



## Takeover of Afghanistan by Taliban: Analysis of Newspapers' Frames and Foreign Office Statements

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### Abstract

This paper reflects the existing scholarly debate on media-foreign policy relationship and its application, in varying circumstances, on Afghanistan under the guise of Galtung's War and Peace Journalism model. The Researcher quantitatively analyzed, The New York Times and Moscow Times from 15<sup>th</sup> August 2020 to 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022 (one year before and one year after Kabul's takeover by Taliban) in the backdrop of foreign policy statements. The New York Times remained stuck to War Journalism with respect to Afghan Taliban during both time periods (pre and post Kabul takeover periods). However, Foreign office statements of US shifted from War Journalism (during pre-Kabul takeover period) to Peace Journalism (during after takeover period). Contrary to this, coverage of Moscow Times changed from War Journalism (during pre-takeover period) to Peace Journalism (during post takeover period) amid peace dominated Russian Foreign office statements during both time periods.

**Keywords:** Afghan Taliban, War and Peace Journalism, CNN effect, Manufacturing Consent, Communicative Peace and Communicative Violence, Afghanistan

Takeover of Kabul by Taliban forces was a highly unexpected event especially when NATO forces remained deployed in Afghanistan for 20 years but foreign assisted government collapsed immediately after withdrawal of US and allied forces. While calculating the economic cost of this war, Brown University (2021) stated that US spent \$ 2.313 trillion from 2001-2021 in a war against Taliban which was started after 9/11.

An investigation of the role of the media regarding unanticipated Taliban takeover of Afghanistan through the lens of War and Peace Journalism model presented by John Galtung in 1970s has been the subject of this study; owing to the fact that Galtung's War and Peace Journalism model has emerged as a conspicuous framework (Tenenboim-Weinblatt et al., 2016).

However, Galtung's War and Peace Journalism model has been censured on theoretical grounds for, laying too much emphasis on peace, ignoring objectivity and being normative (Wolfsfeld, 2004; Hanitzsch, 2004a; Loyn, 2004). At the same time, it has been taken to task overlooking implementation realities (Ottosen, 2010).

The extant literature suggests two major approaches towards media state relationship i.e manufacturing consent and CNN effect. Proponents of manufacturing consent argue that states' interests affect the interpretations (frames) made by the media while exponents of CNN effect (Media effect over foreign policy) believe otherwise (Robinson, 2001). Using content analysis approach, this article quantitatively examines media-foreign policy statements relationship in two major newspapers of the world i.e The New York Times and Moscow Times during pre and post Kabul takeover period in view of Y Wang's call for exploration of how media interpretations relate with foreign policies in War and Peace paradigm under varying circumstances (Wang, 2022).

### 1. Contextual understanding of changing situations on Afghanistan

The vicissitudes of states' interests over Afghanistan issue have considerably impacted the interpretations (frames) about Taliban. On November 13, 1987, then US President Ronald Reagan met Taliban Commander Jalal ud Din Haqqani at White House and supported Afghan fighters against the then USSR and labelled their fight as a fight for the independence of Afghanistan (YouTube 2017).

After 9/11, situation changed completely and Taliban especially Haqqani network became enemy of the CIA (Reuters 2011). Contrary to this, Russia was fighting against Haqqanis and other Afghan fighters from 1979 to 1989 but after US invasion of Afghanistan, interpretations about Taliban in Russian government circles changed. On US withdrawal from Afghanistan, Russian Foreign Office stated (on 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2021) "developments in Kabul and Afghanistan as a whole are stabilizing. The Taliban have started enforcing public order and reaffirmed its guarantees of safety for local residents and foreign diplomatic mission".

In this regard, Zalesny (2003) while studying conflicts concluded that complicated or intractable issues are defined differently in different situations or environments. Such intractable conflicts are difficult to be resolved because of its different interpretations in different situations.

