists spray bullets into crowd of tourists in Kashmir
  2. Article 52: Killing of top rebel commander by Indian forces in Kashmir triggers wave of protests
- **The Guardian**
  1. Article 41: Kashmir tensions high after deaths of men 'used as human shields'
  2. Article 42: Deadly attack on Kashmir military convoy
- **The New York Times**
  1. Article 1: 2 Are Killed in Kashmir as Security Forces Fire on Crowds Protesting Indian Rule
  2. Article 2: At Least 24 Tourists Gunned Down by Militants in Kashmir
- **The Peninsula**
  1. Article 111: India arrests two for harbouring Kashmir attackers
  2. Article 112: India's Supreme Court upholds revocation of Kashmir's autonomy
- **The Washington Post**
  1. Article 11: 7 suspected rebels, 1 Indian soldier killed in Kashmir
  2. Article 12: India hangs man for his role in 2001 parliament attack
- **Times of Israel**
  1. Article 71: At least 24 killed in massacre of tourists in Indian-controlled Kashmir
  2. Article 72: Netanyahu calls Modi to express condolences over Kashmir terror attack
- **TRT**
  1. Article 151: India restricts Laylat al Qadr prayers at Kashmir's largest mosque

2. Article 152: 'Your land is our land': Rights violations in India-administered Kashmir

- **Xinhua**

1. Article 121: 25 tourists killed in Indian-controlled Kashmir

2. Article 122: Policeman, militant killed in gunfight in Indian-controlled Kashmir

### 8. ICR calculations (N = 36)

**Formula:**  $\kappa = (P_o - P_e) / (1 - P_e)$

#### 1. Tone towards Kashmiris (Positive/Neutral/Negative)

**Marginals:**

- Coder1: Positive: 12, Neutral: 20, Negative: 4
- Coder2: Positive: 11, Neutral: 22, Negative: 3
- Total cases: 36

	Positive (C2)	Neutral (C2)	Negative (C2)	Total
Positive (C1)	11	1	0	12
Neutral (C1)	0	20	0	20
Negative (C1)	0	1	3	4
Total	11	22	3	36

Agreements: 11 (Positive) + 20 (Neutral) + 3 (Negative) = 34

$P_o = 34/36 = 0.9444$

Marginal probabilities:

Positive: Coder1 =  $12/36 = 0.3333$ , Coder2 =  $11/36 = 0.3056$

Neutral: Coder1 =  $20/36 = 0.5556$ , Coder2 =  $22/36 = 0.6111$

Negative: Coder1 =  $4/36 = 0.1111$ , Coder2 =  $3/36 = 0.0833$

$P_e = (0.3333 \times 0.3056) + (0.5556 \times 0.6111) + (0.1111 \times 0.0833)$

$$Pe=0.1019 + 0.3395 + 0.0093=0.4507 \quad Pe=0.1019 + 0.3395 + 0.0093= 0.4507 \quad \kappa=0.8987$$

Kappa for Tone towards Kashmiris: 0.90 (Excellent agreement)

## 2. Tone towards Indian State (Positive/Neutral/Negative)

### Marginals:

- Coder1: Negative: 15, Neutral: 11, Positive: 10
- Coder2: Negative: 15, Neutral: 12, Positive: 9
- Total cases: 36

	Positive (C2)	Neutral (C2)	Negative (C2)	Total
Positive (C1)	9	1	0	10
Neutral (C1)	0	11	0	11
Negative (C1)	0	0	15	15
Total	9	12	15	36

Agreements:  $9 + 11 + 15 = 35$

$$Po=35/36= 0.9722$$

Marginal probabilities:

Positive: Coder1 =  $10/36= 0.2778$ , Coder2 =  $9/36= 0.2500$

Neutral: Coder1 =  $11/36= 0.3056$ , Coder2 =  $12/36= 0.3333$

Negative: Coder1 =  $15/36= 0.4167$ , Coder2 =  $15/36= 0.4167$

$$Pe= (0.2778 \times 0.2500) + (0.3056 \times 0.3333) + (0.4167 \times 0.4167)$$

$$Pe=0.0694 + 0.1019 + 0.1736= 0.3449 \quad \kappa=$$

0.9576

Kappa for Tone towards Indian State: 0.96 (Excellent agreement)

### 3. Tone towards Pakistan (Neutral/Negative)

#### Marginals:

- Coder1: Neutral: 33, Negative: 3
- Coder2: Neutral: 32, Negative: 4
- Total cases: 36

	Neutral (C2)	Negative (C2)	Total
Neutral (C1)	32	1	33
Negative (C1)	0	3	3
Total	32	4	36

Agreements:  $32 + 3 = 35$

$P_o = 35/36 = 0.9722$

Marginal probabilities:

