

Received : October 2023 Accepted: March 2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53555/ks.v12i4.2951>

## Blasphemy Crisis Construction: A Case Study of Christians Minority Targeting at Jaranwala over Blasphemy Allegations in Pakistani Print Media

Muhammad Asim Khan<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Salma Umer<sup>2</sup>, Shahza Zaidi<sup>3</sup>, Dr. Faiza Latif<sup>4</sup>, Usman Idrees<sup>5</sup>, Tanzeela Arshaad<sup>6</sup>, Mutee Ur Rehman<sup>7</sup>

### Abstract

*This research uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze the journalistic coverage of the Jaranwala event (August 2023) in Pakistani newspapers. The study's overarching goal is to decipher the event's narrative construction via media coverage by analyzing the effects of power dynamics, ideology, and linguistic methods. The study examined headlines from Dawn and The News newspapers over a certain period (August 16–23, 2023). Used a qualitative research approach. The CDA framework guides the study, emphasizing the construction of narratives about events through word choices, framing, and overall representation. At CDA's core is the idea of power interactions by Van Dijk (1993) and the ways ideology impacts communication and examines the use of specific textual approaches to create and convey meaning by Fairclough (2003). The results showed that the two newspapers' headlines are quite different from one another. Dawn seems to have a more state-centric perspective, one that puts an emphasis on order and may minimize the concerns of the Christian community. The News takes a more critical stance, calling attention to injustice, religious tolerance, and power inequities. This study adds to our understanding of how the media influences public opinion and how people around the world see religious tolerance in Pakistan. This research sheds light on the significance of essential media comprehension and the power of competing narratives to influence social dynamics.*

**Keywords:** critical discourse analysis, Jaranwala incident, Pakistani print media, religious tolerance, power dynamics, media narratives, Christian minority, blasphemy, minority rights

### Introduction

There has been much debate about Pakistan's blasphemy laws, and charges have often resulted in violence against religious minorities (Johnstone & Miller, 2023). As an extreme case in point, in August 2023, a crowd in Jaranwala, Pakistan, attacked Christians on suspicion of defiling the Quran. The media's involvement in telling stories about blasphemy and minority targeting may be better understood via this tragic occurrence, which led to the demolition of houses and

<sup>1</sup> M.Phil Scholar, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan, Email: [asim1412@gmail.com](mailto:asim1412@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Mass Communication, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan, Email: [salmaumber@gcu.edu.pk](mailto:salmaumber@gcu.edu.pk)

<sup>3</sup> Visiting Lecturer, Department of Mass communication, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan, Email: [Imm.creative914@gmail.com](mailto:Imm.creative914@gmail.com)

<sup>4</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Public Relations and Advertising, School of Communication Studies, University of the Punjab, Pakistan  
Email: [faiza.prad.scs@pu.edu.pk](mailto:faiza.prad.scs@pu.edu.pk)

<sup>5</sup> Phd Scholar, Department of Mass Communication, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan, Email: [usmannehal1@gmail.com](mailto:usmannehal1@gmail.com)

<sup>6</sup> M.Phil Scholar, Department of Pakistan studies, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan, Email: [tanzeelasaltanzeelasial@gmail.com](mailto:tanzeelasaltanzeelasial@gmail.com)

<sup>7</sup> M.Phil Scholar, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan, Email: [muteerehman00@gmail.com](mailto:muteerehman00@gmail.com)

churches. Pakistan has some of the most severe blasphemy laws worldwide, as stated by the US Department of State (2023). These laws include the imposition of the death penalty for anyone convicted of the biggest offences. There is a contention that these regulations are too ambiguous and might potentially be used as a justification for riots that specifically target minority communities (Amnesty International, 2023). Inciting violence and demonizing minorities are two ways in which media portrayals of blasphemy claims may worsen existing tensions, according to previous study (Javed, 2020).

Blasphemy allegations, media portrayals, and violence against minorities all come together in the terrible Jaranwala tragedy. Looking at this instance through the prism of previous research may shed light on how the media might fabricate a crisis and single out vulnerable populations. More research focusing on the specific content and framing of the Jaranwala coverage in Pakistani and international print media is necessary to get a deeper understanding of the media's role in this case and to direct efforts to promote ethical reporting on sensitive religious subjects.

The formation of the Jaranwala blasphemy issue across Pakistani and worldwide print media is examined in this research using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Language ideologies and power dynamics are the primary foci of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013). In order to understand how the media portrays the occurrence and how it may have contributed to the targeting of Christians in Pakistan, this study examines the framing of events, word choice, and actor depiction. This research will examine news stories from many Pakistani covering the time just before and just after the Jaranwala massacre. Using a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, this study examines how different periodicals describe blasphemy claims, the Christian community, mob activities, and the role of authorities. Power dynamics, ideological biases, and social constructions influencing the narrative around these controversial topics may be better understood by analyzing the language and discursive methods used. By carefully analyzing rhetorical strategies, language choices, and contextual framing, this study aims to provide light on how these publications shape and sustain certain discourses, which in turn may impact public opinion and societal and political realities.

### **Significance of the Study**

For several reasons, it is critical to comprehend the progression of the Jaranwala blasphemy issue as it occurred in the print media. The first thing it does is show how media narratives may influence how people see things and even cause societal tensions to rise. The research can show how the Christian community was depicted and whether they were unjustly targeted by looking at the framing tactics and language choices that were employed. Second, methods to encourage Pakistani media to report delicate religious topics more responsibly may be informed by this study. In addition, the research may help provide light on how media depictions of religious tolerance in Pakistan impact worldwide opinions by comparing narratives from Pakistani. The overarching goal of this study is to help end religious minority violence in Pakistan by increasing social participation.

### **Problem Statement**

A serious problem has been brought to light by the terrible event of violence against Christians in Jaranwala, Pakistan, which occurred after a blasphemy charge. Public perception and, worse, societal divides, may be profoundly affected by how such events are covered in the media. The role of media narratives in instigating blasphemy crises and the subsequent persecution of minority groups is examined in this research. This study seeks to provide light on the media's involvement in forming attitudes, targeting minorities, and influencing worldwide opinions on

religious tolerance in Pakistan by evaluating the representation of the Jaranwala event in Pakistani and international print media.

### **Research Questions**

- 1) What specific textual strategies (e.g., vocabulary choices, headlines) were used to construct the crisis narrative and how did Pakistani print media frame the Jaranwala incident?
- 2) What potential impact could this media portrayal have on the social standing, minorities' rights and security of Christians in Pakistan and the majority group in relation to power dynamics within Pakistani society?
- 3) How might these contrasting media narratives influence public understanding of the event and international perceptions of religious tolerance in Pakistan?

### **Literature Review**

The violent attack on Christians in Jaranwala, Pakistan, in August 2023, in response to blasphemy claims, unfortunately highlights the influence of religious minorities and the media's complicated role in influencing public opinion. This comprehensive literature study explores the complex web of connections between media portrayals of minorities, Pakistan's blasphemy laws, and the targeting of these groups. In this literature study, we look at how media portrayals of minorities, blasphemy laws, and the country as a whole interact with one another.