#### 1.1. Approaches to understand Media-Foreign Policy relationship

There are two approaches to understand the relationship between Media and Foreign Policy; Realist approach (Manufacturing Consent proponents) and Liberal Approach (Proponents of CNN effect). Realists are of the view that media act as a tool of foreign policy. Foreign policy elites set the agenda while public and media largely follow it. On the other hand, Liberals are of the view that institutions and states act according to norms and rules that evolve over the period of time. Under this approach, media as state institution act according to particular role and have the capacity to shape public opinion and in turn foreign policy (Robinson, 2017).

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There is impending debate in research community whether media coverage influences the foreign policy (Foreign Policy statements) or it is otherwise, which is also the subject of this research.

In this study to understand aforementioned phenomena, conflict reporting has been divided into three phases; pre, during and post conflict situations, similar to four stages of conflict as demonstrated by Eytan Gilboa; onset, escalation, de-escalation and termination (Gilboa, 2007).

### **1.2. Pre stage conflict situation**

US intervention in Somalia and Iraq (due to media role in pre conflict situation) started a debate regarding impact of media on foreign policy. Kennan (1993) (as cited in Robinson (2005)) argued that after Iraq and Somalia's war elite control of foreign policy had been relinquished to media.

Similarly, analyzing US intervention in Somalia, Cohen and Mandelbaum (1994) (as cited in Eytan Gilboa, 2005) argued in their study that continuous coverage, forced US government to intervene in Somalia on human grounds. Auerbach et al (1995) analyzed in his study "Media Framing and Foreign Policy: The Elite Press vis-à-vis US policy in Bosnia" that New York Times and Washington Post presented the Bosnian crisis as a crisis which matters to US interests, ultimately, US intervened in Bosnia.

James F Hoge (1994) held similar grounds and contended that continuous flow of information from Print and Electronic media impacts decision making of foreign policy experts (James H Hoge, 1994).

Steven Livingston (1997) in his study "Clarifying the CNN effect: An Examination of Media Effects according to type of Military Intervention Elaborated the Effects of Media on Foreign Policy" argued that there are three types of media effects; accelerator effect, impediment effect and agenda setting function. As an accelerant effect, media shortens the response time of decision making. As an impediment to the policy goals, media serves as an obstacle to achieve policy goals while as an agenda setting function, it raises humanitarian issues.

Srivastava (2009) further delineated the media effects and concluded in his research that state officials get information about foreign issues through media which affects their decision making process.

Naveh and Chanan (2022) in their study "The Role of Media in Foreign Policy Decision making" elaborated the role of media in all stages of policy formulation. Political leaders take the media into consideration while making their opinion on national and international issues.

Elaborating the notion of media effects on foreign policy narrative, Robinson (2000) (as cited in Eytan Gilboa, 2005) found out that media's influence is maximum when policy is uncertain (Gilboa, 2005).

### **1.3. During conflict situation**

Renowned scholars Edward S Herman and Noam Chomsky (2019), who is considered to be proponent of Manufacturing Consent notion, opined that US media always put forth pro system propaganda by utilizing market forces. (S. Herman & Chomsky, 2019)

Gibbs (2002), following the similar school of thought, contended that US media eulogized Afghan fighters when they were fighting against Soviet occupation in 1970s and 80s later on when they transformed into Taliban and started fighting against US forces, the entire discourse changed. American Press portrayed the war against Taliban as a war against evils of Islamic extremism (Gibbs, 2002).

During conflicts, states use media in order to convince the public, Griffin (2004) and Guardino (2010) found out that selective frames were used during Iraq War, resultantly, Americans were unable to weigh the claims of Bush administration's statements objectively. Press followed national narrative (foreign policy statements) and rarely contribute to the independent journalism (Griffin, 2004); (Hayes & Guardino, 2010).

Even the research has validated that states in differentiated environments use the same ploy, Godefroidt et al (2016) carried out a study "What's in a frame? A comparative content analysis of American, British, French, and Russian news articles". Researchers found out that nationalistic frames dominated the coverage during conflicts (Godefroidt et al., 2016). Responsible leadership and environment reduces conflict (Jabeen et al., 2024).