Neutral: Coder1 =  $33/36 = 0.9167$ , Coder2 =  $32/36 = 0.8889$

Negative: Coder1 =  $3/36 = 0.0833$ , Coder2 =  $4/36 = 0.1111$

$P_e = (0.9167 \times 0.8889) + (0.0833 \times 0.1111)$   $P_e = (0.9167 \times 0.8889) + (0.0833 \times 0.1111)$

$P_e = 0.8150 + 0.0093 = 0.8243$

$\kappa = 0.8417$

Kappa for Tone towards Pakistan: 0.84 (Excellent agreement)

### 4. Presence of Kashmiri Voice (Y/N)

#### Marginals:

- Coder1: Y: 12, N: 24
- Coder2: Y: 12, N: 24
- Total cases: 36

	Y (C2)	N (C2)	Total
Y (C1)	12	0	12
N (C1)	0	24	24
Total	12	24	36

Agreements:  $12 + 24 = 36$

$P_o = 36 / 36 = 1.0$

Marginal probabilities:

Y: Coder1 = Coder2 =  $12 / 36 = 0.3333$

N: Coder1 = Coder2 =  $24 / 36 = 0.6667$

$P_e = (0.3333 \times 0.3333) + (0.6667 \times 0.6667)$

$P_e = 0.1111 + 0.4444 = 0.5556$   $\kappa = 1.0$

Kappa for Presence of Kashmiri Voice: 1.00 (Perfect agreement)

## 5. Overall Framing (Sympathetic/Critical/Balanced/Pro-State)

**Marginals:**

- Coder1: Sympathetic: 12, Balanced: 15, Pro-State: 9
- Coder2: Sympathetic: 11, Balanced: 17, Pro-State: 8
- Total cases: 36

	Sympathetic (C2)	Balanced (C2)	Pro-State (C2)	Total
Sympathetic (C1)	11	1	0	12
Balanced (C1)	0	15	0	15
Pro-State (C1)	0	1	8	9
Total	11	17	8	36

Agreements:  $11 + 15 + 8 = 34$

$P_o = 34 / 36 = 0.9444$

Marginal probabilities:

Sympathetic: Coder1 =  $12/36 = 0.3333$ , Coder2 =  $11/36 = 0.3056$

Balanced: Coder1 =  $15/36 = 0.4167$ , Coder2 =  $17/36 = 0.4722$

Pro-State: Coder1 =  $9/36 = 0.2500$ , Coder2 =  $8/36 = 0.2222$

$P_e = (0.3333 \times 0.3056) + (0.4167 \times 0.4722) + (0.2500 \times 0.2222)$

$P_e = 0.1019 + 0.1968 + 0.0556 = 0.3543$   $\kappa = 0.9138$

Kappa for Overall Framing: 0.91 (Excellent agreement)

## 6. Geopolitical Angle (Pro-India/Pro-Pakistan/Neutral)

**Marginals:**

- Coder1: Neutral: 26, Pro-India: 9, Pro-Pakistan: 1
- Coder2: Neutral: 30, Pro-India: 5, Pro-Pakistan: 1
- Total cases: 36

	Neutral (C2)	Pro-India (C2)	Pro-Pakistan (C2)	Total
Neutral (C1)	26	0	0	26
Pro-India (C1)	4	5	0	9
Pro-Pakistan (C1)	0	0	1	1
Total	30	5	1	36

Agreements:  $26 + 5 + 1 = 32$

$P_o = 32/36 = 0.8889$

Marginal probabilities:

Neutral: Coder1 =  $26/36 = 0.7222$ , Coder2 =  $30/36 = 0.8333$

Pro-India: Coder1 =  $9/36 = 0.2500$ , Coder2 =  $5/36 = 0.1389$

Pro-Pakistan: Coder1 =  $1/36 = 0.0278$ , Coder2 =  $1/36 = 0.0278$

$$Pe = (0.7222 \times 0.8333) + (0.2500 \times 0.1389) + (0.0278 \times 0.0278)$$

$$Pe = 0.6019 + 0.0347 + 0.0008 = 0.6374 \quad \kappa = 0.6936$$

Kappa for Geopolitical Angle: 0.69 (Substantial agreement)

$$\text{Average } \kappa = (0.90 + 0.96 + 0.84 + 1.00 + 0.91 + 0.69) / 6 = 0.8833$$

Average Cohen's Kappa: 0.88

## Appendix D: Final Code sheet

Note: The full dataset is available in the Google Sheet:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1S7bPVTToGn6Xa8xLtn0eA5oxle7wZDI8gdjDWtkn6NE/edit?usp=sharing>

The condensed tables below contain sufficient information for understanding the core codes discussed in the thesis.