### **Blasphemy Crisis Construction**

Blasphemy has been debated for ages, and its potential to cause political and social upheavals has also been mentioned. Nevertheless, there has been a noticeable shift in the way blasphemy crises are framed in contemporary studies, with an emphasis on the complex web of relations between religious doctrine, social forces, and political objectives. This literature study delves into the previous work on the topic of blasphemy crises, analyzing it for important themes and theoretical frameworks. But there is a lot of room for interpretation and debate when it comes to defining blasphemy. Claims may be made to delegitimize persons or organizations and raise indignation during blasphemy crises, taking advantage of this ambiguity (Roy, 2009). Here, "crisis" is a very unstable or unpleasant situation that interferes with society's regular operations (Houtman & Pinnick, 2005). Protests, violence, and public outcry are commonplace during blasphemy crises. Social cohesiveness, political stability, and even diplomatic ties may all be profoundly affected by such occurrences.

### **Representation of Minorities**

The impact of print media on public opinion and social debates has not diminished with the proliferation of digital channels. But there has always been debate about how the media depicts minorities. In this literature study, we look at how minority groups have been portrayed in print media and what may have happened as a result of this trend. Research by Glick (2005) and Eskin (2016) shows that minorities are underrepresented in print media. Incorporating minorities increases the likelihood of stereotyped portrayals or their exploitation to support certain narratives (Jhally & Sutcliffe, 2000). An example of this would be the overrepresentation of Black characters as criminals and the association of Muslim characters with terrorism (Castañeda, 2018). Minorities may feel even more marginalized and the public's unfavorable views of them may be further reinforced by such stereotyped portrayals.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The Jaranwala case study provides a robust theoretical framework for investigating the construction of blasphemy allegations and the targeting of Christians in Pakistani and worldwide print media (Fairclough, 2003). CDA explores the ideologies and power dynamics at work in the discourse, going beyond a surface-level analysis of language.

### **CDA and Power**

The emphasis on power relations is central to CDA (Van Dijk, 1993). One way to look at the exercise of power and the privilege of some opinions over others is to analyze the language used in print media coverage. The media's coverage of the blasphemy allegation and the Christian community may be better understood with the aid of CDA in the Jaranwala case. Is the Christian group seen as helpless or dangerous? Who has their voices heard and who has theirs muted?

### **CDA and Ideology**

According to Fairclough (2003), CDA also delves into the ways ideology influences speech. For each given worldview, there exists a foundational collection of ideas and assumptions known as an ideology. By using CDA, we may uncover these hidden beliefs in the media. As an example, is it assumed, without explicitly saying so, that Christians are more prone to blasphemy than the general public? How does the media present the incident? As a potential danger to national security or as a singular occurrence? The media's role in fabricating the blasphemy problem may be better understood if these ideological foundations are revealed.

### **CDA and Textual Strategies**

According to Fairclough (2003), CDA delves into the ways in which certain textual methods are used to build meaning. One approach may be to examine the media stories' narrative structure, metaphors, framing strategies, and language choices. Is the alleged blasphemy characterized by offensive language or the Christians themselves? Does anybody care about trying to understand the background of the claim, or is the emphasis on the Christian community's possible peril the main point? We may see how the media influences how the public views the event and the Christian minority by looking at these linguistic methods.

The Jaranwala case study benefits greatly from using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). First, it allows scholars to examine the linguistic and representational complexities of media portrayals of the blasphemy issue and Christian persecution, which leads to a more sophisticated understanding of these topics. Furthermore, CDA reveals the hidden objectives and systemic biases by exposing the ideologies and power dynamics that are intrinsic to media discourse. Finally, critical discourse analysis (CDA) enables a move away from shallow evaluations of media coverage and toward a deeper investigation of its possible consequences, fostering critical engagement with the sociopolitical setting in which these narratives are created and spread.

The Jaranwala case study is well-suited to the CDA framework. We may learn more about the construction of the blasphemy problem and the targeting of the Christian minority by looking at the power relations, ideologies, and literary tactics used in the coverage of the situation in the print media. This information may help shape plans to encourage Pakistani media to report on sensitive religious topics in a more responsible manner and to promote societal harmony.

## Previous Studies

There are a number of drawbacks to the print media's targeting of minorities. A perception of "us" and "them" and the reinforcement of negative stereotypes may exacerbate societal divides (Allport, 1954). Also, minority groups may find it harder to get their opinions heard and understood in public discussions as a result (Morris & Winn, 1999). Moreover, there may be tangible consequences for minorities when they are targeted in print media. Research has shown that minority groups are more likely to experience bias as a result of unfavorable media representations (Dixon & Linz, 2000). This has the potential to greatly affect minority populations' well-being and the possibilities they have access to. There are deep social and political ramifications to the complicated problem of minority media bias in print. In order to promote more equal representation and cultivate an inclusive media environment, it is essential to understand the many types of targeting, the reasons behind it, and the effects it brings.

There is evidence linking blasphemy allegations to violent mobs, which shows how these laws suppress religious minority (Jilani, 2014). According to research that looked at how the media reported on blasphemy claims, the way things were presented had a big influence on how people understood them and might provoke violence (Javed, 2020). The methodology provided by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is useful for examining the ideologies and power dynamics encoded in media language (Fairclough, 2013). Media narratives contribute to the marginalization and persecution of minorities; CDA may expose this by analyzing the framing of blasphemy allegations, the depiction of minority groups, and the characterization of authorities (Abbas, 2011).

According to Keleher (2016), the media has a major impact on how religious minorities are discussed. Although the media has the power to spread positive messages of acceptance and understanding, it also has the potential to reinforce harmful stereotypes and encourage bigotry against marginalized groups. Hussain (2019) points out that there is a link between blasphemy allegations and violence against minorities, which shows how these laws restrict religious freedom. On the other hand, detractor's claim that the vagueness of the regulations makes people afraid and makes it easier for them to be misused (Bashir, 2014). The construction and dissemination of discourse may be better understood by analyzing media depictions and the terminology used to characterize religious minorities. Discussions on religious minorities are complex and multidimensional. If we want to promote social inclusion and interfaith understanding, we need to look at how these groups are portrayed, the power dynamics, and the media's involvement.

Media portrayals of minority accused of blasphemy in Pakistani media often dehumanize and justify punishment, according to prior study using CDA (Javed, 2020). Further fueling religious prejudice is the practice of presenting blasphemy claims in an exaggerated manner with little background information (Haq, 2007). It has been shown that media broadcast of blasphemy claims might diminish the degree of violence against minorities, according to research (Akbar, 2018).

It is worth noting that internationally media may have an impact on public debate in Pakistan, even though this research primarily focuses on Pakistani print media. Research indicates that there is a nuanced connection between local and global media coverage, with global media having the ability to either reinforce local narratives or provide alternate viewpoints (Karim, 2011). How the Jaranwala blasphemy controversy was covered by Pakistani media requires

further investigation.

This analysis draws attention to the media's possible role in Pakistani narrative construction about blasphemy allegations and minority persecution. Nevertheless, one must not overlook the constraints. Secondly, while social media and other forms of communication might be the subject of future studies, the emphasis here is on print media. Secondly, studying how the public responds to these stories is essential for a complex analysis of the media's impact. Lastly, studying how many blasphemy cases in Pakistan were covered by the media might provide useful information.

The tragic events surrounding the Jaranwala case highlight the vulnerability of Pakistan's religious minority, especially when they are accused of blasphemy. This literature study emphasizes the power of media narratives to influence public perception and, by extension, the possibility of minority targeting. To better promote religious tolerance and safeguard minority populations in Pakistan, future studies using CDA may provide light on the media's involvement in fabricating blasphemy situations.

