

# Assessing the Influence of Violence Over News Coverage of the Policy Issues in Pakistani Media

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## Abstract

*The relationship between government and media is examined in this article concerning foreign policy issues in Pakistan, whereas the influence of violence is evaluated. The content analysis of three selected topics shows that the nature of violence significantly influences media reporting on policy issues that determine the relationships between government and media. The findings suggest that [violent] issues of Kashmir and the attack on the Salala check post shaped highly supportive coverage in selected newspapers, i.e., Dawn, The News, Nawa-e-Waqt, and Express, from a violent perspective. In contrast, the Yemen conflict, which was surrounded by policy uncertainty about whether to join the military coalition led by Saudi Arabia or remain neutral, significantly shaped more critical coverage in a non-violent context in Pakistani media. The study mainly verifies one of the central tenets of media-policy interaction scholarship (Robinson, 2001); however, it also adds that the nature of 'violence' is another instrumental factor that determines the nature of media coverage on policy issues in the context of developing countries such as Pakistan.*

**Keywords:** Salala Attack, Policy Uncertainty, Violence, Kashmir Issue, Yemen Conflict.

## Introduction

The researchers analyze the Pakistani media approach towards foreign policy issues in the context of 'violence'. The significant chunk of available literature on media and policy relationships mainly focuses on the "elites' role" (Bennett, 1990) in shaping policy debate, thus controlling the media that tows the policy lines of government at the time of policy certainty (Robinson, 2001). The Western-leaning scholarship on media and policy relationships advocates that the press covers policy issues independently. However, some studies have shown that Western media follow government policy directives when covering an international crisis, just like media in developing nations (Carpenter, 1995; Friel et al., 2004; Reese & Lewis, 2009). Political leaders used the media to shape public opinions to promote government policy, influencing the media to follow foreign policy guidelines (Hill, 1996; Morgenthau, 1967). Several studies have examined the relationship between foreign policy and media coverage of Western governments' foreign affairs during international and humanitarian crises, with a particular emphasis on how the media has primarily followed government policy guidelines (Daghrir, 2016; Touri, 2006; Wang et al., 2014; Zhang & Meadows, 2012). While some other academics, including Bennett (1990) and Robinson (2001, 2017), have debated the relationship between foreign policy and the mass media, the influence of the media has been discussed based on elites' control over policy debate and policy certainty. In contrast to this Westernized scholarship, some non-Western research studies emphasize the level of involvement in foreign policy matters, which could impact how the media covers these matters. Din and Hussain (2021) have listed two categories for involvement: direct and indirect. The latter kind is more common in Pakistan, which has been at odds with India over the long-standing Kashmir dispute

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and has been fighting terrorism since the US attack on Afghanistan, Pakistan's northwest neighbor. The body of research on political communication also highlights the importance of law and order during [policy] controversy or tense relations with its neighbors or strategic allies. The media's role becomes even more crucial in these circumstances. For example, when the Indian government was using its forces to handle the law-and-order situation in Kashmir following the Wani killing, it was found that the Indian media employed escalating frames on the issue. Consequently, India's action increased the level of violence in the atmosphere (Amin, 2019).

In connection with the relationship between the media and policy, it is essential to investigate the workings of the media and government in Pakistan, where political conditions fluctuate more frequently. Thus, this study is carried out to contently analyze the media coverage of the three selected situations, including the NATO strike on the Salala check post in November 2011 led by the United States, the Kashmir dispute in July 2016 following the death of Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani in the Indian-held Kashmir, and the Yemen conflict (March 2015), to investigate how the government and media interact when it comes to Pakistani policy matters. This study is conducted to determine whether the relationship between the government and Pakistani media is amicable or antagonistic, whether the nature of violence [violent and non-violent nature of conflict] influences this relationship, or if it has a minimal impact on shaping media coverage.

### **Media and Foreign Policy Issues: From a Global to a Pakistani Perspective**

The relationship between the media and foreign policy extends beyond some of the aspects covered in the previous studies, such as the media's ability to influence foreign policy indirectly and, occasionally, the difficulties that arise from its coverage for decision-makers. Comprehensive scholarship is necessary for a better understanding of the complex relationship between media and foreign policy, as some studies have also revealed the varied nature of the literature on the subject (Bennett & Paletz, 1994; Nacos et al., 2000). However, scholars should concentrate on and address even the minor aspects of this relationship.