Even in recent studies, media's alignment with the state during conflicts has been persistently found, Shabbir et al and Hussain and Munawar (2017) reiterated that media presents biased coverage of the conflicts in favor of the state (Shabbir et al., 2011; Hussain and Munawar, 2017).

However, there are certain events which change the discourse of frames for example Shrine bombing in Iraq changed the nature of frames of The New York Times from White House dominated frames to military dominated frames (Speer, 2017). Additionally, journalists have a say when frames are event driven (Vinet & Zhedanov, 2011).

### **1.4. Post Conflict situation**

Media's consonance with the state is also found during post conflict situations. Nacos et al (2018) underscored in their study "US media and post 9/11 Human Rights Violations in the name of counter terrorism" that US media failed to sensitize the US citizens on human rights violations which were carried out in the name of counter terrorism operations in post 9/11 incidents. US' citizens were unaware of extreme torturing incidents in US controlled foreign prisons.

Pan et al (2022) argued in his study "How government controlled media shifts policy attitudes (post conflict situation) through framing" that authoritarian regime execute their policy change on domestic and international issues by using different types of media framing. Media sensitisation has crucial role in policy issues (Iqbal et al., 2024) and motivate (Ramzan et al., 2023).

Contrarily, there are certain researchers who opposed the finite explanation of frames behavior as Gronomeyer et al (2019) broached that framing process is context specific. He further delineated that when warring sides suffer losses, policy is uncertain and foreign policy elites are divided during conflicts, media starts to impact foreign policy decisions for example increasing fatalities of ISAF forces increased the media coverage and hence mounted public pressure for withdrawal of the forces from Afghanistan (Fetzer et al., 2021). Similarly, US media criticized state in Vietnam and Iraq War (Griffin, 2004); (Hayes & Guardino, 2010).

### **1.5. Impact of War and Peace Journalism**

In order to gauge the impacts of War and Peace journalism frames, Jake Lynch and Annabel Mcgoldrick (2016) conducted a study on the effects of War and Peace Journalism. Researchers showed two types of articles i.e War and Peace journalism to audience and then comprehended their response, significant difference was found out. The audience who were showed Peace Journalism articles were more empathetic towards solving the problems and supported counter hegemony to support non-violent approach towards complex issues. While the audience who were showed War journalism articles were non empathetic (McGoldrick & Lynch, 2016).

## **2. Theoretical Background**

War and Peace Journalism model presented by John Galtung and Framing theory presented by Erving Goffman have been applied in this study.

To identify War and Peace stories; nine War and Peace indicators apiece highlighted in the Galtung's model have been used in this study while War stories have been classified into direct violence, structural violence and cultural violence; Peace stories have been categorized into positive and negative peace as per the War and Peace Journalism model. Besides, Framing theory has been applied in this paper with the concept of War and Peace Journalism frames (Hussain & Siraj, 2019).

For Foreign Policy statements; Arnfred Bojesen (2018) model of communicative peace has been used. She transformed Galtung's classification of peace i.e Positive and Negative Peace into Communicative Positive Peace and Communicative Negative Peace. While violence was categorized into Communicative Direct Violence, Communicative Structural Violence and Communicative Cultural Violence. Communication impacts emotions (Javaid et al., 2023). She was of the opinion that communication as discursive power can be destructively, damage the political structures and democratic principles, simultaneously, communication can be used for peace building among different networks of the society. (Hansen & Bojesen, 2018).

Foreign office statements were selected because they represent the foreign policy of respective country substantively; however, foreign policy political statements have been ignored because they often portray rhetoric (Hacker et al, 2013). Political statements do interfere in psychological discursiveness (Ramzan et al., 2023). Second language impact the interaction as well (Ikramullah et al., 2023). Working policies improves engagement of administrators (Fatima et al., 2024) and less conflicts (Ali et al., 2024).

Frames within the pretext of framing theory are considered interpretations which are significant because they help the audience to interpret reality and make sense out of the events (Hoffmann, 2011). War and Peace frames hold significance as they impact the interpretations of audience and in turn their behavior (McGoldrick & Lynch, 2016). However, it is considered that frames are event driven in certain situations (Vinet & Zhedanov, 2011). So, in the context of this research, it was important to analyze whether takeover of Kabul by Taliban impacted frames in major newspapers of world. This premise leads to the first research question.