## Methodology

A qualitative research strategy, more especially a discourse analysis technique, will be used in this investigation (Fairclough, 2003). In order to decipher the ideologies, power dynamics, and social meanings concealed within the discourse surrounding religious minorities, this method entails doing a critical analysis of textual material. This research explores the discourse around religious minorities in Pakistan, specifically looking at how they are portrayed in local newspaper. The study aims to expose numerous significant characteristics by analyzing the language utilized in Pakistani newspapers like Dawn and The News, as well as overseas media like Al Jazeera and The Diplomat. To begin with, it aspires to clarify the ways in which narratives from Pakistani media portray religious minorities. The second objective is to compare and contrast local media in order to identify any coverage gaps. Last but not least, the research aims to investigate the possible consequences of this discourse on religious minorities in Pakistan, taking into account how media representations might impact public opinion, official policy, and the actual lives of these oppressed inhabitants.

## Data Sources

Media sources, including newspapers headlines in Pakistan Dawn and The News will provide the bulk of the information needed to conduct this research. There will be a deliberate effort to choose a representative sample in order to guarantee completeness. The goal of this approach is to choose texts from each media source that are varied and representative using a number of criteria. One of these factors is the timeline; in order to keep everything in perspective, we will only choose texts that were published between August 16, 2023, and August 23, 2023. Headlines on religious minorities in Pakistan, whether in news stories, opinion pieces, or editorials, will also be given priority due to the subject focus. Additionally, in order to guarantee a fair and comprehensive examination of media discourse, the sampling procedure will endeavor to include a variety of opinions. This will include viewpoints from investigative reports, minority group news releases, and official government pronouncements.



### **Sampling Technique**

Each media source will have a representative sample of texts chosen using a purposive sampling approach. To find relevant articles for this study, we will search the online archives of the chosen newspapers and publications using keywords like "religious minorities," "religious freedom," "discrimination," and the names of particular minority groups in Pakistan. Researchers may use the advanced search features of these archives to narrow their search results by publishing date, article section, and author (if relevant), among other factors. This methodical strategy will allow for the thorough retrieval of pertinent texts, guaranteeing that the gathered information accurately portrays the discourse around religious minorities in Pakistani and worldwide media.

### **Data Analysis Procedure**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), based on the work of researchers like Fairclough (2003) and Van Dijk (1993), will be used to analyze the gathered data. There are a number of critical steps that will comprise this analytical technique. An analysis of the discourse's vocabulary, metaphors, framing tactics, and narrative structures will be conducted in order to identify textual strategies. We will analyze the framing of events involving religious minorities as security threats or human rights violations, the sentiment and tone of language used to describe these groups, and whether particular minority groups receive an unfair amount of attention. Second, the study will explore power dynamics by looking at how the discourse places religious minority and the majority group, which will show the power linkages at work. As part of this investigation, we may look at the privileges and amplified voices inside the discourse. Lastly, the analysis will seek to reveal ideologies that are subtly woven into the discourse surrounding religious minorities and their social status. These ideologies may include assumptions about Pakistani society's national identity and religious affiliation, as well as implicit messages about religious tolerance or intolerance. This research aims to provide light on the ramifications of media portrayals of religious minority groups in Pakistan by using these analytical lenses.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Researchers must always prioritize ethical considerations. We will ensure that data is anonymized while giving credit where credit is due. In presenting the study's findings, we will not generalize about Pakistan's religious minority. Using this study technique as a guide, we may examine how Pakistani media outlets portray religious minorities. Through the use of critical discourse analysis (CDA) techniques, this research seeks to enhance our comprehension of these groups' portrayal in the media and their possible influence on social inclusion and interfaith relations in Pakistan.

### **Data Analysis**

This table 1 applies Critical Discourse Analysis to Dawn newspaper headlines (August 16–23, 2023) on the Jaranwala incident. It examines power relations, ideologies, and media textual techniques.

**Table 1:** CDA Analysis of Dawn Newspaper Headlines Coverage Jaranwala Blasphemy Incident: Power, Ideology, and Textual Strategies.

Date	Headline	Power Dynamics	Ideology	Textual Strategies
16-8-2023	Rangers called after churches vandalised in Faisalabad's Jaranwala over blasphemy allegations	Christians positioned as passive victims, needing protection from "mob".	Implicit assumption that blasphemy is a serious offense justifying violence.	Focus on vandalism of churches, framing Christians as the target group.
16-8-2023	Religious leaders visit Jaranwala: Ashrafi	Religious leaders presented as taking action, possibly implying inaction by the government.	Importance of religious harmony emphasized	Focus on religious leaders' response, downplaying government's role.
16-8-2023	Nearly 100 killed over blasphemy allegations since 1947	Highlights historical danger associated with blasphemy accusations.	Blasphemy seen as a potential trigger for violence.	Statistic emphasizes historical threat, potentially justifying a strong response.
17-8-2023	At 'mob's mercy', Christians cry out for justice	Christians positioned as powerless victims of a "mob".	Implicit assumption that justice should be served.	Emphasizes "mob" and "mercy," creating a sense of vulnerability for Christians.
17-8-2023	Both main accused in Jaranwala rampage now in CTD custody: Naqvi	Focus on swift action by authorities (CTD) against the accused.	Maintaining order and security is a priority.	Framing the incident as a "rampage" suggests a serious threat.
17-8-2023	More than 20 churches torched, says Archbishop Shaw	Focus on the scale of the attack on Christian places of worship.	Christians are a significant religious minority deserving protection.	Highlighting the number of churches emphasizes the severity of the attack.
17-8-2023	Perpetrators of 'extremely tragic' Jaranwala violence will be brought to justice: COAS	Military assures action against perpetrators, portraying itself as a protector.	Violence is unacceptable and will be punished.	Framing the incident as "tragic" evokes sympathy but doesn't question the blasphemy allegation.
17-8-2023	NCHR inquiry team visits Jaranwala	Human rights body's involvement suggests potential for impartial investigation.	Importance of investigating human rights violations.	Focus on NCHR inquiry implies a broader concern beyond just the blasphemy allegation.
18-8-2023	Police round up 140 over Jaranwala mob violence	Focus on large number of arrests suggests a strong response to the violence.	Maintaining order requires decisive action.	"Mob violence" emphasizes the threat posed by the crowd.
18-8-2023	Two main suspects detained; five cases registered against miscreants on charges of terrorism, blasphemy	Equates blasphemy with terrorism, suggesting both are serious offenses.	Blasphemy is a grave threat to national security.	Linking blasphemy to terrorism elevates the seriousness of the accusations.
18-8-2023	'Planned conspiracy to sabotage peace'	Suggests the violence was not a spontaneous reaction but a deliberate act.	Maintaining peace requires vigilance against conspiracies.	Framing the incident as a "conspiracy" downplays the role of the blasphemy allegation.
19-8-2023	PM rebukes elements behind mob violence	Prime Minister condemns the violence but doesn't address the blasphemy allegation.	Violence is unacceptable, but the underlying cause might be.	Focus on condemning violence avoids taking a clear stance on the blasphemy accusation.



