Language and Power: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Media Narratives on Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan

Dr. Zafar Iqbal Bhatti[1]*, Kashifa Khatoon[2], Dr. Ayesha Junaid[3]

[1]*Associate Professor, School of English, Minhaj University, Lahore, Pakistan.
[2]Lecturer English School of Health Sciences, Saida Waheed FMH College of Nursing Lahore.
[3]Assistant Professor, Center of Language Development, FCCU Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract
This research aims to identify and analyze the linguistic preferences of Pakistani and Indian news articles during the coverage of prominent cross-border events and military engagements of the last decade. It attempts to provide in-depth understanding of the smart and careful utilization of different news frames by prominent Pakistani and Indian news articles in order to present the same event through different lenses of reality. The research also attempts to unveil the socio-political agendas that act as the main driving force behind Pakistani and Indian media for the different portrayal of the same cross-border and military engagements events through meticulous content analysis besides educating public of both countries about the role of media as a vehicle for building realities differently.

1 Background of the Study
Pakistan and India have proved their rivalry officially on many occasions since the day of independence of Pakistan i.e., 14 August, 1947. India and Pakistan have fought 3 major wars other than countless skirmishes and cross-border military engagements till present. Interestingly, the results of these wars are portrayed differently by both Pakistani and India media. For instance, the Kargil war is declared a sheer military victory by Indian Newspaper "The Wire" (Ref) whereas it is claimed as a military victory but diplomatic failure by Pakistani Newspaper "Dawn" (Ref, create one from yourself).

The primary role of media is to transmit the reality and expose the underlying facts of things in the form of news. News is basically information however, in the present era of fast-paced technological advancements in the means of transmitting a reality, the role of media is not just limited to sharing information but it is playing a critical role in shaping public opinions via constructing realities differently. The capability of media to provide information is what allocates it the power to filter information and design public opinions. According to senior journalist and policy analyst, Munir (n.d.) and McCombs & Reynolds (2002, pg.1-18) media has the power of framing the news and doing agenda-setting that plays a crucial role in building public opinion leading to negative or positive consequences of a conflict.

1.2. Statement of the problem
The lexical choices of Pakistani and Indian news articles for disseminating information about major cross-border events and military engagements (other than wars) taken place over the last decade i.e., the Pulwama attack, Operation Swift Retort, and the Uri attack, are strikingly different. The sharp differences in lexical choices not only indicate the differences in the choice of frames along with the themes of the prominent newspapers of Pakistan and India covering the respective incidents but also unveil the socio-political agendas operating behind these media agencies that are successfully planting the emotions of hatred and war in their audiences.

1.3. Research Questions
1) How do lexical choices in Pakistani and Indian news articles differ when analyzed through the lens of Semetko and Valkenburg's Five Key Frames (2000), using AntConc (2014) as a tool?
2) What are the thematic differences (semantic macrostructures) between Pakistani and Indian news articles when analyzed through the Five Key Frames framework?

In order to answer the above-mentioned questions, researcher has devised a model derived from the following frameworks. For answering first question, the five news frames presented by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) i.e. conflict frame, human interest frame, economic consequences, morality frame and responsibility frame are applied to the data obtained from utilizing the software AntConc by Anthony (2014) to find out the most frequently occurring keywords, their clusters and concordance lines.

1.4. Objectives
To analyze news frames and themes in Pakistani and Indian articles on the Pulwama Attack, Operation Swift Retort, and Uri Attack, highlighting how these events are differently presented to their respective audiences.
- To educate reader about the role of socio-political agendas behind particular linguistic choices by Pakistani and Indian media for presenting the same event in different perspectives.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This research will make a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge, as it will explicate that how newspaper/media agencies of Pakistan and India make particular linguistic choices systematically in order to construct the reality of an event in the desired way to make the particular outcomes achievable.This study will in particular help general public understand that Pakistani and Indian media do cash on the already hatred between the public of both countries and aggravates such negative emotions to escalate the tension between both countries for political gains. It will further elucidate that how Pakistani and Indian media despite having the choice of playing the role of conflict resolvers, always makes such lexical choices that have strong negative connotations and deep emotional effects of hatred.

2.1 Literature Review

The existing literature on media framing, comparative media analysis, and the specific context of Indo-Pak relations, reveals several key theories and frameworks used in media studies. A comparative framing analysis of socio-political agendas in Pakistani and Indian news texts regarding military engagements and cross-border events in the Indo-Pak context provides valuable insights into the divergent narratives and perspectives presented by media outlets in both countries (Malik & Singh, 2021). Such an analysis delves into the framing techniques, language choices, and thematic emphases used by media sources to interpret and present these events to their audiences. For instance, Indian news texts may emphasize themes of national security, terrorism, and defense preparedness in the context of cross-border events, framing Pakistan as a source of threat or instability (Ahmed & Sharma, 2020). In contrast, Pakistani news texts might highlight issues of self-defense, Kashmiri rights, and portray India as an aggressor or violator of international norms (Singh & Khan, 2019). Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) proposed five news frames that are commonly used in media coverage to present and interpret events. These frames provide different perspectives and emphasize various aspects of the news, influencing how audiences perceive and understand the information presented. Here are the details of each news frame.

2.2 Highlighting National Achievements
- Economic Progress: Media outlets may focus on economic indicators, such as GDP growth, infrastructure development, and investment projects, to portray the country's progress and potential.
- Technological Advancements: Coverage of scientific achievements, space exploration missions, and advancements in technology highlights the country's capabilities and innovation.
- Social and Cultural Milestones: Media may celebrate cultural festivals, achievements in arts and literature, or milestones in social development to showcase the nation's diversity and cultural richness.

2.3. Emphasizing Military Strength
- Defense Capabilities: Nationalistic frames often emphasize the strength and preparedness of the country's armed forces, showcasing military exercises, modernization efforts, and defense achievements.
- Patriotic Narratives: Media coverage may include stories of valor, sacrifices, and heroism of military personnel to evoke patriotic sentiments and national pride.

2.4 Cultural Identity and Heritage
- Historical Narratives: Media outlets highlight historical events, cultural heritage sites, and national symbols to reinforce a sense of identity and continuity with the past.
- Cultural Diplomacy: Coverage of cultural exchanges, music, dance, cuisine, and traditional practices promotes the country's soft power and fosters positive perceptions globally.

2.5 Sports and Entertainment
- Sports Achievements: Success in international sports events, such as cricket, hockey, or Olympics, is extensively covered to boost national morale and unity.
- Entertainment Industry: Media celebrates achievements in the film, music, and performing arts sectors, promoting cultural exports and showcasing talent.

2.6 Patriotic Campaigns and Public Diplomacy
- National Campaigns: Media may actively participate in or promote national campaigns related to patriotism, unity, and national identity, especially during significant events like Independence Day or Republic Day.
- Public Diplomacy: Coverage of diplomatic visits, international engagements, and alliances reinforces the country's global standing and diplomatic achievements.

2.6 Symbolism and Imagery
- Use of Flags and National Symbols: Visual elements such as national flags, emblems, and colors are prominently featured to evoke patriotic sentiments.
- Iconic Landmarks and Monuments: Media showcases iconic landmarks, monuments, and natural beauty to symbolize national pride and identity.