No.	Title	Date	Outlet	Country	Main Frame	Tone (Kashmiris)	Tone (India)	Tone (Pakistan)	Overall Framing	Geo Angle
1	2 Are Killed in Kashmir as Security Forces Fire on Crowds Protesting Indian Rule	2010-06-28	The New York Times	United States	Human Rights	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral
11	7 suspected rebels, 1 Indian soldier killed in Kashmir	2020-08-29	The Washington Post	United States	Security	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
21	5 Indian soldiers among 7 killed in Kashmir gun battles	2021-10-11	CNN	United States	Security	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Pro-State	Pro-India

31	Nine die in Kashmir protest clashes	2010-08-02	BBC	United Kingdom	Security	Neutral	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral
41	Kashmir tensions high after deaths of men 'used as human shields'	2021-11-20	The Guardian	United Kingdom	Human Rights	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral leaning toward critical of India

51	Terrorists spray bullets into crowd of tourists in Kashmir	2025-04-22	The Daily Telegraph	United Kingdom	Terrorism/Militancy	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Pro-State	Pro-India
61	India's October 7: Ambassador J. P. Singh speaks to 'Post' on terror attacks in Kashmir	2025-05-17	Jerusalem Post	Israel	Terrorism/Militancy	Negative	Positive	Negative	Pro-State	Pro-India
71	At least 24 killed in massacre of tourists in Indian-controlled Kashmir	2025-04-22	Times of Israel	Israel	Terrorism/Militancy	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Pro-State	Pro-India
81	In First, ISIS Claims 'Province' in India After Kashmir Clashes	2019-05-12	Haaretz	Israel	Terrorism/Militancy	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Pro-State	Pro-India
91	India's Kashmir clampdown continues four years after Article 370 abrogated	2023-08-05	Al Jazeera	Qatar	Human Rights	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral
101	Two killed, seven hurt in Kashmir grenade attacks	2019-11-26	Gulf Times	Qatar	Security	Neutral	Negative	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
111	India arrests two for harbouring Kashmir attackers	2025-06-22	The Peninsula	Qatar	Terrorism/Militancy	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Pro-State	Pro-India
121	25 tourists killed in Indian-controlled Kashmir	2025-04-22	Xinhua	China	Terrorism/Militancy	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
131	More than 10 dead after India, Pakistan exchange fire in Kashmir	2020-11-13	South China Morning Post	China	Security	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
141	China backs probe into Kashmir attack	2025-04-28	China Daily	China	Diplomacy	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
151	India restricts Laylat al Qadr prayers at Kashmir's largest mosque	2025-03-28	TRT	Türkiye	Human Rights	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral leaning
										toward critical of India

161	With pellets lodged in eyes, Kashmiris fear going blind	2016-07-12	Anadolu Agency	Türkiye	Human Rights	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral leaning toward critical of India
171	Rigid curfew imposed across Kashmir to prevent anti-India protests	2016-08-05	Daily Sabah	Türkiye	Human Rights	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral

## Appendix E: Coder 2 Code Sheet (ICR)

Note: *The full dataset is available in the Google Sheet:*  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NXzYOacqIpzJVe3uV85hxiDs5bZDvY8GMLyZnzj7NE/edit?usp=sharing>

*The condensed tables below contain sufficient information for understanding the core codes discussed in the thesis.*

No.	Title	Date	Outlet	Country	Main Frame	Tone (Kashmiris)	Tone (India)	Tone (Pakistan)	Overall Framing	Geo Angle
1	2 Are Killed in Kashmir as Security Forces Fire on Crowds Protesting Indian Rule	2010-06-28	The New York Times	United States	Human Rights	Neutral	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral
2	At Least 24 Tourists Gunned Down by Militants in Kashmir	2025-04-22	The New York Times	United States	Security	Negative	Neutral	Neutral	Pro-state	Pro-India
3	7 suspected rebels, 1 Indian soldier killed in Kashmir	2020-08-29	The Washington Post	United States	Security	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
4	India hangs man for his role in 2001 parliament attack	2013-02-09	The Washington Post	United States	Terrorism	Neutral	Neutral to slightly positive	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
5	5 Indian soldiers among 7 killed in Kashmir gun battles	2021-10-11	CNN	United States	Security	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Pro-State	Neutral
6	Kashmir attack that killed 37 soldiers deadliest in years	2019-02-15	CNN	United States	Terrorism	Neutral	Neutral	Negative	Pro-State	Neutral
7	Nine die in Kashmir protest clashes	2010-08-02	BBC	United Kingdom	Security	Neutral	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral

8	Kashmir protests over Burhan Wani leave 36 dead	2016-07-13	BBC	United Kingdom	Security	Positive	Neutral to Negative	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
9	Kashmir tensions high after deaths of men 'used as human shields'	2021-11-20	The Guardian	United Kingdom	Human Rights	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral
10	Deadly attack on Kashmir military convoy	2010-10-20	The Guardian	United Kingdom	Security	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
11	Terrorists spray bullets into crowd of tourists in Kashmir	2025-04-22	The Daily Telegraph	United Kingdom	Security	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
12	Killing of top rebel commander by Indian forces in Kashmir triggers wave of protests	2020-05-07	The Daily Telegraph	United Kingdom	Security	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
13	India's October 7: Ambassador J. P. Singh speaks to 'Post' on terror attacks in Kashmir	2025-05-17	Jerusalem Post	Israel	Terrorism	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Pro-State	Neutral
14	How Islamist militant groups in Pakistan's foreign policy affected the Kashmir conflict	2025-05-10	Jerusalem Post	Israel	Security	Negative	Positive	Negative	Pro-State	Pro-India
15	At least 24 killed in massacre of tourists in Indiancontrolled Kashmir	2025-04-22	Times of Israel	Israel	Terrorism	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Pro-State	Pro-India
16	Netanyahu calls Modi to express condolences over Kashmir terror attack	2025-04-24	Times of Israel	Israel	Security	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Pro-State	Pro-India
17	India and Pakistan Agree to a Ceasefire in U.S.mediated Talks	2025-05-10	Haaretz	Israel	Security	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
18	First Official Death in Indian Kashmir Protests; Pakistan Warns of Seeds of War	2019-09-04	Haaretz	Israel	Security	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Balanced	Neutral
19	India's Kashmir clampdown continues four years after Article 370 abrogated	2023-08-05	Al Jazeera	Qatar	Human Rights	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral
20	Troops deployed in troubled Kashmir	2010-09-17	Al Jazeera	Qatar	Security	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Sympathetic to Kashmiris	Neutral

## Appendix F: Corpus of Articles Analysed Using CDA

## NYT:

Mashal, M., & Raj, S. (2025, April 23). Killing of civilians near Pahalgam in Kashmir shatters illusion of calm. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/04/23/world/asia/kashmir-attack-india-pakistan.html>

Kumar, H., & Najar, N. (2016, July 14). Eye injuries flood Kashmir hospitals after police fire pellets at protesters. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/14/world/asia/jammu-kashmir-protests-india.html>

## Washington Post:

Masih, N., & Irfan, S. (2021, October 16). *In Kashmir, militants target minority civilians, stoking fears of a return to violent past.* *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/10/16/india-kashmir-civilian-killings/>

Slater, J. (2019, March 27). From scholars into militants: Educated Kashmiri youths are joining an anti-India insurgency. *The Washington Post*. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/from-scholar-to-militant-why-more-kashmiri-youth-are-joining-an-insurgency-against-india/2019/03/26/2a6e92c645ce-11e9-94ab-d2dda3c0df52\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/from-scholar-to-militant-why-more-kashmiri-youth-are-joining-an-insurgency-against-india/2019/03/26/2a6e92c645ce-11e9-94ab-d2dda3c0df52_story.html)

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Ahmed, M., & Gupta, S. (2019, February 14). Kashmir attack that killed 37 soldiers deadliest in years. *CNN*. <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/02/14/asia/kashmir-attack-india-busattack-intl>

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Kashmir protests over Burhan Wani leave 36 dead. (2016, July 13). *BBC News*  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-36781367>

#### **The Guardian:**

Hassan, A., & Ellis-Peterson, H. (2021, November 20). Kashmir tensions high after deaths of men 'used as human shields.' *The Guardian*.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/nov/20/kashmir-deaths-human-shieldsindia-police>

Hassan, A. (2022, June 5). 'Fear is increasing': Hindus flee Kashmir amid spate of targeted killings.

*The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/05/fear-is-increasing-hindus-flee-kashmir-amid-spate-of-targeted-killings>

#### **The Daily Telegraph:**

Lateef, S. (2025, April 22). India attack: Terrorists in Kashmir fire at crowd of tourists. *The Telegraph*. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2025/04/22/terrorists-spray-bullets-crowd-tourists-india-kashmir/>

Farmer, B. (2019, May 24). Killing of 'most wanted' al-Qaeda linked Kashmir militant sparks protest. *The Telegraph*. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/05/24/killing-wanted-al-qaeda-linked-kashmir-militant-sparks-protest/>

#### **Jerusalem Post:**

Spyer, J. (2025, May 10). How Islamist militant groups in Pakistan's foreign policy affected the Kashmir conflict. *The Jerusalem Post*. <https://www.jpost.com/international/article-853266>

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#### **Xinhua:**

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