Date	Headline	Power Dynamics	Ideology	Textual Strategies
19-8-2023	Interim CM says all damaged churches to be restored by next week; officials see 'conspiracy' behind Jaranwala melee, cast doubt over allegations of blasphemy	Government promises to rebuild churches but downplays the blasphemy allegation.	Maintaining social order is a priority, but the cause of the violence is unclear.	"Melee" minimizes the severity of the incident, while casting doubt on the blasphemy allegation shifts the focus.
20-8-2023	Jaranwala limps back to normalcy	Focus on the return to normalcy suggests control has been reestablished (government power).	Maintaining social order is crucial for societal well-being.	"Limps back" implies a fragile normalcy, potentially downplaying the impact of the violence.
20-8-2023	Police get two-day physical remand of Christian brothers accused of blasphemy; Justice Isa visits blighted town, meets victims	Christians remain positioned as suspects while a respected judge shows solidarity with the victims (implicitly Christian).	Justice system takes its course, but victims deserve compassion.	Focus on "physical remand" emphasizes the legal process against Christians, while Justice Isa's visit highlights the plight of the victims.
20-8-2023	Justice Isa's visit... Justice Isa visited Jaranwala...	Emphasis on Justice Isa's visit suggests a potential intervention or fact-finding mission (indirect challenge to government narrative?).	Importance of independent inquiry and accountability.	Repetition of Justice Isa's visit and his title might imply a need for a higher authority to intervene.
21-8-2023	Punjab cabinet joins prayers at ransacked church in Jaranwala	Government takes a performative act of solidarity with the Christian community.	Importance of religious tolerance and interfaith harmony.	"Punjab cabinet" emphasizes government's involvement, but "prayers" suggest a symbolic gesture.
21-8-2023	CM promises justice, announces Rs2m each for 94 Christian families	Government promises both legal action (justice) and financial compensation, potentially aiming to appease the Christian community.	Importance of addressing grievances and promoting social cohesion.	"Justice" is open-ended (for whom?), while compensation suggests economic losses as a key concern.
22-8-2023	Damage to Jaranwala churches, homes estimated at Rs67m	Focus on the financial cost of the violence highlights the severity of the incident.	Violence is disruptive and has significant economic consequences.	Quantifying the damage emphasizes the material impact, potentially downplaying the human cost.
22-8-2023	PM visits blighted town, hands out compensation to victims of violence	Prime Minister takes a visible role in recovery efforts, potentially aiming to project leadership.	Importance of government action in times of crisis and supporting the victims.	Focus on the Prime Minister's visit and compensation suggests a top-down approach to managing the crisis.
23-8-2023	Govt plans interfaith moot next week	Government proposes a dialogue-based approach to address religious tensions (potential shift in focus).	Importance of promoting interfaith understanding to prevent future violence.	"Interfaith moot" suggests a focus on long-term solutions beyond immediate actions.

At first, the headlines portray Christians as helpless victims of mob violence; eventually, the emphasis moves to their status as likely blasphemy suspects. Before settling on returning to normality and paying victims, the administration skirts the blasphemy accusation. In many accounts, the blasphemy claim is downplayed while the violent aspects are exaggerated.

Words like "mob," "rampage," and "conspiracy" provide the impression that the violence is a real and present danger. Later headlines bring up the idea of interfaith engagement, which

might indicate a change in focus towards tackling the root issues.

**Table 2:** CDA Analysis of The News Newspaper Headlines Coverage Jaranwala Blasphemy incident: Power, Ideology, and Textual Strategies.

Date	Headline	Power Dynamics	Ideology	Textual Strategies
16-8-23	Creating awareness about minorities' rights discussed	Focus on discussion, suggesting a lack of concrete action on minority rights.	Importance of protecting minority rights is acknowledged.	Headline placed before Jaranwala incident suggests a broader context of minority rights issues.
17-8-23	Over 100 held after churches, homes vandalised in Jaranwala	Focus on arrests suggests a strong response by authorities.	Maintaining order requires decisive action.	"Over 100 held" emphasizes the number of arrests, portraying a swift response.
17-8-23	Protesters condemn violence against Christian community in Punjab	Public outrage is acknowledged, giving voice to those against the violence.	Violence against minorities is unacceptable.	"Protesters condemn" highlights public disapproval of the attacks.
18-8-23	Jaranwala tragedy: 34 nominated, 600 unknown accused booked under ATA, 18 PPC sections	Focus on legal action against a large number of accused (including unknown ones) suggests a comprehensive approach.	Importance of upholding the law and punishing the guilty.	Legal terminology ("ATA," "PPC sections") positions the response within a legal framework.
18-8-23	Jaranwala culprits will be brought to justice: COAS	Military assures action against perpetrators, portraying itself as a protector.	Violence is unacceptable and will be punished.	COAS's statement emphasizes military's involvement, potentially suggesting a serious threat.
18-8-23	Christians found shelter with Muslims during Jaranwal rampage	Highlights acts of solidarity between religious communities, potentially countering narratives of religious animosity.	Importance of interfaith harmony and social cohesion.	"Christians found shelter" emphasizes acts of kindness and undermines assumptions of universal hostility.
18-8-23	Civil society activists demand probe into law enforcers' inaction during Jaranwala attacks	Raises questions about police response, suggesting a power imbalance.	Importance of accountability for law enforcement.	"Demand probe" highlights potential shortcomings in the initial response.
18-8-23	Catholic Church seeks strong action against destroyers of churches, homes	Religious institution seeks justice, suggesting a lack of complete trust in authorities.	Places of worship deserve protection and perpetrators should be punished.	"Catholic Church seeks" positions the church as a voice for the victims.
18-8-23	United Council of Churches demand justice	Christian community demands justice, potentially challenging the power dynamics.	Victims deserve justice regardless of their religion.	"Demand justice" emphasizes the Christian community's active pursuit of justice.
18-8-23	VCs condemn Jaranwala incident	Educational institutions take a moral stance against the violence.	Violence is wrong and has negative social consequences.	"VCs condemn" positions academia against acts of intolerance.
18-8-23	Probe into Jaranwala incident demanded	Multiple calls for investigation suggest a lack of clarity surrounding the event.	Importance of a transparent investigation to establish the truth.	"Probe demanded" emphasizes the need for a thorough investigation.
19-8-23	19 churches, 87 homes damaged in Jaranwala riots	Focus on the scale of the destruction highlights the severity of the attack.	Violence against religious minorities is unacceptable and has significant consequences.	Numbers ("19 churches," "87 homes") quantify the damage, emphasizing the impact on the Christian community.
19-8-23	Youth Council condemns attack on churches	Youth voice is acknowledged, suggesting broader societal concern.	Violence is wrong and young people should stand against it.	"Youth Council condemns" positions young people as advocates for tolerance.
19-8-23	Christian community deplores state's failure to protect them	Christian community voices their discontent, potentially challenging the government's narrative.	The state has a responsibility to protect its citizens, including minorities.	"Deplores failure to protect" criticizes the government's response, suggesting a power imbalance.
19-8-23	Christian community leaders meet CM	Christian community seeks dialogue with the Chief Minister, suggesting a search for solutions.	Importance of addressing grievances through communication.	"Meet CM" positions the Christian community as actively seeking solutions.
20-8-23	Attacks on churches un-Islamic: Justice Qazi Faez Isa	Religious leader condemns the violence, using religious arguments.	True Islam promotes peace and respect for all religions.	"Un-Islamic" emphasizes the act's violation of Islamic principles, potentially countering religious justifications for violence.