### **RQ1: What was the change in amount of coverage of Afghan Taliban in leading International English newspapers after Afghanistan's Takeover?**

Literature further suggests that there is more tendency towards War journalism in the media and journalists prefer the same due to patriotism particularly during conflicts (Barnett and Roselle, 2008; Goddard et al., 2008), so it was imperative to comprehend whether the same trend was followed in the press of subjected countries during Kabul takeover by Taliban especially in a circumstances when one country was involved in conflict i.e US and other country was not i.e Russia.

### **RQ2: Which type of frame i.e War or Peace Journalism remained dominant during conflict and post Afghanistan's takeover period?**

Galtung (1996) conceptualized war journalism into three categories i.e direct violence, cultural violence and structural violence while Peace journalism into positive peace and negative peace, subsequently Galtung advocated for Peace journalism; however, Peace journalism has been under scrutiny due to its practical weaknesses (Kempf, 2010; Lynch, 2015). Moral injury can be balanced with other influences (Javaid et al., 2024). In this regard, some researchers have expressed the need to further understand how War and Peace is conceptualized (Gouse et al., 2019), so this need leads to the formation of following research question.

### **RQ3: Which type and category of peace/violence was most covered during before and after period of Afghanistan's Takeover?**

This study been subject to research in the backdrop of research gap highlighted by Y Wang that relationship between media interpretations and foreign policies in War and Peace Paradigm should be explored (Wang, 2022). This research gap transpires into following research question.

### **RQ4: What was the relationship between foreign office statements and media frames in terms of war and peace journalism during before and after Afghanistan's takeover period?**

### 3. Method

Galtung's War and Peace Journalism Model has been selected to analyze the role of media during Afghanistan conflict because the subjected model is considered to be better model as compared to other models e.g Cascading model, indexing hypothesis model, propaganda tool model etc (Wang, 2022).

For the empirical testing of Galtung model on Afghanistan's situation, post positivist approach has been applied as similar to majority of war and peace studies (Siraj, 2008; Maslog et al., 2006). This approach suits to the purpose of this study i.e to determine the nature (either War or Peace stories) and quantity of war and peace stories during pre and post period of Afghanistan's takeover in international newspapers (of different countries) that have different foreign policies.

Quantitative content analysis technique has been applied for data collection which is often considered as tool to describe the characteristics of the content (Riffe et al, 2014). While according to Youngblood (2012) and Lynch (2014), content analysis is the most widely practiced technique in Peace journalism studies.

News items, articles and editorials pertaining to Afghan Taliban in The New York Times and Moscow Times from 15<sup>th</sup> August 2020 to 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022 (i.e One year before and one year after Taliban's takeover) have been taken in order to properly contextualize the change in nature of frames scenario as Grier (2010) asserted that journalistic ideals regarding timeliness cause the loss of frames and ultimately led them to cover the stories beyond war context. Leading newspapers of both countries were considered; Wall Street Journal is the leading newspaper of US but was not available in its complete form (only abstracts were available) in Lexis and Nexis, so The New York Times was selected (second most circulated paper of US as per Agility PR solutions) while Moscow Times is the leading English Newspaper of Russia which is also only Russian newspaper available on Lexis and Nexis. Secondly, The New York Times and Moscow Times have shown quite independence in the past. The New York Times criticized US foreign policy during Vietnam War when there was elite dissensus while Moscow Times was banned from publishing from within Russia due to its critical coverage on Russian foreign policy during Ukraine War.

Simultaneously, Foreign office statements on websites of Foreign offices of US and Russia have been considered during the same period in order to find correlation among the selected newspapers and foreign policy statements of the respective countries.

Lexis- Nexis was used to retrieve data relating to Afghan Taliban from The New York Times and Moscow Times using the keyword "Afghan Taliban". Further Census study was carried out for newspapers and foreign policy statements (press releases, press notes, press briefings of foreign office, reports etc). However, in order to maintain numerical balance between two groups (Newspapers and Foreign Policy statements) for the purpose of correlation (association), random sampling (of newspaper data) was done via Excel Sheet.