2.7 Comparative Media Analysis:

Comparative media analysis involves comparing media content, narratives, and framing strategies across different media outlets, countries, or time periods to identify patterns, differences, and influences. In Indo-Pak relations, comparative media

analysis helps understand how media representations differ between Indian and Pakistani outlets. It examines how nationalistic, peace-oriented, or conflict-oriented frames are employed differently, reflecting each country's perspectives, political narratives, and audience preferences. It also sheds light on media biases, stereotypes, and the impact of historical narratives on contemporary media coverage. Comparative media analysis between India and Pakistani electronic media involves studying the similarities, differences, and patterns in how news outlets from both countries cover and frame issues related to bilateral relations, conflicts, and other socio-political events.

2.8 Cross-Border Events in Media Discourse

Cross-border events, including military engagements like Operation Swift Retort and incidents such as the Pulwama Attack and Uri Attack, are often subject to intense media scrutiny and framing in both Pakistani and Indian news texts. European researchers, such as Müller and Schmidt (2020), have conducted comparative media analyses to uncover language and tone differences, cultural narratives, and discursive strategies employed by media outlets in both countries. These analyses reveal how media coverage reflects broader national narratives, historical grievances, and political agendas, shaping public discourse and policy debates.
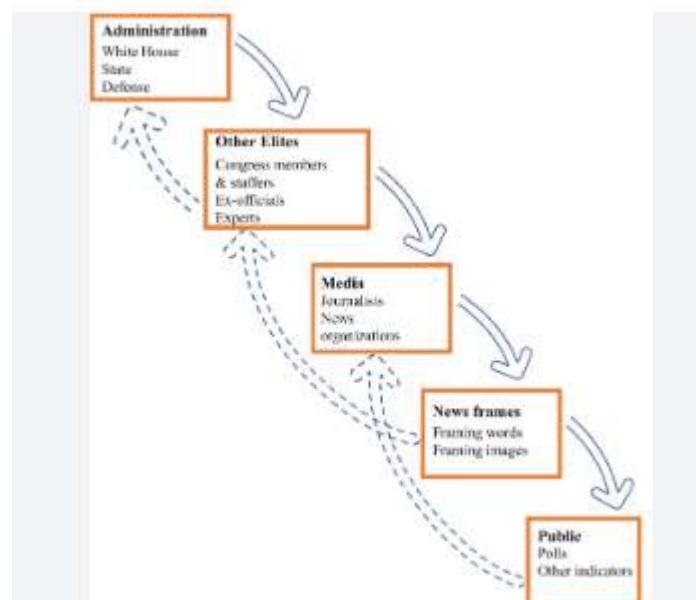
3.1 METHODOLOGY

This research aims to delve into the complexities of media framing in the coverage of military engagements and cross-border events between Pakistan and India, employing a mixed-methods approach to combine quantitative content analysis with qualitative comparative framing analysis (Weaver, 2007). Such an approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of frame usage, ideological underpinnings, and discursive strategies employed by media sources in both countries, contributing to a nuanced understanding of media influence on public perceptions and bilateral relations.
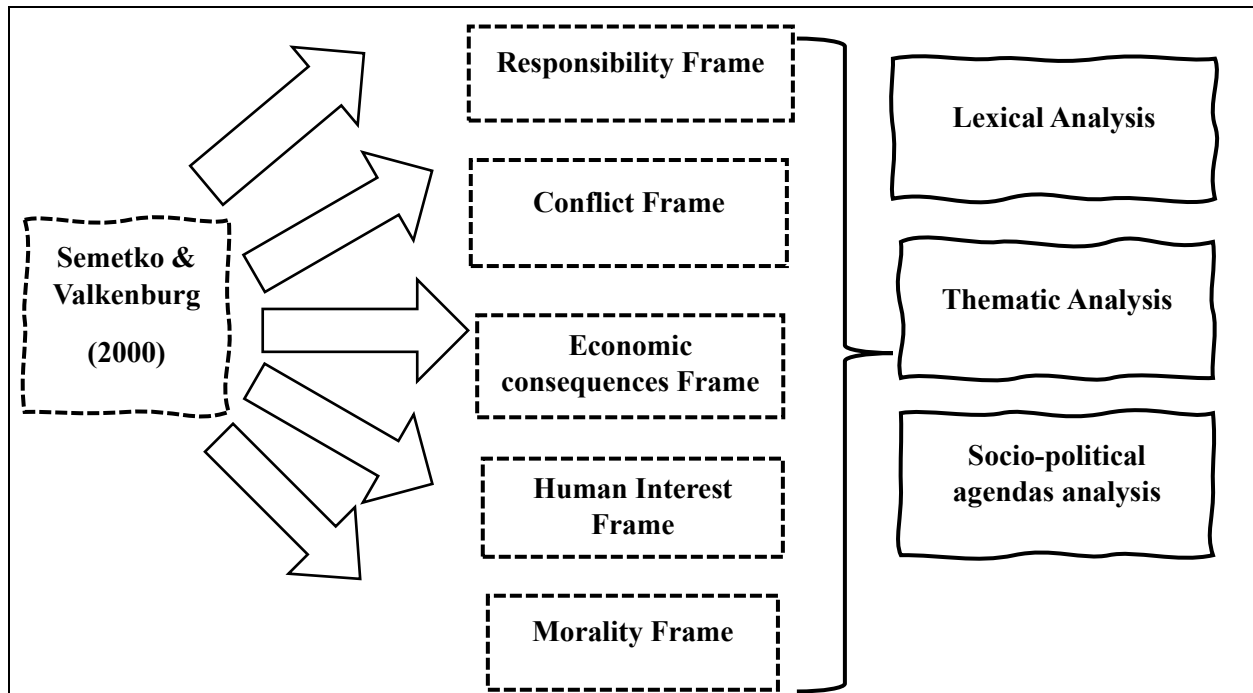
Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) proposed five news frames that are commonly used in media coverage to present and interpret events. These frames provide different perspectives and emphasize various aspects of the news, influencing how audiences perceive and understand the information presented.

3.2 Mixed Method Approach

For the successful arrangement of the research, the researcher has used mixed method approach. Mixed-methods research is a type of research design that combines elements of both quantitative and qualitative research methods within a single study. This approach allows researchers to gather and analyze both numerical data (quantitative) and non-numerical data (qualitative) to gain a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem. Quantitative methods involve the collection and analysis of numerical data. This may include surveys, experiments, statistical analysis, or structured observations. Qualitative methods involve the collection and analysis of non-numerical data such as interviews, focus groups, observations, or content analysis of texts.

The first question is answered by applying the five key frames by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) after corpus analysis of the data for lexical differences between the Pakistani and Indian news articles using by employing AntConc by Anthony (2014). The second question is answered by subjecting the obtained data of lexical differences to macro-level analysis via van Dijk's Semantic Macrostructures theory in order to find out themes build up using 'Five Frames' in the news articles. The third question of socio-political differences in agendas between India and Pakistan has been answered by explanations of the above two questions. The research model used by researcher has been explained in the table below:

3.3 Corpus-based linguistics approach

Researcher has applied corpus-based linguistics approach as the supporting research methodology to carry out this research. By utilizing a software AntConc by Anthony (2014), researcher has looked for highly frequent linguistics patterns in the chosen news articles to draw up the common discourses being highlighted in the news articles along with the role played by recurrent lexical patterns to endorse the particular semantic macrostructures in various aspects of news representation through the lens of 'Five Frames' by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000).

In order to find out highly frequent linguistics patterns, keywords investigation is carried out with their lexical clusters and concordances to map out the dominant and eminent semantic macrostructures of the social actors participating in the conflicts. According to Scott and Tribble (2006) (4), the 'keyword' is a prime analytical tool that is used not only to unveil the significant features of the writing style but also the thematic frame of the text.