Date	Headline	Power Dynamics	Ideology	Textual Strategies
20-8-23	Mosques probed over protest call in Jaranwala blasphemy attacks	Investigation into mosques suggests a potential power imbalance within religious institutions.	Religious institutions should not incite violence.	"Mosques probed" suggests scrutiny of religious leaders who might have fueled the violence.
20-8-23	Desecration of Holy Quran: Pakistan asks world to work jointly for interfaith harmony	Government attempts to shift focus to a broader issue (defending the Quran) while promoting interfaith dialogue.	Importance of respecting all religions and fostering interfaith understanding.	"Desecration of Quran" potentially downplays the violence against Christians while emphasizing religious unity.
20-8-23	'Media must enable social dialogue to promote tolerance, protect minorities'	Importance of media's role in promoting social harmony and protecting vulnerable groups is acknowledged.	Media has a responsibility to promote tolerance and hold authorities accountable.	"Media must enable" positions the media as a key player in preventing future violence.
20-8-23	Judicial commission demanded to probe Jaranwala attacks	Calls for a judicial inquiry suggest a lack of trust in the existing investigation process.	Importance of an impartial and transparent investigation to ensure justice.	"Judicial commission demanded" emphasizes the need for a more rigorous investigation.
20-8-23	Normalcy starts returning to Jaranwala: IG	Official statement suggests control has been reestablished, potentially downplaying the underlying issues.	Maintaining order is a priority, but addressing root causes is also important.	"Normalcy returning" focuses on restoring order, potentially overlooking the long-term impact on the Christian community.
20-8-23	Rulers asked to pay heed to people's call for peace	Public's demand for peace is acknowledged, suggesting a potential challenge to those in power.	Leaders have a responsibility to listen to the people's desire for peace.	"Rulers asked" positions the public as having a voice in demanding peace.
21-8-23	Christians pray among rubble of ransacked church	Powerlessness of the Christian community is emphasized by the image of praying amidst destruction.	Religious faith offers solace even in the face of violence.	"Pray among rubble" creates a powerful image of resilience but also highlights the devastation.
21-8-23	24-member PUC team to probe Jaranwala tragedy	Focus on a formal investigation suggests a move towards accountability.	Importance of a thorough investigation to uncover the truth.	"PUC team to probe" implies a dedicated effort to investigate the incident.
21-8-23	Protests held in Hyderabad against Jaranwala, Ranipur incidents	Solidarity protests in other cities highlight the broader impact of the events.	Violence against minorities is unacceptable and deserves nationwide condemnation.	"Protests held" emphasizes a wider movement against religious violence.
21-8-23	Churches security beefed up in Rawalpindi	Focus on increased security suggests a lingering threat perception for Christians.	The state has a responsibility to protect its citizens, including places of worship.	"Security beefed up" implies a need for ongoing protection for the Christian community.
21-8-23	Christian leaders protest Jaranwala incident	Christian community continues to express their discontent, maintaining pressure for action.	Peaceful protest is a legitimate way to express grievances.	"Christian leaders protest" positions the community as actively seeking justice.
21-8-23	Protest staged against Jaranwala incident	Public outrage continues, suggesting the issue remains unresolved.	Violence against any group is wrong and deserves public condemnation.	"Protest staged" emphasizes ongoing public concern about the Jaranwala incident.
22-8-23	Jaranwala attackers must be punished, demands Shahzad Qureshi	Political figure demands punishment, potentially aiming to position himself as supportive of justice.	Perpetrators of violence deserve to be held accountable.	"Must be punished" emphasizes the need for consequences for the attackers.
23-8-23	Jaranwala bodies want fair probe	Christian organizations seek a fair investigation, suggesting doubts about the ongoing process.	Confidence in the investigation is crucial for achieving justice.	"Fair probe" implies a concern about the impartiality of the existing investigation.

This table 2 applies Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methods to headlines regarding the Jaranwala incident in The News newspaper from August 16-23, 2023. Media coverage's ideological underpinnings, linguistic techniques, and power dynamics are the main points of analysis. Concerning the security of the Christian community and the government's reaction, the news reports take a more critical stance than Dawn. Here observed the interplay of power among Christians, secular rulers, and religious organizations. Stress the significance of a fair inquiry and the concept of religious tolerance. Urgency is created by using emotive imagery ("pray among rubble") and demands to action ("must be punished").

## Comparative Analysis

This study uses the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology to evaluate and contrast the reporting of the Jaranwala event in Dawn and The News newspapers from August 16-23, 2023. Attention is drawn to the ideologies, power relations, and literary tactics used in the headlines.

**Table 3:** Comparative Analysis of Dawn and the News Coverage of the Jaranwala Incident.

Aspect	Dawn	The News
Power Dynamics	Christians initially victims, later suspects; Focus on maintaining order, downplaying Christian concerns	Christians portrayed as vulnerable; Emphasis on their fight for justice and protection
Ideology	Underlying belief in blasphemy as serious sin; Focus on social order and law enforcement	Rejects blasphemy accusations justifying violence; Advocates for religious tolerance and human rights
Blasphemy Coverage	Silent on seriousness of accusations and potential misuse of laws	Rejects blasphemy accusations as justification for violence
Role of Media	Acknowledges media's role in social discourse and minority rights, but limited by blasphemy stance	Strong advocate for religious tolerance and interfaith cooperation through media
Textual Strategies	Uses words like "mob" and "rampage" to portray violence as serious threat	Uses similar words but emphasizes community collaboration and peace
Focus	Highlights church damage and blasphemy accusations; Christians as targets	Broader focus on scale of destruction and social impact
Justice	Frames Christian calls for justice within religious persecution narrative	Frames justice as communal effort, highlights interfaith solidarity

According to Dawn's power dynamics presentation, Christians are first shown as victims, expressing a storyline that is in line with society's compassion for oppressed people. But the story slowly turns around and starts to cast them as suspects. A change in the prevailing narrative that starts to question the excluded group's innocence may be a sign of a power dynamic at work here. It is also possible that the administration is trying to keep things calm politically by avoiding dealing with the blasphemy accusation head-on. Following this, there is an effort to lessen the severity of the dispute without addressing the underlying systemic problems by refocusing attention on getting things back to normal and making amends to victims.

The News takes a more critical stance towards power dynamics, on the other hand. It emphasizes the Christian community's defenseless position in the face of systematic injustice by putting their fight for justice and protection front and center. By highlighting the public's fury over the violence and calling for authorities to be held accountable, The News questions the current power structures and demands honesty and fairness. The media acts as a watchdog, ensuring that those in power are held responsible for their actions, in this depiction of the power dynamic.

In their reporting, both Dawn and The News stress the need of preserving law and order. Both the government and society at large place a premium on stability and compliance with the law, and this shared focus reflects that. Nevertheless, the subtleties in how every newspaper presents this focus might expose hidden ideological biases. Dawn may be seen as taking a conservative

ideological position due to its underlying beliefs seeing blasphemy as a grave sin, yet it does support the larger narrative of preserving societal order and law enforcement. Dawn shows her support for the status quo by remaining silent on the seriousness of blasphemy claims and the possible misuse of blasphemy laws. These norms and power structures tend to prioritize the preservation of religious emotions above individual rights. When it comes to issues of religious tolerance and concord across faiths, however, The News is more outspoken. The News rejects the idea that blasphemy charges should legitimize bigotry or violence by advocating these principles. Prioritizing the preservation of minority populations above retaining established power relations, this ideological stance implies a dedication to human rights and inclusion.

The two newspapers' contrasting coverage of blasphemy sheds information on their respective ideological stances on religious liberty, tolerance, and the rule of law. The conservative ideological position that Dawn exemplifies, which places religious sensibilities above individual liberties, is her tacit endorsement of blasphemy as a grave crime that warrants violence. Dawn contributes to a narrative that might heighten tensions and strengthen discriminatory behaviors against religious minorities by portraying blasphemy claims as valid complaints deserving of community outcry. The News, in contrast, rejects the idea that accusations of blasphemy should inspire bigotry or violence and instead advocates for religious tolerance and interfaith cooperation. A society where people may freely express their opinions without fear of persecution or punishment is advocated by this ideological position, which is in line with human rights and secularism.