For the identification and classification of War and Peace frames, War and Peace indicators and categories as highlighted in Galtung's War and Peace Journalism model have been applied in this study.

War and Peace indicators have been majorly operationalized into two types; criteria based and language based indicators while War frames are classified into elite, propaganda, violence and differences; Peace frames are classified into people, truth, peace and solution.

For newspapers coverage, variables were; types of newspaper, types of frames, categories of frames. For Foreign Policy, categories and types of communication were taken as variables.

War Journalism is based on the definition of violence. Galtung (2007) defined violence as unnecessary harm to people's basic needs. Violence was further classified into direct, structural and cultural violence. Direct violence represents extortion, killing, injury, kidnappings, threats etc. Structural violence denotes injustices that are embedded into social system, preference of minority over majority etc. Cultural violence invokes the culture of superiority or inferiority without respect to race, class and sex which resultantly causes structural and direct violence.

Moreover, Peace was categorized into Positive and Negative Peace. Galtung (1996, as cited in Gouse et al, 2019) stated that Positive Peace is a term used to refer long term peace which hinges upon long term investments, economic progress, strength of institutions and attitudes that foster Peace while Negative Peace represents absence of physical (direct) violence.

For operationalization of Foreign office statements, Arnfred Bojesen's (2018) model of Communicative Peace has been used (which has been derived from Galtung model of War and Peace journalism). Under this model, Communicative Direct Violence represents use of words such as terrorist, assassination, brutal, condemn etc or harm people's integrity or individual freedom, use of threat and power, sanctions, threat etc. While Communicative Cultural Violence denotes statements that creates polarization and otherization of certain groups i.e they versus us etc Communicative Structural Violence demonstrates allegations and propaganda.

Alternatively, Communicative Positive Peace shows constructive debate, talks of development, justice equality, multiparty solutions etc; Communicative Negative Peace exhibits maintaining status quo without any negative statements.

### 4. Findings

**RQ1: What was the change in amount of coverage of Afghan Taliban in leading International English newspapers after Afghanistan's Takeover?**

**Ans:** There was slight increase in coverage from pre takeover period to after takeover period. The New York Times which published 522 stories (Articles, News items and editorials) from 15<sup>th</sup> August 2020 to 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021 (before

takeover) increased to **623** stories (after takeover) from 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021 to 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022 while Foreign office statements which include Press Releases, Press Notes, Press Briefings etc were significantly increased from **12 to 32** from pre takeover period to post takeover period.

On the other hand, Moscow Times had little coverage as compared to The New York Times. **32** news stories were covered; of which **13** were published during before takeover time period while 19 were published during after takeover time period. There were **25** foreign policy statements; out of which **11** were issued during before takeover time period while **14** were issued during after takeover time period.

**RQ2: Which type of frame i.e War or Peace Journalism remained dominant during conflict and post Afghanistan’s takeover period?**

**Ans:** In The New York Times, the percentage of War and Peace frames almost remained same during pre and post coverage of Afghanistan’s takeover. During pre-takeover period 484 stories supported War Journalism and 35 stories favored Peace Journalism; however, during after takeover period, 579 stories (news items, articles and editorials) favored War journalism while 41 stories supported Peace Journalism.

In Moscow Times, during pre-takeover period, 3 stories were peace oriented and 10 stories were War Journalism oriented. There was complete shift during after takeover period as 14 stories were leaned towards peace journalism while 5 stories were tilted towards War Journalism.

Under Foreign Office communication (US); during before takeover time period, 11 foreign policy statements were issued; of which 6 were leaned towards War Communication while 5 were covered with peace communication lexicon.

During after takeover time period, 30 foreign office statements (US) were issued, out of which 22 were Peace communication oriented while 8 statements were covered with War Communication.

Similarly, at the behest of Russian foreign office, during before takeover time period, 11 Foreign policy statements were issued, out of which 4 were covered with War Communication while 7 were covered with Peace Communication.