3.4. Semantic Macrostructures

Thematic frame of the text refers to the theme of the text termed as 'semantic macrostructures' by van Dijk (1985) (5) that serves as a primary notion in discourse analysis. In this research, researcher has identified and highlighted the thematic structures of the selected news articles by tracing down keywords stating social actors with their semantic references in their respective concordance lines.

3.5. Data Collection

As the study focuses on the analysis of newspaper articles based on the cross-border military events of the Pulwama Attack (2019), Operation Swift Retort (2019) and the Uri Attack (2016), the data has been collected from the mainstream media i.e. newspapers. Large number of articles featuring these events have been studied but only five articles from five different newspapers for each event have been selected through purposive sampling technique for the analysis of data.

3.6. Sample

For data analysis, total 30 newspaper articles have been selected, 5 articles each from both Pakistani and Indian newspapers for one respective event. These news articles are strictly related to the three selected cross-border military events. The detail of the selected news articles is:

For 1) the Pulwama Attack (2019), five articles from the Indian newspapers 'The Economics Times', 'The Indian Express', 'Hindustan Times', 'Times of India', and 'NDTV' and five articles from the Pakistani newspapers 'DAWN', 'The Express Tribune', 'The News', 'The Nation' and 'The Frontier Post' have been analyzed respectively.

For 2) Operation Swift Retort (2019), the Indian newspapers from which articles have been taken are 'India Today', 'Hindustan Times', 'The Times of India', 'The Indian Express' and 'The Economics Times' and for Pakistani newspaper articles, the newspaper chosen are 'Daily Times', 'The Nation', 'The Express Tribune', 'DAWN' and 'The News International'.

For 3) The Uri Attack (2016), the five Indian newspapers from which articles have been taken are 'Hindustan Times', 'India Today', 'Times of India', 'Indian Express' and 'The Hindu' whereas for Pakistani news articles, the newspapers selected are 'Pakistan Today', 'The Nation', 'The News' 'DAWN' and 'Tribune'.

4.1 Data Analysis

The comparative analysis of Pakistani and Indian news articles reveals distinct differences in corpus size and lexical diversity. Pakistani news articles, with a total of 8789 tokens and 1801 unique words, have a larger word count but a lower type-token ratio (TTR) of 0.205, indicating less lexical diversity. In contrast, Indian news articles, comprising 7804 tokens and 1939 unique words, exhibit a higher TTR of 0.249, suggesting a richer and more varied vocabulary.

4.2 Comparison at the Level of Word Frequency
3.1.1 Operation Swift Retort
3.1.1.1 Indian

Type	Rank	Freq
The	1	235
In	2	108
To	3	84
Of	4	82
Abhinandan	5	78
A	6	75
And	7	74
Was	8	68
On	9	55
Air	10	50
He	11	48
Pakistan	11	48
His	14	44
By	15	40
Indian	15	40

In Indian news articles covering Operation Swift Retort, the frequent mention of "abhinandan" (78) indicates a strong focus on Group Captain Abhinandan Varthaman, highlighting his role and actions during the operation. This aligns with the Responsibility Frame, showcasing Indian heroism and military capability. The frequent use of terms like "air," "pakistan," and "indian" suggests detailed coverage of the aerial aspects of the conflict and the involvement of both nations. Common words like "the," "in," and "to" are typical in English text and don't add much thematic value.

3.1.1.2 Pakistan

Type	Rank	Freq
The	1	266
Of	2	118
To	3	91
A	4	82
And	5	81
Pakistan	6	62
In	7	52
On	7	52
Indian	9	48
Was	10	34
That	11	32
Air	12	30
As	14	28
Force	15	27
India	15	27

Pakistani news articles also frequently mention "pakistan" (62) and "indian" (48), indicating a focus on the bilateral conflict. The frequent appearance of "air" and "force" suggests an emphasis on the military and aerial aspects of the operation, likely portraying Pakistan's defensive and strategic responses. The absence of a prominent individual like Abhinandan in the frequency list indicates a more generalized coverage of the events rather than focusing on specific personalities.

3.1.2 Pulwana Attack
3.1.2.1 Indian

Type	Rank	Freq
The	1	162
In	2	80
And	3	70
Of	4	60
A	5	44
To	6	43
Attack	7	41
On	8	35
Pakistan	9	31
Pulwama	10	25
Was	11	23
By	12	22
India	14	20
Were	14	20
An	16	18

In Indian articles covering the Pulwama attack, the frequent use of "attack" (41) and "pulwama" (25) indicates a strong focus on the specific event and its implications. The frequent mention of "pakistan" (31) and "india" (20) highlights the bilateral tensions and accusations following the attack. The frequent use of "was," "by," and "were" suggests detailed reporting on the incident, including the parties involved and the sequence of events.

3.1.2.2 Pakistan

Type	Rank	Freq
The	1	140
Of	2	62
To	3	60
In	4	58
And	5	48
Pakistan	6	38
A	7	32
That	7	32
S	9	28
India	10	26
Indian	10	26
Attack	12	19
On	12	19
By	14	18
Has	15	17

Pakistani articles frequently mention "pakistan" (38) and "india" (26), reflecting the bilateral nature of the coverage. The mention of "attack" (19) indicates coverage of the incident itself, while "that" and "has" suggest reporting that includes Pakistani perspectives and responses to Indian accusations. The lower frequency of "pulwama" compared to Indian articles suggests less emphasis on the specific location and more on the broader geopolitical implications.