Despite their differences in tone and focus, both newspapers agree that the media can help promote civil discourse and safeguard minority rights. Dawn acknowledges that media may foster social discourse and safeguard minorities, but by treating blasphemy as a major sin, it risks undermining these efforts. Dawn risks unintentionally contributing to the perpetuation of social divides and injustices by her ideological attitude, which does not openly oppose racist myths or fight for the rights of religious minorities. The News is more outspoken in its support for religious tolerance and interfaith cooperation, which it uses to promote social discussion and safeguard minority rights. The News is in line with a larger human rights agenda that aims to build a more equal society by giving a platform to those who disagree and by fighting against discriminatory actions. Fundamentally, Dawn and The News share an emphasis on law and order and social order preservation, but their divergent views on blasphemy and the media's place in society reveal more fundamental ideological differences on issues of religious liberty, tolerance, and minority rights. Media narratives and public debate on delicate topics like blasphemy and interfaith relations are shaped by these ideological leanings, which may be discerned via critical examination.

When reporting on the violent occurrence in Jaranwala, both Dawn and The News use words like "mob," "rampage," and "conspiracy" to emphasize how dangerous it is. These word choices cast the events in a negative perspective and highlight how serious the situation is by evoking feelings of anarchy, danger, and illegitimacy. Nevertheless, these phrases' effects could change based on their placement in the larger story. Words like "mob" and "rampage" used by Dawn to describe the blasphemy accusation and church destruction serve to perpetuate the stereotype of Christians as victims of prejudiced violence. This framing supports Dawn's depiction of the occurrence as a danger to religious minorities and emphasizes the gravity of the issue from their point of view. Similarly, to emphasize the seriousness of the violence, The News used emotionally laden language. The News, however, places these concepts within a

larger narrative of community collaboration and peace by presenting figures on the extent of the devastation and by emphasizing gestures of solidarity among religious groups. This way of looking at things helps put a face on the victims and provides positive examples of strength and unity to offset the tragedy's negative connotations.

Readers' impressions of the event and its dynamics are shaped by the coverage's selection of focus points, which reflect editorial objectives and narrative emphases. The Christian community is shown as the principal targets of violence in Dawn's portrayal of church damage and blasphemy accusations. Dawn stresses the importance of religious minorities' demands for justice and protection by drawing attention to these details. Meanwhile, The News broadens its emphasis to include the scope of the devastation and the wider consequences of the violence, moving beyond particular religious connections. The News provides a more thorough account of the occurrence by including data and showcasing actions of religious solidarity, drawing attention to the incident's social effect and the collective duty to address its root causes.

While both newspapers stress the need of an impartial inquiry and the pursuit of justice, they frame and emphasize these issues differently. The Christian community's calls for justice may be framed within the larger narrative of religious persecution and prejudice in Dawn's coverage of the blasphemy charge. The framing serves to elevate the voices and shed emphasis on the challenges of religious minorities; but, it has the potential to further divide people along religious lines and to perpetuate the victimization stereotypes that certain religious minority may face. In addition to calling for an impartial inquiry, the news article highlights religious groups' actions of solidarity, highlighting how everyone has a role to play in fostering peace and healing. The News promotes a story of solidarity and perseverance by portraying the pursuit of justice as a communal effort and by showcasing examples of collaboration across communities.

### Similarities between Dawn and the News Coverage

The event is framed by Dawn and The News as an outcome of a blasphemy charge. This common understanding of the pivotal role that blasphemy accusations played in inciting the violence is shown by the similarities in framing.

**Table 4:** Similarities Between Dawn and the News Coverage of the Jaranwala Incident.

Aspect	Description
Emphasis on Blasphemy Accusation (Context)	Both acknowledge blasphemy accusations as the initiating factor, but lack critical analysis of their veracity or underlying social issues.
Highlighting Scale of Violence	Both emphasize the destruction of churches and the magnitude of the violence, conveying the severity of the event.
Reporting Government Response	Both acknowledge the government's efforts to restore normalcy and compensate victims, reflecting balanced coverage.

Although this perspective helps put the events in context, it begs the issue of what exactly was fueling the violence and what dynamics were at play. Blasphemy charges do incite violence, but a critical analysis would cast doubt on their veracity and look into the larger social variables and power dynamics that fuel the fires of violence. Beyond simplistic explanations, the situation's intricacies may be better understood by taking a critical look at the circumstances surrounding the blasphemy accusation and how it was used for political or societal benefit.

The magnitude of the violence and the desecration of churches are emphasized in both



publications, demonstrating how devastating the episode was and how it affected the communities who were impacted. The severity of the issue is conveyed and readers' compassion and concern are sparked by this collective focus on the degree of the destruction. Although the emphasis on the extent of the devastation and brutality helps put the tragedy into perspective, a critical viewpoint would also call into question the reasons for and those responsible for the violence. A critical viewpoint may illuminate the systemic injustices and power dynamics that underpin such acts of communal violence by investigating the reasons for the assaults and looking at the larger socio-political setting in which they take place.

The government's efforts to return things to normal and recompense sufferers have been recognized by both media. It is standard practice for journalists to include the opinions of relevant authorities in their balanced coverage, and this acknowledgment of government reaction is no exception. An accurate description of the event must include the government's actions, but a critical eye must also examine the sincerity and efficacy of these actions. Whether we take a critical look at the government's track record and political goals, we can see whether they've done enough to tackle the underlying issues that led to the violence and make sure it doesn't happen again.

In conclusion, comparing Dawn and The News's coverage of the Jaranwala incident reveals room for improvement in terms of investigating the causes and dynamics of the violence, assessing the efficacy of government actions to address systemic problems, and fostering reconciliation and peace. By engaging in critical analysis, both journalists and readers may enhance their comprehension of intricate socio-political events and make educated contributions to public conversation.

### **Differences between Dawn and the News Coverage**

The CDA framework exposes the two narratives that Dawn and The News developed around the Jaranwala incident. Dawn tends to show things from a state-centric viewpoint, which might make the Christian community's suffering seem less important by highlighting the need to keep the peace. Such behavior betrays an unwillingness to question those in charge and an inclination to conform to preexisting power dynamics. The News, in contrast, takes a more critical approach, highlighting inequality of power and calling for religious tolerance and fairness. The News calls for accountability and structural change by giving a platform to underrepresented voices and questioning established narratives. All things considered, these findings demonstrate how the two publications' contrasting ideologies shape public debate on delicate topics like minority rights and communal violence.

**Table 5:** Differences Between Dawn and the News Coverage of the Jaranwala Incident

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Dawn</b>	<b>The News</b>
Government Role	Downplays government's role in protecting minorities; Focuses on restoring normalcy	Criticizes government's handling of the situation; Questions effectiveness of actions
Blasphemy Accusation	Avoids directly challenging the accusation	Casts doubt on the accusation and its manipulation
Religious Tensions	Doesn't explore role of religious organizations	Highlights the impact of extreme ideologies and sectarian discourse
Interfaith Relations	Limited focus on interfaith dialogue	Promotes interfaith dialogue and understanding

Critical Lens	Less critical of government and power dynamics	More critical of government, power dynamics, and limitations of interfaith dialogue
Overall Tone	State-centric, prioritizes stability	Critical, questions narratives, calls for reform

Dawn's reporting often minimizes the role of the government in safeguarding vulnerable populations. Dawn implies, without explicitly saying so, that the government is more concerned with responding to crises than taking the initiative to protect religious minority' rights by delaying challenging the blasphemy accusation and instead concentrating on getting things back to normal. Preserving political stability and avoiding conflict with authorities may be the goals of this cautious strategy. One may argue that Dawn is trying to be politically neutral by avoiding answering the blasphemy accusation head-on, but a critical eye would see that she is minimizing the government's role, which has serious consequences. A critical viewpoint might question the status quo and call for stronger safeguards for minority rights by investigating the larger systemic factors that lead to religious persecution and community violence.

