

Print Media Coverage of Covid-19: A Comparative Analysis of Daily Jang & Daily Nawa-i-Waqt Newspapers

Bashir Memon¹, Rashid Ali Khuhro², Ahtisham Abid Hashimani³

Abstract

Respiratory Syndrome SARS-CoV-2, which started in Wuhan, China in December 2019, has affected more than 200 countries. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak of COVID-19 a pandemic. During this pandemic, the media has played an important role in disseminating information regarding infection, precautions, and vaccination. In this context, this study analyses the framing of COVID-19 in the Pakistani press. For this study, the data was collected from two highly circulated Urdu language newspapers; Jang and Nawa-i-Waqt between February to July 2020. The findings revealed that by providing proper attention to COVID-19, the Pakistani newspapers (Daily Jang and Daily Nawa-i-Waqt) did not publish in-depth stories. Both newspapers relied on elite sources such as government, health department officials, and paramedical staff. The marginalized sources such as the public and labor were also cited in the news. The finding further revealed that most of the frames used were alarming and inducing panic. However, reassuring frames were used rarely. The stories emphasized more on death tolls and cases of COVID-19 in comparison to offering solutions frames.

Key Words: COVID-19, Media Coverage, Pakistani Press, Content Analysis, Framing.

¹ Professor, Department of Media and Communication Studies, University of Sindh, Jamshoro.

² Associate Professor, CRDC, University of Sindh, Jamshoro (Corresponding Author).

³ Student, Department of Media and Communication Studies, University of Sindh, Jamshoro.

Introduction

In December 2019, a mysterious disease like pneumonia was reported in Wuhan, China. Later, it was found to be caused by a virus called SAR-CoV-2 or Acute Acute Respiratory Syndrome Corona Virus 2. The WHO commonly identified the disease as a Novel Coronavirus. Interim guidelines for all countries on January 10, 2020: "Monitoring of sick people, sampling, treating patients, controlling infections in health centers, maintaining proper supply, and communicating with the public about new viruses" (WHO, 2022). As of May 21, 2020, COVID-19 had infected 213 countries and territories around the world with about 5,171,936 confirmed global cases and there had been around 333,100 deaths (Apuke & Omar, 2021).

The first COVID-19 case was confirmed in Pakistan on February 26, 2020, in Karachi. The patient was a student and tested positive upon returning from Iran. By the middle of March, COVID-19 had reached all four provinces of the country (Jamil & Appiah-Adjei, 2020). As of May 17, 2020, the number of cases had risen to 40,151 with 11,341 recoveries and 873 deaths in the country. The most affected province was Sindh with 15,590 confirmed cases, followed by Punjab with 14,584 cases (OCHA, 2020). Pakistan was placed under a nationwide lockdown, which began in early April and was later extended twice until May 9, 2020. To that end, the lockdown was phased out (Jamil & Appiah-Adjei, 2020).

In addition, the effects of the spread of COVID-19 have been observed in all walks of life. Studies show that providing adequate information to the public about epidemics or pandemics reduces the rate of infection in the population. In this context, the media has been an essential agent in covering the spread of the disease, highlighting various aspects of infectious diseases. It was observed during previous epidemics such as Ebola, SARS, MERS, and now COVID-19. Information on infectious diseases, including unexpected outbreaks, can have serious economic, physical, psychological, and social effects (Mutua & Oloo Ong'ong'a, 2020).

In this critical state of the health crisis, news coverage has become an important factor not only in shaping the public discourse about the epidemic but also in delivering administrative interventions on the spread of the disease (Mutua & Oloo Ong'ong'a, 2020; Poirier, Ouellet, Rancourt, Béchar, & Dufresne, 2020). The role of the media in shaping the news about the health crisis is an important part of reaching out to the public (Thomas, Wilson, Tonkin, Miller, & Ward, 2020). This position coincides with Gislason (2013) says that the use of news frames during public health emergencies has a significant impact on social understanding and response to epidemics (Mutua & Oloo Ong'ong'a, 2020).

Furthermore, the sensitivity and prevalence of COVID-19 have made it one of the first and most reported issues in all tabloids worldwide in 2020. Since the beginning of 2020, news on various aspects of COVID-19 has dominated global news coverage. Media framing is an important resource for users to learn more about the coronavirus and how to escape it. There is no doubt that the media has come a long way in promoting and reporting the virus worldwide (Basch, Kecojevic, & Wagner, 2020).