The way the media covers foreign policy matters can be used to gauge their relationship with foreign policy (Bennett, 1990). It is believed that elites will likely report on foreign policy crises from their point of view (Bennett, 1990, 1993). As a result, the media has been a powerful instrument in international politics, promoting a country's foreign policy or relations with other countries. In this context, Hallin (2005) calls attention to the biased coverage of policy issues in Western media, arguing that American media portrays the United States' position in conflicts as correct and justifies any action or measure taken by the government to further its goals.

For this study, Pakistan is selected to evaluate the relationship between media and policy from a third-world perspective because, since its founding in 1947, the country has had a thriving print media. Newspapers and magazines have played a significant role (Pintak et al., 2018). Pakistan is a politically active country with thousands of newspapers, radio stations, and over 90 TV channels (Ellis & Baloch, 2019). Thus, private media accounts for a significant portion of the viewership, and state-owned TV and radio channels lose some influence (Pintak et al., 2018). After the advent of private media, it can be argued that Pakistan's media landscape has become more diversified, and it [the press] criticizes domestic political issues; however, no media outlet can report on security and foreign policy issues with the same level of [high] criticism (Hussain & Lynch, 2019). But in the context of policy situations, like the Kashmir dispute, the media's portrayal might be influenced by a more comprehensive framework of elite control along with a sphere of consensus that stimulates public opposition to Indian aggression, creating the phenomenon known as the rally around the flag (Din, 2022).

Thus, in this study, the overall strategy Pakistani media uses to cover foreign policy-related topics is examined. In contrast, the researchers analyzed the media from a broader perspective of 'violence', coupled with the prevailing circumstances, i.e., policy certainty and policy uncertainty. Thus, this study investigates the relationship between media and foreign policy within developing nations like Pakistan and the broader context. The researchers assess how the media covers foreign policy-related issues during [violent] conflict.

### **Media and Policy Relationships: Theoretical Perspectives**

The researchers used the synergy of two theoretical perspectives to discuss the relationship between media and policy issues, i.e., indexing theory (Bennett, 1990) and the media-policy interaction model (Robinson, 2000). The indexing theory, which has been criticized for its emphasis on the views of elites, can address the current state of the relationship between the media and the government. It explains this relationship in terms of how the media covers the political debates of elites. According to Bennett (1990), from the boardroom to the beat, news professionals in the mass media tend to "index" the range of voices and opinions in editorials and news stories to match the range of viewpoints expressed in the government's public discourse on a particular subject. Therefore, the theory essentially forecasts the type of media coverage based on the agreement and disagreement of elites. Researchers like Bennett et al. (2008) and Zingarelli (2010) tested the indexing theory in their studies. They concluded it was a suitable theoretical framework for examining the relationship between media and government.

On the other hand, the policy-media interaction model (Robinson, 2000) conceptualizes the conditions that influence the policy process, arguing that the policy process is more receptive to the impact of critical media coverage when there is policy uncertainty within the executive. Many elements associated with policy uncertainty may be at play in this situation. First, if policy uncertainty prevails due to disagreements among the executive policy subsystems, policymakers seeking a change in direction may have more negotiating power in response to negative media coverage. Second, policymakers may feel under pressure to react to critical coverage or else run the risk of being "caught on the hop" and facing a P.R. disaster if it turns out that policy uncertainty stems from a lack of policy altogether. In this situation, a policy could be created to stop the opposing media coverage, primarily as a countermeasure. Lastly, due to policy uncertainty, the government needs to be equipped to use its massive public relations apparatus to respond to journalists; thus, it makes policymakers vulnerable to media influence.

This study, while combining the critical assumptions of indexing and the policy-media interaction model, attempts theoretically to evaluate the three different policy issues, i.e., the Kashmir conflict, the Salala check post-attack, and the Yemen conflict, based on the coverage they shaped in Pakistani media. Additionally, to elites' consensus and policy certainty or uncertainty, this study also examines the effect of the type of 'violence' in influencing media reporting, especially at a time when policy issues are passing through a violent phase. Thus, this study is designed to examine the overall attitude of Pakistani media concerning policy issues during violent times. For a thorough examination of the media approach, one research question and a hypothesis are formulated, which are:

### **Research Questions and Hypothesis**

- What is the distribution of slants, keyframes, and nature of violence in the selected issues?
- The nature of violence is a potential determinant of the relationship between media and government in the context of policy issues.