3.2 Comparison at the Level of Part of Speech (POS) (Theme wise)
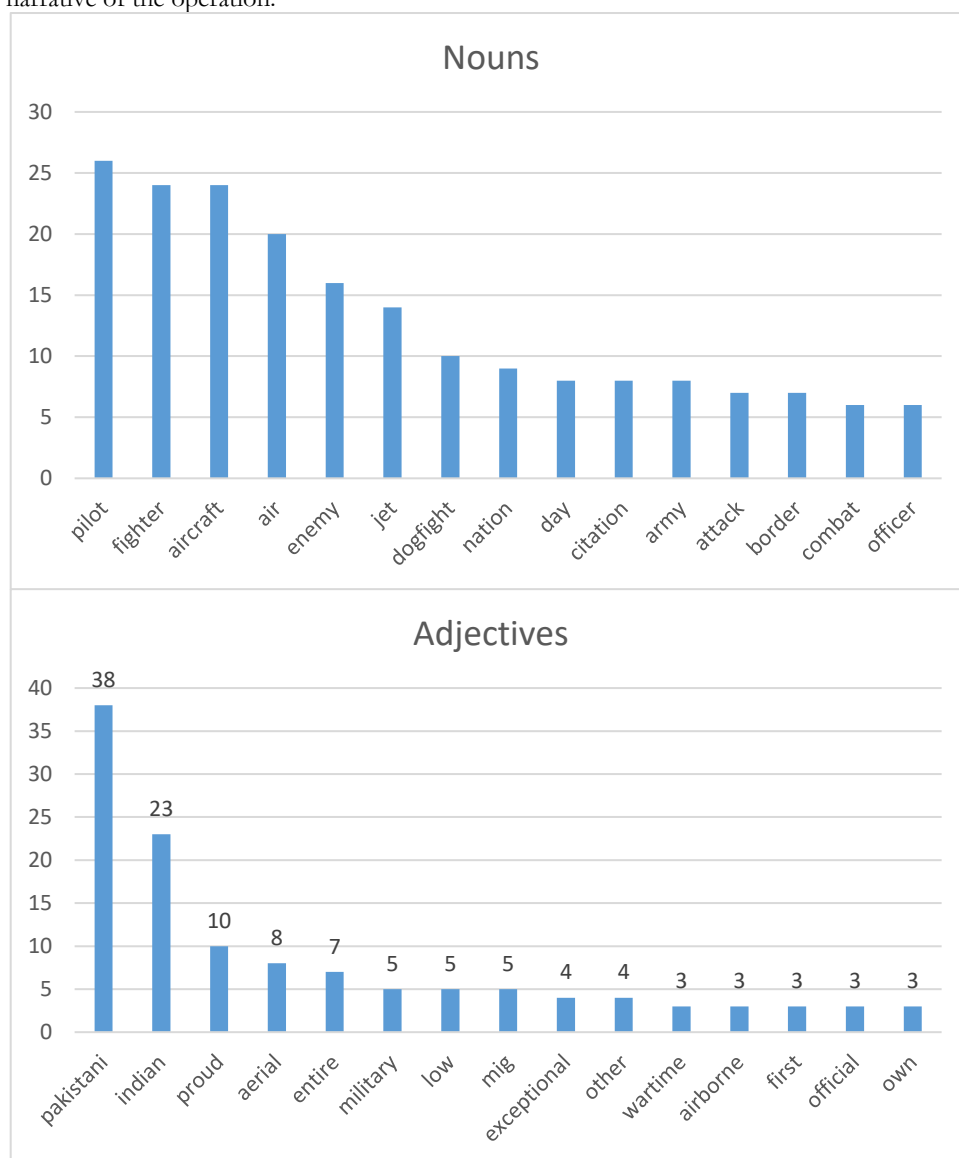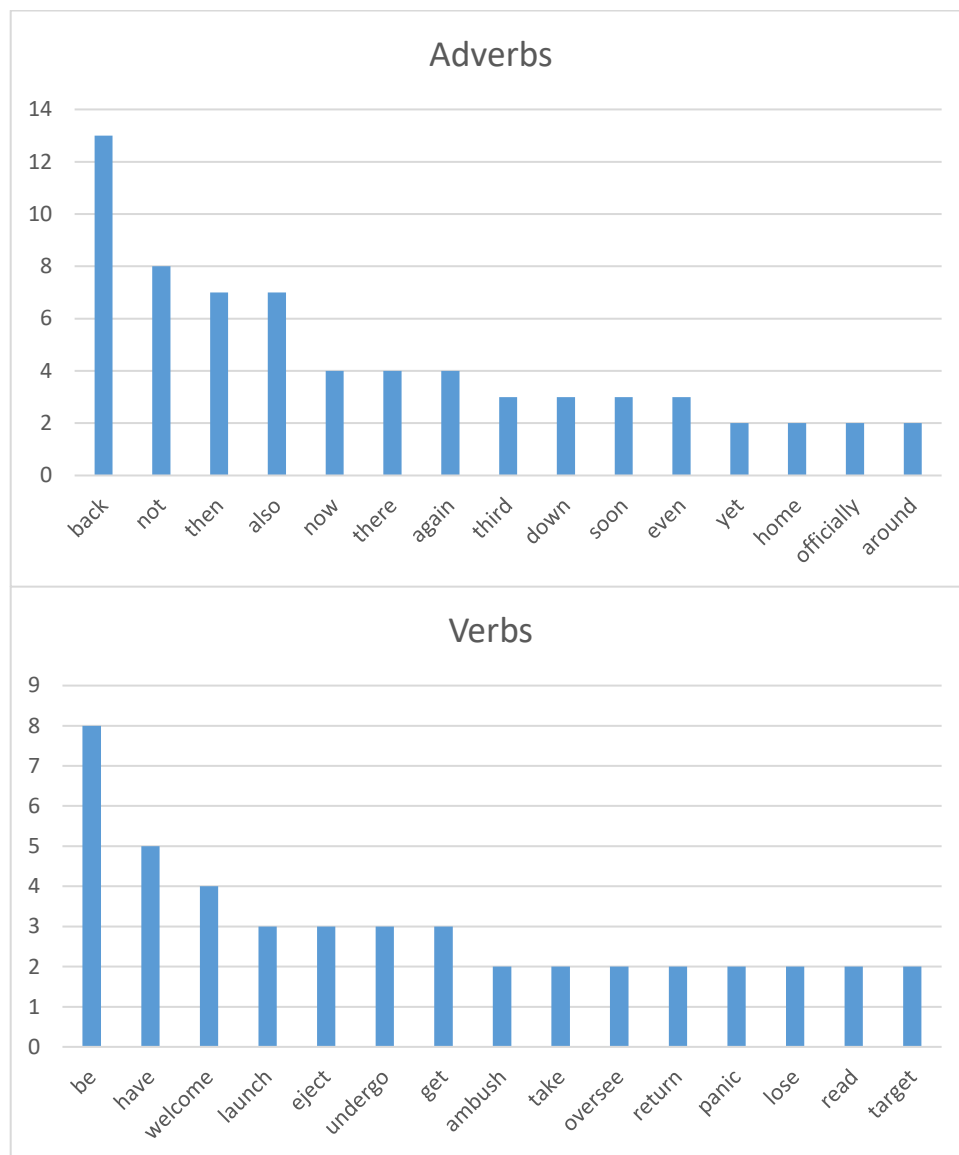### 3.2.1 Operation Swift Retort
3.2.1.1 Indian

Nouns		Adjectives		Adverbs		Verbs	
Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency
pilot	26	pakistani	38	back	13	be	8
fighter	24	indian	23	not	8	have	5
aircraft	24	proud	10	then	7	welcome	4
air	20	aerial	8	also	7	launch	3
enemy	16	entire	7	now	4	eject	3

jet	14	military	5	there	4	undergo	3
dogfight	10	low	5	again	4	get	3
nation	9	mig	5	third	3	ambush	2
day	8	exceptional	4	down	3	take	2
citation	8	other	4	soon	3	oversee	2
army	8	wartime	3	even	3	return	2
attack	7	airborne	3	yet	2	panic	2
border	7	first	3	home	2	lose	2
combat	6	official	3	officially	2	read	2
officer	6	own	3	around	2	target	2

The most frequent nouns in Indian news articles regarding "Operation Swift Retort" include "pilot" (26), "fighter" (24), "aircraft" (24), "air" (20), and "enemy" (16). These nouns reflect a focus on military personnel, equipment, and the adversarial nature of the engagement. Words like "jet," "dogfight," "nation," "army," and "attack" further emphasize the combat and nationalistic elements of the narrative. The use of nouns like "citation" and "border" highlight formal recognitions and geopolitical boundaries, respectively.