Therefore, most of the studies that have been working on COVID-19 argue that reporters and newspapers whose mental models have already been formed with clear and concise information about COVID-19 set the agenda by placing their readers' perceptions

of the coronavirus in a negative perspective. Representation demonstrates the media's ability to set agendas (Basch et al., 2020).

According to Yang and Ishak (2012), framing analysis allows researchers to examine the role of media in the development of social and political, and health issues. This study can provide insights into the framing patterns the National print media of Pakistan has used for the COVID-19 news. Therefore, this study aims to examine the attention and framing of COVID in the Pakistani press. In this context the specific research objectives are i) To determine coverage of COVID-19 pandemic-related stories on the front pages of the Daily Jang and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt Pakistani newspapers and ii) To identify the reporting patterns about COVID-19 in both newspapers. Following the above research objectives, the research questions of this study are i) Which newspaper gave more prominence and more space to COVID-19 pandemic-related stories on its front page? and ii) Did COVID-19 pandemic-related stories in both newspapers differ in the types of frames they used?

Literature Review

There is a long tradition of research on print media coverage in the scientific literature. For decades, one of the most popular ideas in media research has been that information should be relevant and accurate, complete and reliable, especially when it comes to public health issues. - In some cases, the media is not interested in isolation but in other areas. In this regard, it is necessary to set the agenda. The amount of media coverage dedicated to the issues determines the degree of public concern for these issues (Villena-Alarcón & Caballero-Galeote, 2020).

During the outbreak of grave infectious diseases (such as SARS, influenza, NH1, Ebola, etc.), many people keep a close eye on media reports and as a result, take precautionary measures to protect themselves from the disease. These precautions may include staying home, getting vaccinated, avoiding crowds, using antibiotics, canceling travel plans, and currently wearing appropriate face masks (Konstantinidou, 2020). Similarly, the outbreak of COVID-19 has become the focus of media attention around the world, and the new flu will continue to be on the front page for months to come (Villena-Alarcón & Caballero-Galeote, 2020).

According to researchers in mathematical modeling at the Georgia Institute of Technology and Marshall University, the sooner media coverage of an epidemic begins, the fewer people will be affected. Depending on their structure, almost any media coverage helps reduce the extent of the epidemic. The more powerful the media is in providing information on infectious diseases and deaths, the lower the total quantity of infections will be. For these researchers, informing the audience about the effects of the outbreak / precautionary measures is always helpful in staying safe, but the longer they wait, the shorter the media coverage, if the duration is too long. The effect is non-existent (Mummert & Weiss, 2020).

Corvo and De Caro (2020) conducted a research study on press coverage during the COVID-19 epidemic in Italy. The purpose of the study was to analyze the media coverage of the Italian press during the COVID-19 epidemic. They underwent online journal coverage and analyzed a total of 1,512 articles in two months. The two main analyzes performed were coding quantitative content analysis and textual analysis of

newspaper article data, and emotional analysis using Taltech 2.10 and Viento tools.

The study concluded that there was a consensus in various newspapers. The results showed two different trends historically during the COVID-19 crisis. The subjects of the first two weeks were mainly focused on the percentage of the disease, in terms of prevention, care, and treatment but also on fear and anxiety. Then, about 2 months later, the newspapers focused on the social, political, and economic effects of COVID-19 on Italy, and possibly health organizations, shortly. Demonstrates the attitude of newspapers towards publishing sensational articles and headlines and gives a brief account of the potential impact on public understanding of virus-related issues. The study recommends that more attention be paid to analyzing the effects of newspaper communication on public behavior and reactions.