## Research Methodology

The study is conducted quantitatively while applying content analysis for data treatment, whereas a coding sheet was designed to collect data. As an observational research method, content analysis provides a methodical, objective analysis of communication evidence (Berelson, 2000). It systematically evaluates the symbolic content of all recorded communications (Kolbe & Burnett, 1991). Because of this, content analysis is a versatile method that can be used with audio, visual, and textual data (Stemler, 2015). Many academics and researchers in journalism have been using content analysis; however, Berelson (1952, 2000) identified three distinct factors of content analysis that aid in understanding written communication. (i) concentrating on using the [written] content to interpret the intent [observed fact], which will help one comprehend the goals and intentions of those engaged in the content distribution process; (ii) emphasizing consensus among pertinent stakeholders regarding communication goals, including those who create and disseminate content (media professionals), the audience (consumers), and the analysts (interpreters). (iii) Considering media content, quantitative analysis is an essential process in a communication phenomenon. Similar to previous relevant research (Bennett, 1990; Hallin, 2005; Hussain, 2022; Robinson, 2001, 2017) that looked at the connection between the government and media within a larger framework of policy concerns, the primary goal of this study is to ascertain the fundamentals of that relationship in the Pakistani context.

## Population and Sampling

The study's population consists of Pakistani media, and the researchers have chosen two English daily newspapers, Dawn and The News, and two Urdu newspapers, Nawa-e-Waqt and Express, which are widely circulated in Pakistan and have a significant impact on the nation's policy discussions (Malik & Iqbal, 2010). The researchers used census sampling to collect all the news stories published during the timeframe on the selected issues. The relevant news stories from the Urdu newspapers were obtained from their respective online databases. In contrast, the news stories published in the chosen English newspapers were taken from the Central Library records of the University of Swat, Pakistan.

The timeframe for the Salala attack and the Kashmir conflict is three months, from November 2011 to January 2012 and July to September 2016, respectively. For the Yemeni conflict, the timeframe is two months—from March to April 2015. Using the census technique, the researchers consulted the front, back, and national pages and collected an overall total of 1068 news stories during the timeframe of this study.

## Frames

This study develops a comprehensive criterion to evaluate the degree to which reports either upheld the views of the Pakistani government on the chosen issues, shaped a balanced coverage or took a position that is at odds with the government's responses to the issues. For analyzing the coverage, framing criteria are created to evaluate the nature of the media discussion. The researchers found frames and slants in news stories being published on all three of the study's selected issues while examining the policy relations between Pakistan's media and government. Gamson & Modigliani (1989) define *frames* as ideas that have a dominant shape and offer meaning to a sequence of events. Consequently, it brings attention to the dispute, which forms the core of the problem; in contrast, according to Entman (2007), "slant is created when the framing of events favors one side over the other in a current or potential dispute." In order to examine how the media covers specific topics, such as the Salala attack, the conflict in Kashmir, and the conflict in Yemen, the researcher in this study employs frames and slants to assess how the Pakistani government and media interact with each other. Slants evaluate the overall impression created in a news story on a particular issue, while frames highlight the

salient features of chosen issues. After closely examining news stories, the researcher identified frames while adhering to Carter et al. (2011). Initially, a total of twenty-one frames—seven for each of the three issues that were chosen—were identified; however, after carefully examining these frames, the research was able to determine ten final frames that, taken as a whole, are more representative and helpful for examining the media's inclinations toward policy-related issues in Pakistan. The frames for the three chosen issues of this study are indicated in the list below:

*Salala Attack:* (a) demonstrations and censure; (b) the sovereignty of Pakistan; and (c) the U.S. response to the matter. The Daily Dawn (December 29, 2011) carried a story that exemplified "Pakistan's sovereignty," stating that while Pakistan aspires to have positive relations with the international community, particularly the United States, "it [Pakistan] cannot compromise its national sovereignty and integration." *The purpose of this study is to examine how the Pakistani media reported this violent [tragic] incident and how that coverage shaped the relationship between the government and the media.*

*Kashmir status:* (a) rightful conflict; (b) making Kashmiris victims; (c) peaceful tenacity; and (d) the international community's role. The Daily News (July 12, 2016) described the Indian actions against the protesters as "symbols of tyranny and torture" in one of its representative stories that represented the Indian government's move as "victimization of Kashmiri." *In this study, the researchers examine the mode of the relationship between the government and media in the context of violence in Kashmir, which is mainly a policy issue that prevails in a politically controlled environment.*