During after takeover period, 14 Foreign Policy statements (Russia) were issued, all were covered with Peace Communication.

**RQ3: Which type and category of peace/violence was most covered during before and after period of Afghanistan’s Takeover?**

**Ans** In The New York Times, during pre-takeover time period, Direct Violence dominated the coverage with 330 stories, Cultural Violence stories tallied to 105 and stories covered with structural violence were 52. However, there were only 35 stories that discussed Negative Peace.

In The New York Times, during post time period, Direct Violence was most covered frame with 270 stories, while Cultural Violence was represented with 197 stories, and Structural Violence with 114 stories; however, Negative Peace was showed with 42 stories.

In Moscow Times, during pre-takeover time period, Direct Violence dominated the coverage with 10 stories, while only three stories were leaned towards Negative Peace.

In the same newspaper, during post takeover time period, Negative Peace stories led the coverage with 12 stories, positive peace was discussed only in one story, while Direct Violence was covered in five stories.

Under the rubric of Foreign Policy (US Foreign Office) and during pre-takeover period, 6 Foreign office statements were issued with Communicative Cultural Violence, while 5 statements were covered with Negative Peace.

During after takeover period (US Foreign Office), 11 Foreign office statements were covered with Positive and Negative Peace apiece, while 8 Foreign Policy statements remained stuck to Communicative Cultural Violence.

Under Foreign Policy statements of Russian Foreign Office, during pre-takeover time period, 6 Foreign office statements were covered with Positive Peace, while one with Negative Peace and remaining 4 with Direct Violence.

In the similar vein, during after takeover period, the entire 14 statements were covered with Positive Peace.

**Table 1: Distribution of Data according to types of War and Peace frames**

Newspapers The New York Times	Number of Stories	
	Before Taliban Takeover	After Taliban Takeover
Direct Violence	330	270
Cultural Violence	105	197
Structural Violence	52	114
Negative Peace	35	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>623</b>
<b>US Foreign Office Statements</b>	<b>Before</b>	<b>After</b>
Communicative Cultural Violence	7	9
Communicative Negative Peace	5	12
Communicative Positive Peace		11
Total	<b>12</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Moscow Times</b>	<b>Before</b>	<b>After</b>
Direct Violence	10	5

Positive Peace	-	1
Negative Peace	3	12
Total	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Russian Foreign Office Statements</b>	<b>Before</b>	<b>After</b>
Communicative Direct Violence	4	
Communicative Positive Peace	6	14
Communicative Negative Peace	1	
Total	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>

**Table 2: Distribution of Data according to Categories of War and Peace Journalism Model**

Newspapers	Number of stories	
	Before Takeover	After Takeover
The New York Times	No of Stories	No of stories
Violence (War Journalism)	443	473
Elite(War Journalism)	43	30
Solution (Peace Journalism)	17	
Differences(War Journalism)		78
Propaganda (War Journalism)	1	
Peace (Peace Journalism)	18	30
People (Peace Journalism)		12
<b>Total</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>623</b>
<b>Moscow Times</b>		
Violence (War Journalism)	6	6
Elite (War Journalism)	2	
Differences (War Journalism)	2	
Peace (Peace Journalism)	3	4
Truth (Peace Journalism)		5
People (Peace Journalism)		3
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>

**RQ4: What was the relationship between foreign office statements and media frames in terms of war and peace journalism during before and after Afghanistan's takeover period?**

There was moderate (Pearson) correlation (association) **0.346** between NYT and Foreign Policy statements during pre-Kabul takeover period, value of P was **0.297** which is insignificant while during post takeover period their correlation stood at **-0.443** which is moderate and negative in nature. Value of P was **0.0104** which is significant.

There was weak negative correlation (association) between Moscow Times and Foreign Policy statements during pre-takeover period (association) **-0.134**, value of P was **0.695** which is insignificant while during post takeover period their correlation stood at **0.372** which is moderate, value of P was **0.190** which is also insignificant.