Frequent verbs in the Indian articles are "be" (8), "have" (5), "welcome" (4), "launch" (3), and "eject" (3). These verbs indicate states of being, possession, and actions taken during the military operation. Verbs like "undergo," "get," "ambush," "take," "oversee," "return," "panic," "lose," "read," "target," "honor," and "escape" detail specific actions and reactions, contributing to the dynamic narrative of the operation.
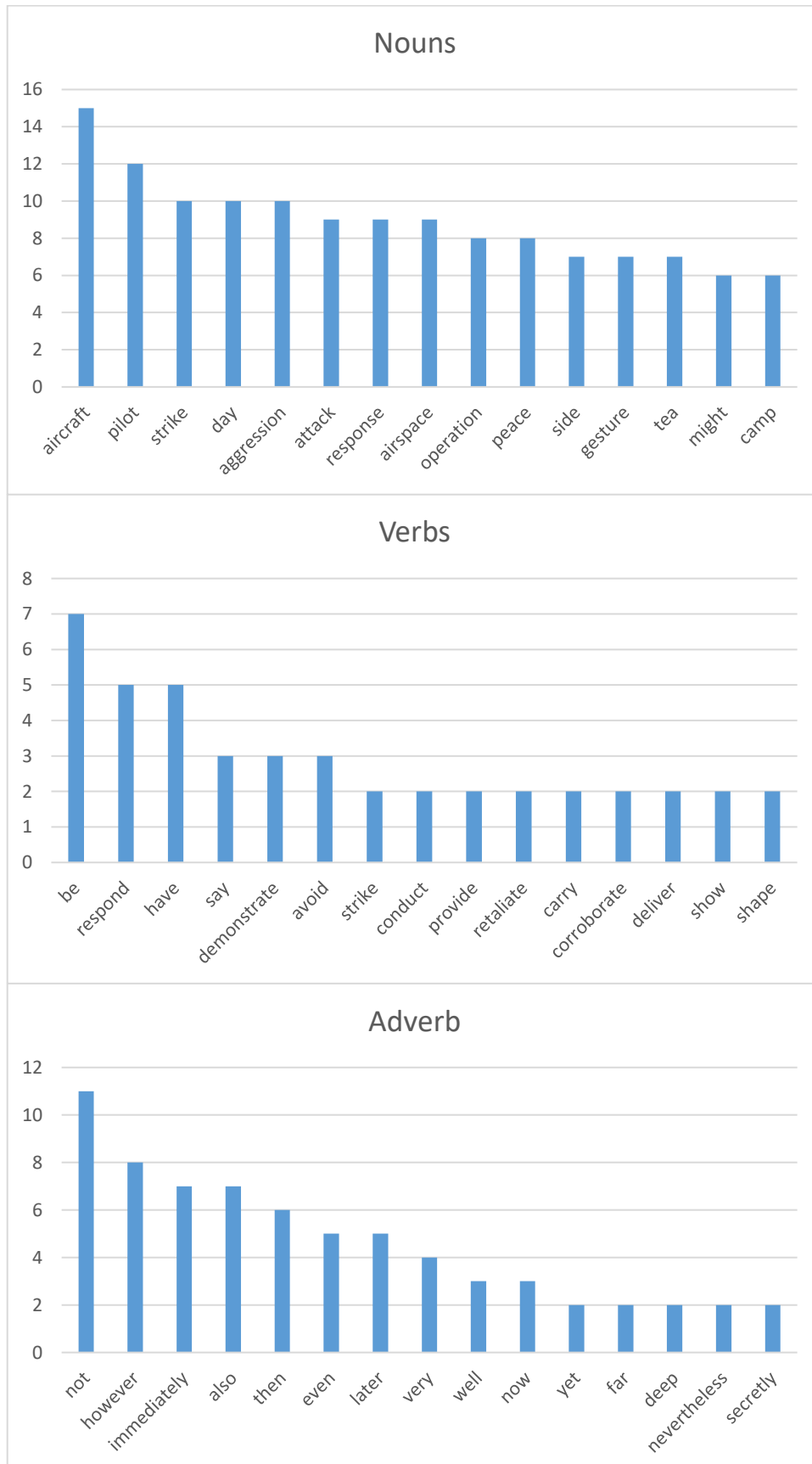

Nouns

Adjectives

Adverbs

Verbs

3.2.1.2 Pakistan

Noun		Verb		Adjective		Adverb	
Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency
aircraft	15	be	7	indian	41	not	11
pilot	12	respond	5	military	14	however	8
strike	10	have	5	pakistani	14	immediately	7
day	10	say	3	armed	10	also	7
aggression	10	demonstrate	3	aerial	6	then	6
attack	9	avoid	3	religious	5	even	5
response	9	strike	2	political	5	later	5
airspace	9	conduct	2	nuclear	4	very	4
operation	8	provide	2	FALSE	4	well	3
peace	8	retaliate	2	paramilitary	4	now	3
side	7	carry	2	terrorist	4	yet	2
gesture	7	corroborate	2	alive	4	far	2
tea	7	deliver	2	surgical	4	deep	2
might	6	show	2	territorial	4	Nevertheless	2
camp	6	shape	2	full	4	secretly	2