*Yemeni conflict:* (a) political process; (b) neutrality; (c) uncertain policy. In one of the selected news stories while highlighting the 'political process', daily *The News* (April 6, 2015) framed the "current situation in Yemen as part of an international conspiracy against Muslims and called for a peaceful solution to the crisis." About Pakistan's stance on the Yemen conflict, the media highlighted the issue more in the context of the 'neutrality frame' Thus, *Daily Dawn* (April 10, 2015), while covering the Pakistani parliament's decision, urged the government "to remain neutral in the Yemen conflict." *Thus, the purpose of this study is to determine how and to what degree policy uncertainty coupled with the nature of 'violence' affects the government-media relationship.*

## Findings and Discussion

**Q:** What is the distribution of slants, keyframes and nature of violence in the selected issues?

**Table 1** Distribution slants, frames, and nature of violence in the media coverage of the NATO's attack on the Salala check post

Newspapers	Supportive	Neutral	Oppositional	Total
Dawn	37	11	06	54
The News	28	12	09	50
Nawai-e-Waqt	61	30	09	100
Express	44	28	10	82
Total	171 (58)	81 (27)	34 (15)	286 (100)
$X^2(2, N=286) = 101.67, p < 0.01$				
Frames	Supportive	Neutral	Oppositional	
Demonstrations and censure	86(50)	24(30)	08(24)	
The sovereignty of Pakistan	64(38)	27(33)	12(35)	
The U.S. response to the matter	21(12)	30(37)	14(41)	
Total	171(100)	81(100)	34(100)	
$X^2(4, N=286) = 29.49, p < 0.01$				

Nature of Violence	Supportive (N%)	Neutral(N%)	Oppositional (N%)
Violent	164(96)	69(85)	12(35)
Nonviolent	07(04)	12(15)	22(65)
Total	171(100)	81(100)	34(100)

$X^2(2, N=286) = 84.87, p < 0.01$

Table 1 shows that the Salala attack, carried out by NATO forces, shaped 286 news stories in selected newspapers. The first section of the table's statistical results,  $X^2(2, N = 286) = 101.67, p < 0.01$ , shows a significant difference in the distribution of the three slant categories. The selected newspapers covered the incident more favorably; 58% highlighted or reported the government's position favorably. 15% of coverage was oppositional to the issue, and 25% was neutral. News reports concerning demonstrations by opposition parties and civil society organizations were the primary sources of oppositional coverage.

The second part of the table displays the statistical findings  $X^2(4, N = 286) = 29.49, p < 0.01$ , which demonstrate the significant correlation between the framing category and the type of media coverage. These findings show that the frame of "demonstrations and censure" shaped supportive coverage substantially (50%) and that the frame of "the sovereignty of Pakistan" shaped coverage that was 38% supportive. "The U.S. response to the matter," the final frame of this discussion, garnered 37% and 41% of neutral and oppositional coverage, respectively. The relationship between media coverage of the Salala attack and the type of violence (violent and non-violent) is depicted in the third section of the above table. The results show that, overall, across all four newspapers, the violent-orient content is heavily covered (96%) with the support of the Pakistani government. In contrast to the supportive category, 65% of the oppositional category is strongly framed from a non-violent perspective. The findings indicate that the issue, which appeared out of nowhere, is primarily dealt with violently in each selected newspaper. For instance, the NATO action was denounced as "unprovoked aggression" (The News, 2011), which infuriated Pakistan's military and political establishments. The *Daily Dawn* (December 28, 2011), while mentioning the security sources, "accused the Americans of an intentional attack on its [Pakistani] troops." According to statistical results, the third part of the table indicates significant differences between the slant and the nature of violence, i.e.,  $X^2(2, N = 286) = 84.87, p < 0.01$ , showing that the nature of violence has a significant influence over media coverage of the conflict.

In light of the above findings, on the one hand, these results contradict the event-driven news model proposed by Lawrence (2000), which proposes that the media cover tragic events that happen suddenly. In contrast to this model, there was more supportive coverage [advocating the Pakistani government's stance] for the sudden and tragic Salala incident. However, these results do somewhat confirm Lance Bennett's (1990) indexing hypothesis, which emphasizes that media coverage is determined by official debate. Apart from the political elites, the military has a legitimate say in official discourse in Pakistan, particularly when it comes to incidents like Salala. Therefore, the political agreement and the military's absolute monopoly in Pakistan (Hussain & Lynch, 2019) created a favorable environment for the government in the Salala incident.