**Table 3: Correlation between Newspaper Coverage and Foreign Office Statements**

Newspapers	Coverage	Number of Foreign Policy statements	Correlation	
	Census study		Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Value of P
	Number of Stories			
The New York Times (before takeover of Kabul by Taliban)	522	12	0.346	0.297
The New York Times (after takeover of Kabul by Taliban)	623	32	-0.443	0.0104
Moscow Times (before takeover of Kabul by Taliban)	32	11	-0.134	0.695
Moscow Times (after takeover of Kabul by Taliban)	19	14	0.372	0.190

**4.1. Statistical Justification**

In this study, correlation between large population size of newspaper coverage (i.e., 1145 in case of The New York Times) and small population size of foreign office statements (i.e., 44 in case of US foreign office statements) was applied which some critics believe is not logical. In order to give answer to aforementioned criticism, following reference has been given;

Cochran (1963) argues that statistical test due to small number of samples cannot be insignificant when it represents the entire population. In this case entire population of both categories (i.e., Newspaper coverage and foreign office statements) have been selected. Entire population represents entirety and no feature is missed.

#### 4.2. Reliability

In this study, two coders were used for the calculation of Cohen Kappa Reliability. Test –retest method was exercised which amounted reliability to 0.86 (it refers strong agreement).

### 5. Discussion

This study empirically tested a new framework with respect to relationship between Media and Foreign Policy statements under Galtung's theoretical Model of War and Peace Journalism in the contrasting situations (before and after takeover of Kabul by Taliban).

Coverage of The New York Times and Moscow Times from 15th August 2020 to 15th August 2022 (one year before and one year after Taliban takeover) was analyzed in relation with Foreign Policy statements of respective countries. There was moderate (Pearson) correlation (i.e. 0.346) between The New York Times and foreign policy statements during conflict (one year before Kabul Takeover). The New York Times was depicting War Journalism while foreign policy statements of US were more tilted towards negative peace (acceptance of Taliban without development and progress oriented steps) in the backdrop of peace agreement that was signed between US and Taliban in Feb 2020. However, US Foreign Policy elites were divided on the issue of withdrawal as The New York Times reported (on 15th April 2021) that President Biden is first US President to turn down Pentagon suggestion of condition based withdrawal while the paper stated on the same day "Veterans feel dismay over the withdrawal". Following the division among Foreign Policy elites, The New York Times was not following state narrative over withdrawal from Afghanistan, these findings are in line with the notion that media represents elites dissensus and operates within sphere of legitimate controversy (Robinson et al., 2016).

After Kabul Takeover, US Foreign Policy statements strongly advocated negative peace (73%).

US delegation met Taliban leaders (on 30th Nov 2021) and Foreign Office issued statement 'The U.S delegation noted recent statements from Taliban leaders expressing support for women and girls' access to education at all levels and urged implementation of that commitment countrywide', on the other hand, The New York Times' coverage was dominated by War journalism (93 %) and large number of stories were on cultural violence/mistreatment with Afghan women (32 %) in the context of dissensus among Foreign Policy elites for example former President George W Bush also criticized Western withdrawal from Afghanistan in an interview to DW (on July 14th, 2021).

These findings are in line with the researches who analyzed Vietnam War; there was elites' consensus at the start of the war, so media was acting as per the notions of manufacturing consent but at the end of Vietnam War when concerns started to arise among Foreign Policy elites, there was also growing resentment in the media (Robinson et al., 2016).

Unlike US, Russia was not warring country and was holding series of talk's processes by engaging Taliban and other regional and international stakeholders. However, Foreign Policy statements (Russia) were representing cautious approach on US withdrawal. On 16th Aug 2021, Russian Embassy stated "According to available reports, the developments in Kabul and Afghanistan as a whole are stabilizing. The Taliban have started enforcing public order and reaffirmed its guarantees of safety for local residents and foreign diplomatic missions" while after passage of some time, Russian Foreign Policy statements started to expressed apprehensions on Taliban rule and stated (on 31st March 2022) "Afghan government agencies lack the personnel who would represent the interests of the country's diverse ethnic groups, national and confessional minorities and political forces". Similarly, on 26th April 2022 Russian Foreign Office issued statement "We intend to ensure full diplomatic recognition of the new Afghan authorities provided they keep their promise to set up an all-inclusive government, and not just in the ethnic-denominational context".