The most frequent nouns in Pakistani news articles include "aircraft" (15), "pilot" (12), "strike" (10), "day" (10), and "aggression" (10). These nouns highlight key elements of the event, emphasizing the military assets, personnel, and the nature
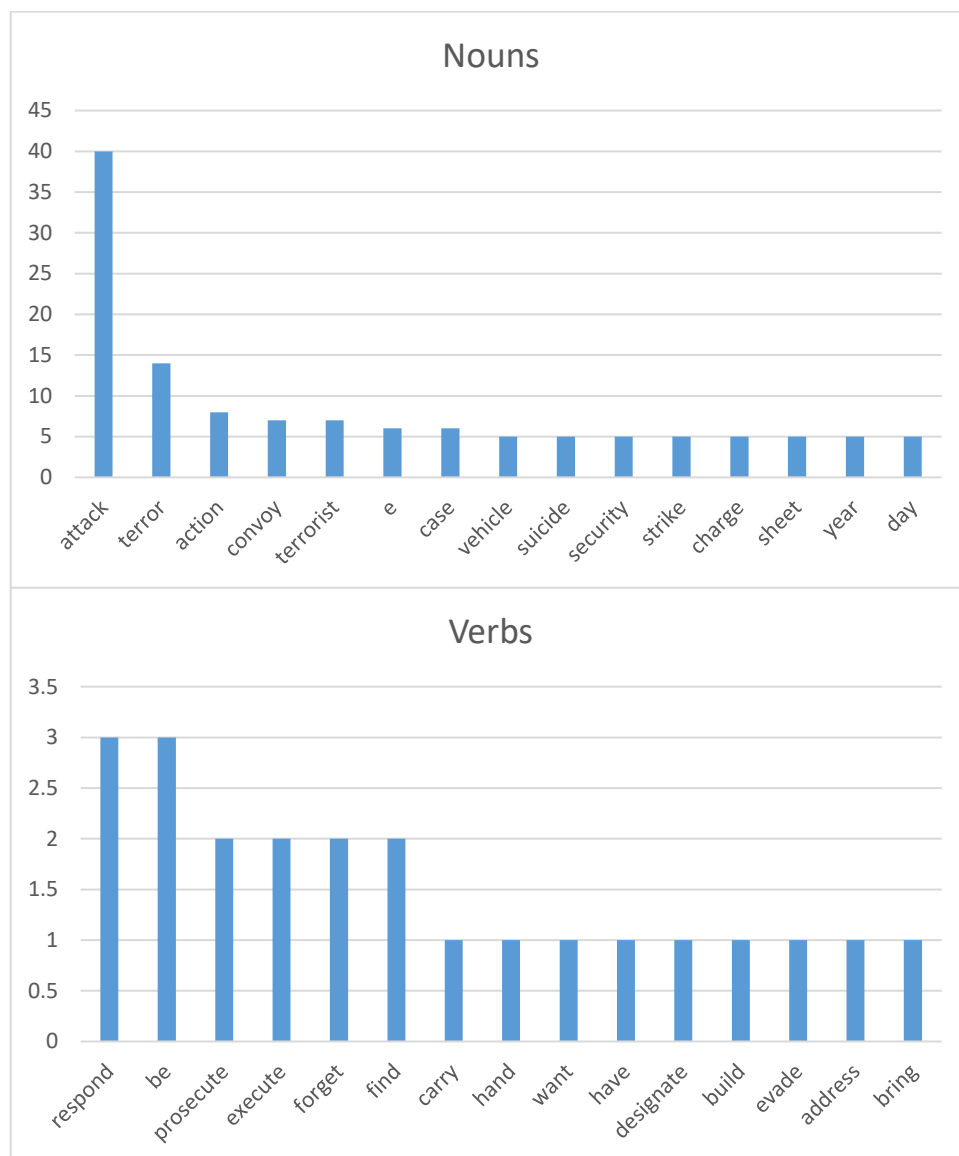
of the conflict. Words like "response," "airspace," "operation," "peace," "side," "gesture," "tea," "might," and "camp" add dimensions of diplomacy, territorial integrity, and cultural aspects.
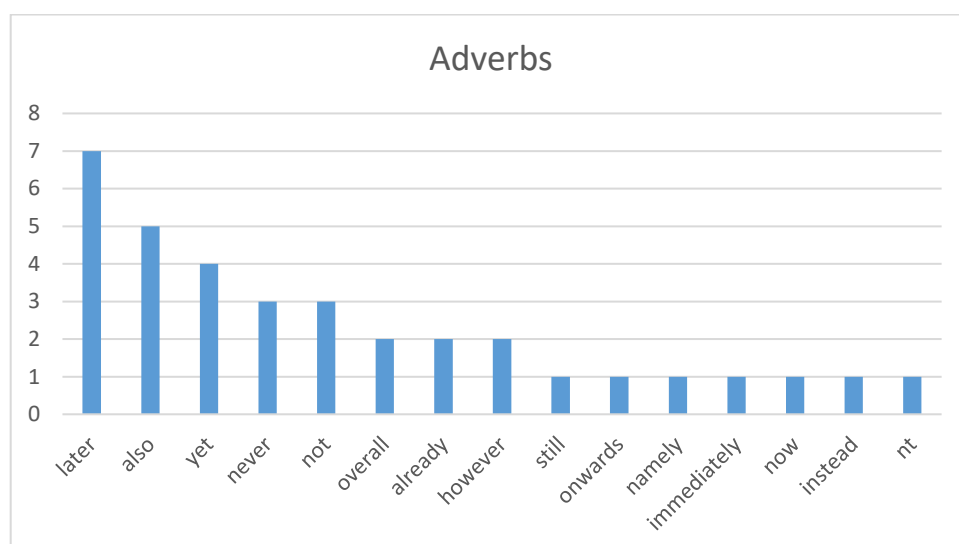
Common adverbs are "not" (11), "however" (8), "immediately" (7), "also" (7), and "then" (6). These adverbs add context regarding timing, contrast, and sequence, emphasizing immediate reactions and providing counterpoints to assertions. Words like "even," "later," "very," "well," "now," "yet," "far," "nevertheless," and "secretly" offer additional temporal and qualitative nuances, contributing to the overall narrative structure.

Nouns

Verbs

Adverb

The lexical analysis of Indian and Pakistani news articles on "Operation Swift Retort" reveals distinct narrative focuses and stylistic choices. Indian articles concentrate on specific military actions and achievements, using detailed descriptions of personnel and equipment, and a dynamic portrayal of events. In contrast, Pakistani articles emphasize broader actions and responses, focusing on reactions, demonstrations, and the diplomatic context. The frequent use of national identity markers in both sets of articles reflects the highly charged and nationalistic nature of the coverage. Adverbs and verbs in Indian articles often provide a detailed sequence of actions, while those in Pakistani articles add context and contrast, reflecting different narrative approaches to the same events.

Common adverbs are "later" (7), "also" (5), "yet" (4), "never" (3), and "not" (3). These adverbs provide temporal context and contrast, highlighting the sequence of events and negating certain actions or outcomes. Adverbs such as "overall," "already," "however," "still," "onwards," "namely," "immediately," "now," "instead," and "nt" add additional layers of timing and conditions to the narrative.
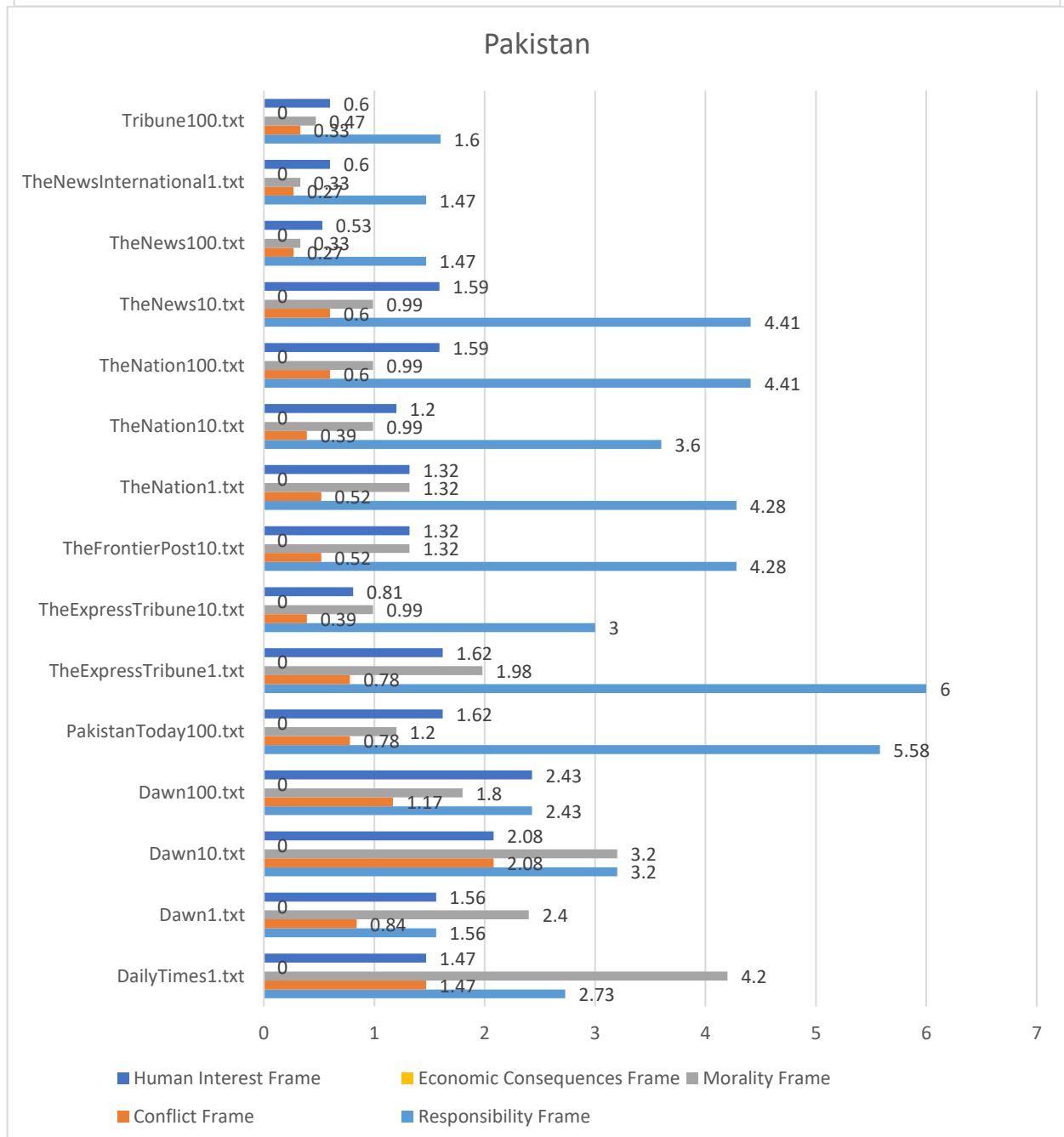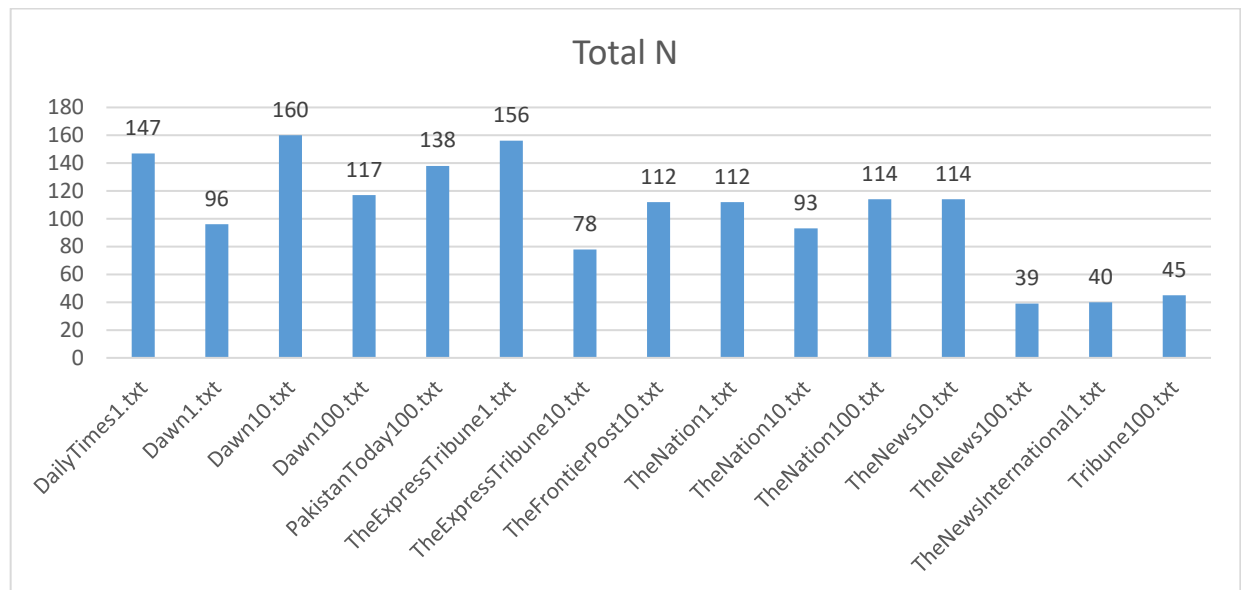
Adverbs