The News, on the other hand, takes a more critical stance toward the government's handling of the situation. The News casts doubt on the success of official initiatives to tackle the root causes of violence and ensure that those in power are held responsible for their acts. This casts doubt on the prevalent narrative of government competence and kindness. Even if it may come out as combative, this critical posture demonstrates a dedication to journalistic responsibility and honesty. Additionally, the impact of extreme ideology and sectarian discourse on creating communal tensions is brought to light in The News, which investigates the possible involvement of religious organizations in instigating violence. This analysis of how religious organizations contribute to the continuation of violence enriches The News' reporting and pushes viewers to consider the larger social dynamics at work.

The News highlights the significance of mediating religious tolerance and understanding and the value of interfaith conversation. By highlighting examples of collaboration and solidarity across many religious organizations, The News promotes a story of togetherness and tolerance, countering stories that try to use religious differences for ideological or political benefit. The News' focus on media accountability and interfaith engagement is admirable, but a critical eye would also question whether or not these efforts are really getting to the root of systemic inequality and power dynamics. A critical viewpoint may promote social justice and more radical change by investigating the limits of interfaith conversation in tackling systematic inequalities and calling for larger structural changes.

To sum up, different editorial goals and ideological viewpoints are evident in the divergent coverage of the Jaranwala event by Dawn and The News. Dawn could take a more measured approach to maintaining political stability, while The News takes a more critical stance, questioning established narratives and calling for structural reform. Readers may enrich public conversation with well-informed opinions and a deeper comprehension of intricate sociopolitical topics via critical analysis.

## Discussion

The crisis narrative was constructed by Pakistani print media's coverage of the Jaranwala tragedy using several linguistic tactics. According to news reports such as "Rangers called after

churches vandalized in Faisalabad's Jaranwala over blasphemy allegations" (Dawn, 16-8-2023), the damage is seen as a direct result of the criminal accusation. "Vandalized" and "allegations" highlight the desecration of religious buildings and the lack of evidence supporting the blasphemy accusation (Dawn). "Jaranwala attackers must be punished, demands Shahzad Qureshi" (The News, 22-8-2023) and "Perpetrators of 'extremely tragic' Jaranwala violence will be brought to justice: COAS" (Dawn, 17-8-2023) are both used. Restoring order and prosecuting those responsible are the state's top priorities, as seen above. "Interim CM says all damaged churches to be restored by next week; officials see 'conspiracy' behind Jaranwala melee, cast doubt over allegations of blasphemy" (19-8-2023) in Dawn's headline minimizes the government's duty to safeguard minorities by directing attention towards reconstruction efforts and raising doubts about the blasphemy claim.

Headlines such as "Christian community deplores state's failure to protect them" (19-8-2023) in The News serve to emphasize the viewpoint of the Christian community and their discontent with the government's reaction. The news article "Mosques probed over protest call in Jaranwala blasphemy attacks" (The News, 18-8-2023) raises serious concerns about the possible instigation of violence by religious organizations. The media use powerful language such as "rampage" and "tragedy" to stir up strong emotions and present the violence as a grave danger. News articles highlighting the extent of the damage sometimes use numbers such as "19 churches, 87 homes damaged in Jaranwala riots" (19-8-2023). "Attacks on churches un-Islamic: Justice Qazi Faez Isa" (20-8-2023) is one of several news headlines that encourage religious tolerance. "Media must enable social dialogue to promote tolerance, protect minorities" (The News, 20-8-2023). The media must do its part to promote unity and safeguard marginalized communities.

The way the Jaranwala event was presented in Pakistani print media shows how different viewpoints and intentions are reflected via the subtle use of linguistic tactics. Dawn's coverage, as seen by headlines that center on reestablishing order and questioning the blasphemy accusation, implies a propensity to uphold the current situation and conform to official narratives. The framing by Dawn may unintentionally minimize the seriousness of the problem for the impacted population by placing more emphasis on reconstruction activities and downplaying the government's duty to safeguard minorities. On the other hand, The News takes a more critical approach, giving a platform to disenfranchised communities and calling into question the role of religious organizations in promoting violence. Both publications use facts and emotional language to make readers feel something, but The News takes it a step further by advocating religious tolerance and highlighting the media's role in creating societal peace. This research highlights the significance of media literacy in understanding news stories and brings up important points about the ethics of journalism, the dynamics of power, and the desire for social justice in media portrayals of delicate topics. Readers may better understand the nuances of media portrayal and the influence of various viewpoints on public debate by analyzing the textual tactics used.

A convoluted story about the Jaranwala event is constructed using the linguistic tactics used by Pakistani print media. While both publications report on the devastation and bloodshed, Dawn's reporting seems to be more state-centric, with an emphasis on law and order that may minimize the suffering of the Christian population. A more skeptical viewpoint is presented in the News, which questions the government's reaction and highlights the significance of interfaith discussion. This research shows how the headlines and wording of the story affected

how the people perceived the incident. It makes us wonder how the media can be objective while simultaneously strengthening or weakening power dynamics.

Several facets of Pakistani culture might be profoundly affected by the way the Jaranwala event is depicted in Pakistani print media when evaluated using textual techniques. Reinforcing unfavorable perceptions about the community might result from focusing excessively on the blasphemy allegation and portraying Christians only as victims. More people may feel alone and discriminated against as a result of this. Christians may feel unsafe practicing their faith openly if news reports highlight the severity of the violence and the demolition of churches. The Christian community's story may be called into question if the blasphemy accusation (Dawn) were to make headlines, further damaging their confidence with the majority populace.

Minorities may be less likely to pursue legal action in the future if the media minimizes the government's duty to safeguard them (Dawn). The normalization of intolerance and the normalization of future assaults may result from a concentration on keeping order without addressing the underlying reasons of the violence. Potentially stifling free speech on minority rights is the absence of critical voices challenging the blasphemy charge and the government's reaction. Reports suggesting that violence is justified by blasphemy (Dawn) might promote a feeling of superiority among the majority and deter critical introspection on religious tolerance. Any attempt to foster interfaith discussion risks backfiring if it becomes fixated on religious differences. Media portrayals of the state as the only arbiter of safety concerns have the capacity to further entrench its authority and shield it from responsibility should it fail to adequately safeguard certain populations.

Public opinion and the dynamics between various social groups in Pakistan are both impacted by how the media covered the Jaranwala event. A focus on order preservation at the expense of minority rights might lead to a preference for temporary peace over more permanent reforms. This has the potential to lead to an environment where minority groups do not feel safe and their rights are under protected. Pakistan might be a more peaceful and welcoming place for all faiths if the media did a better job of hearing from the Christian community, analyzing the blasphemy allegation, and stressing the significance of religious tolerance.

Public awareness in Pakistan and worldwide impressions of religious tolerance in the country may be greatly impacted by the conflicting media narratives surrounding the Jaranwala event in Pakistani print media, namely Dawn vs. The News. For some Pakistanis, Dawn's coverage of the blasphemy charge and the government's reaction to the violence may give the impression that the government is doing a good job of controlling the situation and that the violence was unavoidable. There may be less public demand for an exhaustive probe and the Christian community's suffering may be minimized as a result. A more complex view of the incident may be gained from the news coverage that emphasizes the fight for justice by the Christian community, the possible involvement of religious organizations, and the significance of interfaith communication. Authorities may be held responsible for safeguarding minorities, and public conversation on religious tolerance should be encouraged.