**Table 2 Distribution slants, frames, and nature of violence in the media coverage of the Kashmir issue**

<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>Supportive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Oppositional</b>	<b>Total</b>
Dawn	52	29	11	92
The News	63	22	8	93
Nawai-e-Waqt	93	32	9	134
Express	72	32	9	113
<b>Total</b>	<b>280(65)</b>	<b>115(27)</b>	<b>37(08)</b>	<b>432(100)</b>
$X^2(2, N=432) = 213.79, p < 0.01$				
<b>Frames</b>	<b>Supportive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Oppositional</b>	
Rightful conflict	99(35)	37(32)	04(11)	
Making Kashmiris victims	121(43)	27(23.5)	08(22)	
Peaceful tenacity	28(10)	24(21)	04(11)	
The international community's role	32(12)	27(23.5)	21(56)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>280(100)</b>	<b>115(100)</b>	<b>37(100)</b>	
$X^2(6, N=432) = 63.14, p < 0.01, V = 0.27$				
<b>Nature of Violence</b>	<b>Supportive (N%)</b>	<b>Neutral(N%)</b>	<b>Oppositional (N%)</b>	
Violent	235(84)	28(24)	07(19)	
Nonviolent	45(16)	87(76)	30(81)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>280(100)</b>	<b>115(100)</b>	<b>37(100)</b>	
$X^2(2, N=432) = 156.26, p < 0.01, V = 0.60$				

The above Table 2, which presents the general conclusions about the Kashmir issue, shows that violence increased following the death of young Kashmiri commander Burhan Wani. Thus, Pakistani media covered the problem in the context of government policy, while the selected newspapers also considered the issue's violent nature in their reports. These factors led to a higher percentage of media coverage (65%) that supported Pakistan's stance on the Kashmir issue, with 27% being neutral and 8% being oppositional. In contrast, some of the internal factors of Pakistan's government were criticized. Statistically, there were significant differences in the distribution of the three slant categories [ $X^2(2, N = 432) = 213.79, p < 0.01$ ] that show a significant relationship between media and government on the issue of Kashmir. Similarly, the second section of the above cross table's statistical results,  $X^2(6, N = 432) = 63.14, p < 0.01$ , show a significant correlation between the framing category and the type of media coverage. The theme of "rightful conflict" dominated the neutral category, accounting for 32% of the coverage, while the frame of "international community's role" shaped more oppositional coverage (56%). The frame of "Making Kashmiris victims" greatly influenced supportive coverage (43%), promoting the Pakistani stance that Indian forces were involved in the victimization of Kashmiri people.

The results shown in the third section of the above table show that, overall, across all four newspapers, violent-orient content is most frequently reported in the supportive category (84%). The oppositional and neutral categories are framed at 81% and 76% from a non-violent perspective. Following the killing of Burhan Wani, the conflict broke out, resulting in the deaths of 95 Kashmiris and injuring approximately 15,000 others, including 850 who had pellet injuries to their eyes (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016). For instance, the Pakistani media portrays the Kashmiri people who took to the streets to protest the Indian government, portraying them as "angry protesters." However, 81% of the 37 oppositional news stories in the chosen newspapers presented the oppositional category from a non-violent standpoint.

According to statistics, there is a significant difference between the slant and the nature of violence in the cross table above [ $X^2(2, N=432) = 156.26, p < 0.01$ ], which suggests that the nature of violence has a significant influence on how media coverage is shaped.

The overall results of Table 2 and its sub-tables, like the Salala incident, contradict Lawrence's (2000) event-driven news model, as following the unexpected incident of Burhan Wani's killing, the violence turned into a crisis. Thus, the issue of Kashmir is reported with only 8% criticality, falling under the procedural form of criticism (Hussain, 2022). However, these results validate the significant assumptions of policy certainty (Robinson, 2000), which also holds that a politically controlled environment produces narratives supportive of the government.

**Table 3 Distribution slants, frames, and nature of violence in the media coverage of the Yemen conflict**

Newspapers	Supportive	Neutral	Oppositional	Total
Dawn	22	24	28	74
The News	21	30	27	78
Nawai-e-Waqt	28	36	45	109
Express	25	31	33	89
Total	96(26)	121(36)	133(38)	350(100)

$X^2(2, N=350) = 8.86, p < 0.02$

Frames	Supportive	Neutral	Oppositional
Political process on Yemen	54(56)	22(18)	19(14)
Neutrality	33(34)	75(62)	49(37)
Policy uncertainty	09(10)	24(20)	65(49)
Total	96(100)	121(100)	133(100)

$X^2(4, N=350) = 89.21, p < 0.01, V = 0.36$

Nature of Violence	Supportive	Neutral (N%)	Oppositional (N%)
Violent	47(49)	39(32)	13(10)
Nonviolent	49(51)	82(68)	120(90)
Total	96(100)	121(100)	133(100)

$X^2(2, N=350) = 40.72, p < 0.01, V = 0.34$

The Yemen conflict is reported in the context of policy uncertainty. In contrast, the results in the first section of the table indicate that 38% of media coverage was critical of the issue, with 36% falling into the neutrality category. Additionally, 26% of the selected newspapers provided coverage that supported Pakistan's stance on the Yemen conflict. In this case, the statistical test [ $X^2(2, N = 350) = 8.86, p < 0.02$ ] demonstrates the significant variations in the distribution of the three slants' categories.