3.2.2.2 Pakistan

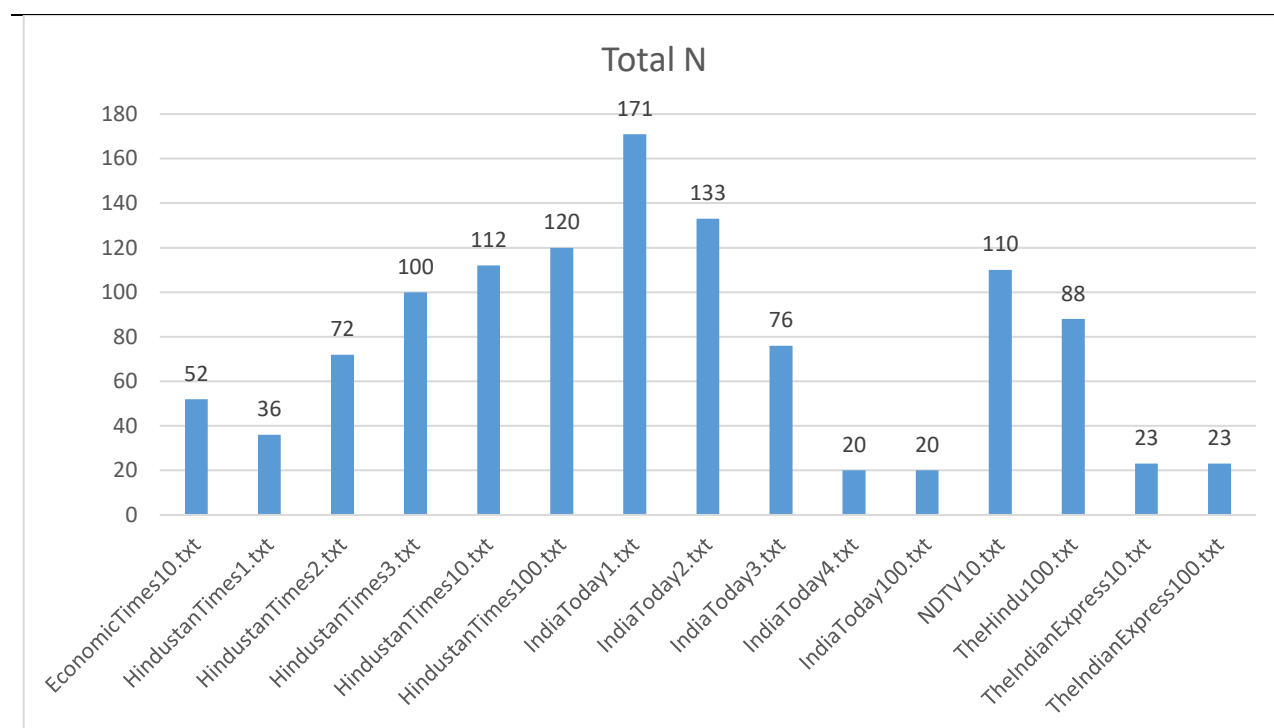| Nouns		Verbs		Adjectives		Adverbs	
Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency
attack	19	carry	5	indian	20	also	7
security	7	be	4	such	4	once	3
s	7	engage	2	pakistani	4	again	3
border	5	achieve	2	full	4	not	3
cooperation	5	divert	2	high	3	only	3
terror	5	work	1	international	3	then	2
statement	5	protest	1	other	3	now	2
intelligence	5	refute	1	political	3	further	2
incident	4	understand	1	local	3	so	2
war	4	reach	1	armed	3	later	2
fact	3	target	1	military	3	over	1
community	3	provide	1	last	3	vigorously	1
violence	3	conduct	1	general	3	already	1
evidence	3	vent	1	FALSE	3	unfortunately	1
country	3	resist	1	paramilitary	2	never	1

In Pakistani news articles, the most frequent nouns are "attack" (19), "security" (7), "border" (5), "cooperation" (5), "terror" (5), and "statement" (5). These nouns focus on the event, security implications, and the responses from various entities. Words like "intelligence," "incident," "war," "fact," "community," "violence," and "evidence" highlight the broader context and the reaction to the attack.