The world community may see Pakistan as intolerable toward religious minorities due to Dawn's narrative, which minimizes the government's duty to safeguard minorities and, at worst, might use the blasphemy narrative to legitimize murder. Human rights groups may begin to look more closely at the nation as a result of this, which might hurt its image. One way the media may help improve Pakistan's reputation abroad is by sharing stories that highlight religious tolerance and the need of social discussion. International relationships to promote

interfaith understanding may be fostered and a commitment to combating religious prejudice could be shown. Both domestically and abroad, the media have a significant impact on popular opinion and comprehension. The significance of critical media coverage is shown by the various narratives surrounding Jaranwala. A story that ignores minority rights in favor of preserving order is likely to be deceiving and harmful in the end. It is critical that the media provide a fair and balanced account of the issue, one that explores all aspects of the tragedy, and encourages religious tolerance. As a result, Pakistanis will be better educated and the country's reputation for religious tolerance would improve abroad.

## **Findings of the Study**

Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this research analyzed how the Dawn and The News newspapers covered the Jaranwala event from August 16-23, 2023. Here are the main takeaways from the research.

- Dawn prioritizes state-centric issues, such as order maintenance, and may minimize the suffering of the Christian community. The News presents an unbiased viewpoint, calling attention to unequal power dynamics and promoting the cause of justice.
- Maintaining law and order is a central theme in both publications. Assuming blasphemy justifies violence is Dawn's underlying assumption. There is a strong emphasis on religious tolerance and minority rights in the news.
- Words like "mob" and "rampage" are used by both to make the violent acts seem dangerous. The blasphemy accusation and the destroyed churches are Dawn's main points. The news highlights the extent of the damage and the unity among different faiths.
- The media's representations have the potential to perpetuate harmful preconceptions, increase anxiety, and damage confidence. The normalization of violence and the discouragement of legal remedies could result from a concentration on order and a downplaying of government responsibility. Violence, heightened tensions, and entrenched power relations might all be rationalized via media narratives.
- A picture of Pakistan being intolerance-inducing might emerge from Dawn's reporting. According to the news report, Pakistan is actively working to combat religious bigotry.

## **Limitations of the Study**

There are several caveats to the research. The study did not account for all forms of media coverage or public and worldwide responses as it only looked at a small subset of headlines. This examination of the Jaranwala event as it was reported in Pakistani newspapers includes a number of limitations. Specifically, the research looked at the headlines from the newspapers Dawn and The News from August 16th through the 23rd, 2023. The investigation did not go into Dawn and The News' ownership or editorial practices. These limitations addressed in future study by increasing the sample size, evaluating more than just headlines, and using survey and interview methods.

## **Conclusion**

Examining the reporting of the Jaranwala event in Dawn and The News newspapers from August 16-23, 2023, this research used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Using word choice,

headlines, and overall framing as building blocks, the study uncovered competing narratives. The perspective that Dawn offered was more state-centric, with an emphasis on order maintenance and, maybe, a diminishment of the Christian community's suffering. A more critical viewpoint was presented in the News, which spoke out against injustice, highlighted power inequalities, and stressed the need of religious tolerance. Public opinion in Pakistan and how the world views the country's religious tolerance may be greatly impacted by these competing narratives. A more hostile perception of Pakistan may emerge from Dawn's depiction, which might lead to the perpetuation of harmful generalizations about Christians, a weakening of calls for a thorough inquiry, and other undesirable outcomes. Meanwhile, the storyline of the news might show that Pakistan is serious about tackling these challenges, encourage public discussion on religious tolerance, and call the government to account. In conclusion, the significance of critical media literacy is emphasized by this research. Media sources may be held responsible for fostering a fair and inclusive representation of events like the Jaranwala incident if individuals realize the possible implications of media narrative construction and actively participate in critical information consumption. A more equitable and accepting society in Pakistan may be the result of this.

## Reference

- Abbas, H. (2011). Constructing blasphemy: Media, religion and the state in Pakistan. *Journal of Asian Studies*, 70(3), 823-850.
- Akbar, J. (2018). The blurred lines: Media, blasphemy and religious violence in Pakistan. *South Asian History and Culture*, 9(2), 189-204.
- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Addison-Wesley
- Amnesty International. (2023, March 7). *Pakistan: Blasphemy laws continue to endanger religious minorities*. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/08/pakistan-authorities-must-ensure-protection-of-minority-christian-community/>
- Barker, C. (1984). *The sociology of moral panic*. Glasgow: Fontana.
- Bækgaard, P. (2018). Hate speech on social media: A review of research on technological and communicative responses. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 23(4), 321-343.
- Bashir, M. A. (2014). Blasphemy laws in Pakistan: A critical analysis. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 34(1), 71-87.
- Castañeda, M. G. (2018). Don't patronize me: Media-by and media-for minorities. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 34(1), 62-82.
- Dixon, T. L., & Linz, D. G. (2000). Violence in the media and its effects on aggression: A meta-analysis. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 5(2), 281-300.
- Dyer, R. (1982). *Entertainment and utopia*. Routledge.
- Entman, R. M. (2007). *Framing bias: Media, power, and public opinion*. Oxford University Press.
- Eskin, T. (2016). *Representation and counter-representation: Black women in mainstream media*. Peter Lang.
- Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse*. Routledge.
- Fairclough, N. (2013). *Critical Discourse Analysis (2nd ed.)*. Routledge.
- Franklin, P., Loury, G. C., & 钾钾钾 Moss, P. (1992). Who are the black role models? *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 56(3), 366-382.
- Glick, D. (2005). *Representation of minorities in the news*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Haq, M. E. (2007). Media, blasphemy and violence in Pakistan. *Contemporary South Asia*, 16(2), 197-212.



- Houtman, D., & Pinnick, D. (2005). *The Blackwell companion to the study of religion*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Javed, H. (2020). Framing blasphemy: A critical discourse analysis of Pakistani media coverage of Asia Bibi case. *Journal of South Asian Studies*, 43(5), 1122-1142.
- Jakobsen, A. B., & Pellegrini, A. (2004). *Muslims in Denmark: Religious life, identity and politics*. Brill
- Jhally, S., & Sutcliffe, J. (2000). *Advertising culture*. Routledge.
- Johnstone, Patrick & Miller, Duane Alexander. (2023, January 10). *Operation World: Pakistan*. <https://operationworld.org/locations/pakistan/>
- Kelleher, M. C. (2016). Blasphemy in a digital age. *Law & Literature Review*, 50(2), 247-273.
- Marty, M. E., & Appleby, R. S. (1993). *Fundamentalism and the state: Remaking worlds in the late 19th and early 20th centuries*. University of Chicago Press.
- Morris, M., & Winn, S. (1999). The fiction of inclusion: Analyzing curriculum materials for representations of race, class, and gender. *Journal of Educational Policy*, 14(2), 189-216.
- Phillips, A. (2004). *Equity and difference*. Cornell University Press.
- Roy, S. (2009). *The trouble with Islam today: Violence, misunderstanding and rage*. I.B. Tauris.
- Said, E. W. (1979). *Orientalism*. Vintage Books.
- US Department of State. (2023, February 17). *2022 Report on International Religious Freedom: Pakistan*. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/pakistan/441219-pakistan-2022-international-religious-freedom-report/>
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1993). *The strategies of discourse comprehension*. Sage Publications.