The second section of the above cross table's statistical results [ $X^2(4, N = 350) = 89.21, p < 0.01$ ] show a significant correlation between the framing category and the type of media coverage. Similarly, the "neutrality" frame shaped 62% of the total neutral coverage, the "political process on Yemen" frame shaped high supportive coverage (56%), and the "policy uncertainty" frame shaped 49% of the oppositional coverage.

The findings suggest that out of 96 supportive stories on the Yemen conflict, 51% of the stories were violently oriented, indicating that supportive coverage of the conflict is slightly more prevalent in nonviolent scenarios. Similarly, a high percentage of non-violence perspectives—68% and 90%, respectively—are framed in neutral and oppositional coverage.



According to statistics, there is a significant difference between the slant and the nature of violence in the above table [ $\chi^2(2, N = 350) = 40.72, p < 0.01$ ], suggesting that the nature of violence has a significant influence on how the media covered the Yemen conflict.

The relationship between the types of violence—violent and nonviolent—and the media's portrayal of Yemen is depicted in the third section of Table No. 3. The final issue of this study, the Yemen conflict, is, in contrast to the earlier issues of the Salala attack and the Kashmir dispute, framed predominantly from a nonviolent perspective in Pakistani media. The selected newspapers advocated neutrality in the case of the Yemeni conflict and presented the matter as a "peaceful solution to the crisis" (*The News*, 2015). However, the selected newspapers presented the Yemeni conflict less violently. They primarily backed the government's decision to join the military alliance against terrorism led by Saudi Arabia, which was aimed at "protecting Yemen and its people from the aggression of the (Shia) Houthi militia" (*Dawn*, 2015).

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study indicate a significant influence of the nature of violence over media coverage of the policy issues in Pakistani media, as shown in Table 1. The selected newspapers framed the Salala attack highly in the context of violence, which shaped 96% of supportive coverage. In contrast, the media advocated Pakistan's stance on the Salala incident, which turned the relationship between Pakistan and the US into hostility. Similarly, the selected newspapers gave minimal critical coverage, i.e., 15% out of the total 286 news stories, whereas the nonviolent perspective dominated the critical coverage by 65%. In the case of the Kashmir conflict, the violent nature of the issue shaped 84% of supportive coverage.

In comparison, the nonviolent perspective of the conflict generated 81% of critical coverage out of the total critical coverage (8% of total news stories, i.e., 432) in the selected newspapers on the issue of Kashmir [see the first and third parts of Table No. 2]. Similarly, the Yemen conflict covered more in policy uncertainty and shaped 49% of supportive coverage in the context of violence. In contrast, the issue, which triggered more critical coverage than the other two issues, generated 90% of the 133 oppositional news stories from a nonviolent perspective. Thus, these findings confirm the research hypothesis of this study, which states that "the nature of violence is a potential determinant of the relationship between media and government in the context of policy issues" in Pakistan. Overall, the results verify one of the central tenets of the media-policy interaction scholarship (Robinson, 2000) media-policy interaction model, according to which critical media coverage of an issue arises when it lacks [policy] certainty. The relationship between media and policy is similarly observed in Yemen, where it is seen negatively, and in Kashmir and the Salala incidents, where it is seen positively. Thus, the overall discussions in light of the findings of this study confirm the research hypothesis.

In summary, this study is limited to content analysis of print media; four newspapers are chosen to investigate the connection between media and policy crises in the Pakistani setting. In light of the limitations of this study, it is advised that future researchers focus their attention on political communication topics and employ different techniques such as;

- Thematic analysis of the recorded content on policy issues, as well as of the in-depth interviews with policymakers and journalists.
- Quantitative analysis will be used to examine the contents of electronic and print media on policy issues.
- Quantitative analysis will be used to examine the contents of social media on policy issues.
- Qualitative analysis to record the perceptions of policymakers and journalists on the role of the media during policy crises.

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