3.4.1 Pakistan

File Name	Responsibility Frame	Conflict Frame	Morality Frame	Economic Consequences Frame	Human Interest Frame	Total N
DailyTimes1.txt	2.73	1.47	4.2	0	1.47	147
Dawn1.txt	1.56	0.84	2.4	0	1.56	96
Dawn10.txt	3.2	2.08	3.2	0	2.08	160
Dawn100.txt	2.43	1.17	1.8	0	2.43	117
PakistanToday100.txt	5.58	0.78	1.2	0	1.62	138
TheExpressTribune1.txt	6	0.78	1.98	0	1.62	156
TheExpressTribune10.txt	3	0.39	0.99	0	0.81	78
TheFrontierPost10.txt	4.28	0.52	1.32	0	1.32	112
TheNation1.txt	4.28	0.52	1.32	0	1.32	112
TheNation10.txt	3.6	0.39	0.99	0	1.2	93
TheNation100.txt	4.41	0.6	0.99	0	1.59	114
TheNews10.txt	4.41	0.6	0.99	0	1.59	114
TheNews100.txt	1.47	0.27	0.33	0	0.53	39
TheNewsInternational1.txt	1.47	0.27	0.33	0	0.6	40
Tribune100.txt	1.6	0.33	0.47	0	0.6	45

Frame	Sentences
Responsibility Frame	Moments after the attack the Indian media and government immediately blamed Pakistan before even the start of any investigation.
	"The Pakistanis are bound to react, conventionally and not through a proxy like a militant group," Rahul Bedi, an analyst at the London-based Jane's Information group told the New York Times. "Where they react and when is something that only Pakistanis know."
Conflict Frame	Some of the aircraft were not immediately available for inspection due to the conflict, so it took US personnel several weeks to account for all of the jets, one US official said.
Morality Frame	India claimed that its air force had managed to kill more than 300 terrorists while Pakistan but several international observers negated the claim as there were no casualties and the bombs had clearly missed the target, which in fact was not a terrorist camp, but an ordinary religious school, for the village children.

Frame	Sentences
Responsibility Frame	group Captain Abhinandan Vartharman received the Vir Chakra, the third-highest wartime gallantry award, at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.
	President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday awarded the Vir Chakra to group Captain Abhinandan Vartharman who, in 2019, shot down a Pakistani F-16 fighter jet during a dogfight over the Line of Control (LOC) in the aftermath of the Balakot airstrike.
Human Interest Frame	Abhinandan received the third-highest wartime gallantry award at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi for showing "conspicuous courage" and demonstrating "gallantry in the face of the enemy while disregarding personal safety" with an "exceptional sense of duty".

3.4.7 Human Interest Frame

This frame is more prevalent in Pakistani articles, often humanizing the impact of conflicts and political actions on individuals. In Indian articles, it is present but to a much lesser extent, primarily highlighting the heroism of individuals like Group Captain Abhinandan Vartharman.

Quantitatively, Pakistani articles show a higher variance in the use of different frames, with some articles focusing heavily on the Responsibility and Morality frames, while others distribute the focus more evenly across frames. Whereas, Indian articles consistently emphasize the Responsibility Frame, often sidelining other frames, which suggests a more unified narrative approach in Indian media coverage.

Graph 1: Frequency of Themes in Indian and Pakistani Media

Theme	Indian Media (%)	Pakistani Media (%)
Terrorism	40	15
National Security	35	10
Victimization	15	30

Theme	Indian Media (%)	Pakistani Media (%)
Peace and Dialogue	5	25
Political Blame	5	20

2. Microstructures
Lexical Choices and Rhetorical Devices
Graph 2: Common Lexical Choices in Headlines

Lexical Choice	Indian Media (Frequency)	Pakistani Media (Frequency)
Terrorist	50	10
Martyr	40	5
Allegation	5	30
Innocent	5	25
Peace	0	30

Graph 3: Rhetorical Devices Usage

Rhetorical Device	Indian Media (Usage %)	Pakistani Media (Usage %)
Emotive Language	60	20
Patriotism	50	10
Deflective Language	10	50
Questioning Motives	10	40
Diplomatic Tone	0	30

3. Social Cognition
Shared Knowledge and Beliefs
Graph 4: Public Perception as Influenced by Media

Belief/Perception	Indian Audience (%)	Pakistani Audience (%)
Pakistan sponsors terrorism	70	20
India unjustly accuses Pakistan	10	60
Need for military retaliation	60	10
Advocacy for peace and dialogue	10	50
Political motivations behind attacks	20	40

4. Context Models
Specific Contexts in Media Reporting
Graph 5: Contextual Emphasis in Reporting

Contextual Focus	Indian Media (%)	Pakistani Media (%)
Election Periods	30	10
International Diplomacy	10	40
National Security Crisis	40	10
Humanitarian Issues	10	30
Internal Political Issues	10	10

The narrative in Pakistani articles frequently includes criticisms of India's policies and actions, particularly with respect to Kashmir and incidents like the Balakot strike. There is also a focus on moral arguments and humanizing the impacts of the conflict. Whereas, Indian articles largely concentrate on the official responses to perceived threats from Pakistan, emphasizing the actions of Indian authorities and the valor of Indian military personnel. There is less focus on the broader conflict or moral arguments.

Moreover, the thematic analysis reveals a clear divergence in the media narratives of Pakistan and India. Pakistani media tend to adopt a critical stance towards Indian actions, frequently invoking moral and human-interest frames to highlight the consequences of the conflict. Indian media, on the other hand, focus predominantly on the responsibility frame, emphasizing the actions and heroism of Indian authorities and military personnel. This indicates not only different journalistic focuses but also distinct underlying political and cultural narratives shaping media coverage in both countries.

5. CONCLUSION
The comparative framing analysis of socio-political agendas in Pakistani and Indian news texts covering military engagements and cross-border events provides significant insights into how media constructs realities differently across national boundaries.

This study utilized AntConc (2014) for lexical analysis and examined the coverage through the lens of five framing categories: conflict, human interest, responsibility, morality, and economic consequences. The primary research question guiding this analysis was: "What are the key lexical differences in Pakistani and Indian news articles covering the selected events?"

5..3 Recommendations for Future Research
Future research could benefit from the current study:
- Expanding the scope to include a wider array of events and longer timeframes to observe changes in framing strategies over time.
- Incorporating qualitative methods such as content analysis of editorials and opinion pieces to gain deeper insights into the editorial stance behind framing choices.
- Exploring the impact of digital and social media on framing and public perception, given their growing influence.

This study demonstrates that Pakistani and Indian news media construct realities of military engagements and cross-border events in ways that reflect and reinforce their respective national socio-political agendas. By highlighting key lexical differences and framing strategies, this research contributes to our understanding of media's role in international conflict and underscores the need for critical media literacy to navigate and interpret these constructed realities.

This study has illuminated the socio-political agendas embedded in Pakistani and Indian news coverage of military engagements and cross-border events, analyzed through Semetko & Valkenburg's (2000) framing theory. By revealing the distinct ways in which each country's media constructs and conveys these events, we gain a deeper understanding of the role of framing in shaping national narratives and public opinion. These insights underscore the importance of critical media literacy and the need for more balanced reporting to foster mutual understanding and conflict resolution. Through this comparative analysis, we contribute to a more nuanced comprehension of media's role in international relations and the construction of socio-political realities.

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