During pre-takeover period, Foreign Policy statements (Russian Embassy) were mostly portraying negative peace (63 %) as opposed to Moscow Times which was dominated by War Journalism stories (81 %) within the pretext of threats to Tajiks and Uzbeks (who enjoys Russian support ) from Taliban , hence correlation was found to be weak and negative in nature (-0.134). These findings commensurate with the past behavior of Moscow Times as it was banned from publishing from Russia during Ukraine war, due to being critical to Russian Foreign Policy.

During post takeover period, Foreign Policy statements of Russian Foreign Office were dominated by negative peace i.e Russia was granting conditional acceptance to Taliban (negative peace), although Russia did not officially recognize Taliban, but advocated officially that proper representation should be given to Tajiks and Uzbeks in the government and Taliban must ensure that terrorists should not encroach into Central Asian states (9th September, 2021). However, Russian Envoy to Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov (20th Aug 2021) said "Taliban are easier to negotiate with than the old puppet government of exiled President Ashraf Ghani".

In the same vein, Moscow Times shifted to Peace Journalism (64%) as opposed to pre takeover period where only 19 percent stories covered Peace journalism. In the view of Moscow Times' relationship with Foreign Policy statements, Correlation was moderate (0.372) during post takeover period. These findings (of Moscow Times) correspond with the findings of the Speer (2017) who found out that frames of The New York Times during Iraq War changed after



bombing of major Shia shrine, and frames tended to represent military version than of White House after the bombing; henceforth, frames are more event oriented in certain situations.

### 5.1. Limitations

This research faced certain restrictions due to time and resources. In the hindsight, future researchers should focus on broadening the base of research to Television e.g speeches in Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, political speeches discussing foreign relations etc, in order to better comprehend the media-state relationship.

Further, Pamela shoemaker stressed upon the need to understand extra organizational influences in the process of news making (Reese, 1991). Within this pretext, future researches should also incorporate survey research with the purpose of interviewing foreign diplomats and journalists, so that media Foreign Policy relationship can be conceptualized and operationalized with more inclusive approach.

## 6. Conclusion

This study offers insight to relationship between Media and Foreign Policy statements while applying War and Peace Journalism model. There are two schools of thought primarily i.e manufacturing consent and CNN effect that have conversely debated over the Media –Foreign Policy relations. Proponents of Manufacturing consent school of thought argue that political elites use media to shape public’s opinion; however they caveated their observation with the notion that media criticizes elite decisions if there are differences among the elites. (S. Herman & Chomsky, 2019). On the other hand, advocates of CNN effect believe that Media pressurizes Foreign Policy experts for making foreign policy decisions as it was observed in the cases of US invasion in Somalia and Iraq (Robinson, 1999). Elaborately, there are multiple situations when CNN effect (Media effect over foreign policy) becomes more pronounced i.e when Foreign Policy elite is divided and policy is uncertain (Robinson, 2001).

This particular study deals with both scenarios i.e media follows state narrative during conflicts (manufacturing consent) but gets more leverage (CNN effect) when there is elite dissensus and frames are event driven (Kabul Takeover). The New York Times in both situations i.e pre and post Kabul takeover period exuded War journalism despite the fact that US Foreign policy statements were accepting Taliban with apprehensions (Negative Peace). On the other hand, Moscow Times showed mixed reaction, it portrayed War Journalism during pre-Kabul takeover period while Negative Peace during post Kabul takeover period.

These findings are in consonance with early researches that media has more tendency towards War Journalism (Shinar, 2009). In a nutshell, The New York Times remained stuck to Direct Violence in covering Taliban while Moscow Times, on the whole, covered the stories with Negative Peace i.e acceptance towards Taliban provided if they give appropriate representation to all the ethnic population. These results echo the early findings of S. Fahmy (2010) who argued that gatekeeping and news selection vary from culture to culture.

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