In a study, Apuke and Omar (2020) demonstrated media exposure to the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria and aimed to determine if the media coverage is building awareness and educating the public on preventive measures to take. The researchers selected four highly circulated online Nigerian Newspapers *Daily Sun*, *Vanguard*, *Daily Trust*, and *Leadership* available from February 2020 to April 2020. A total of 650 articles consisting of news, editorials, features, opinions, columns, and articles were found by using the keyword search including keywords 'COVID-19', 'COVID-19 outbreak', 'Coronavirus', 'Coronavirus in Nigeria', 'death rates of Coronavirus', 'intervention on Coronavirus', 'updates on Coronavirus' and 'pandemic in Nigeria'. The study concludes that the Nigerian media has done well in covering epidemics, which has led to public awareness. However, the coverage was not in-depth as most of the reported stories were short and straightforward news. Most of the stories were scary and horrible. The most common topics were the coverage of COVID-19 cases in Nigeria, the mortality rate, and concerns about Nigeria's readiness. Public sensitivity and education were covered. Minimal attention was paid to healthcare workers. The study's recommendations say that the media should pay more attention to sensitizing and informing the public about the steps required to control the virus. They should avoid the excessive use of dangerous and dangerous accents in presenting stories of the COVID-19 epidemic in Nigeria.

Das, Saha, Kabir, Deb, and Bhowmik (2020) reviewed the coverage of COVID-19 in the Bangladeshi media by analyzing the content of The Daily Star, a popular English language daily in Bangladesh, between January 2020 and April 2020. They selected items through text pre-processing using the topic modeling (Late Dirichlet Allocation) Technique. A total of 6203 articles were submitted and each article was manually reviewed and articles related to COVID-19 were identified. Out of all the sample articles, 1886 articles were related to COVID-19. Research has shown that the prevalence of COVID-19 has been significant since the first cases were confirmed in Bangladesh. The most common reporting topics are the spread of COVID-19, and COVID-19-related operation support and its impact on logistics and the economy. Local news articles focused on the plight of people in rural areas due to the spread of COVID-19, the response of local authorities, government oversight, the impact on job security and workplace safety, and the nationwide shutdown. Experts have repeatedly spoken in the editorial and opinion columns about the implementation and effectiveness of various COVID-19 prevention/protection measures. It was also found that the newspaper articles described the condition of COVID-19, precautions, the state of the healthcare system, its effects on the people, and so on (Das et al., 2020).

In a study regarding the framing of COVID-19 in the online newspapers, Sahara Reporters, Premium Times, and Daily Post in Nigeria Onwe et al. (2020) revealed that online newspapers reported the spread of COVID-19 in ways that disturbed the audience before the last outbreak of the epidemic. The study shows that online newspapers focus more on treatment against fear and death frames in reporting any future health emergencies. In another content analysis study, Ogbodo et al. (2020) reviewed the global media framing of COVID-19 to understand the dominant frames and compare word choices in the media. The results showed that human interest and fear/intimidation frames dominated global media coverage of the pandemic.

Research Method

In this quantitative study, the researchers have used content analysis as a data collection method. It widely used method to analyze the content of print media i.e., newspapers and magazines. This method is used to determine the content of dimensions and nature of the media coverage and newspapers' role. For this study, two popular newspapers are selected from all the publications in the country. Both are Urdu language dailies of Pakistan namely *Daily Jang* and *Daily Nawa-i-Waqt*.

Jang Newspaper belongs to the Jang group of newspapers. It was established in 1942 in Delhi by Mir Khalil-ur-Rehman. The Jang Newspaper is the flagship publication of the group, which is an Urdu-language publication and is printed in six stations across the country.

Nawa-e-Waqt belongs to the Nawa-e-Waqt Group of Publications, founded in 1940 by Hamid Nizami, one of the founders of Pakistani journalism. Nawa-e-Waqt began its work in Lahore. The first issue of the fortnightly journal Nawa-e-Waqt was started. This is an Urdu language publication that has a wide range of circulation across the country.

The *portable document format* (pdf) of both newspapers was downloaded for a period of six months (February to July 2020). The front pages of all the selected sample newspapers were studied from February 01, 2020, to July 31, 2020, in search of the required information.

The systematic random sampling technique was applied in this study. In systemic random sampling techniques, every n th article, unit, or element is selected from the population. For example, to get a sample of 20 from a population of 100, or a sampling rate of $1/5$, a researcher randomly chooses a starting point and sampling interval. In this study, newspapers from February 1, 2020, to July 31, 2020, were selected using a system of random sampling techniques to select newspapers of odd dates (1, 3, 5, respectively). He analyzed a total of 182 days.

Table 1: Sampling Frame

S.NO	Months	Total Days	Sampling Days	Percent (%)
1	February	29	15	(16.12)
2	March	31	16	(17.2)
3	April	30	15	(16.12)
4	May	31	16	(17.2)
5	June	30	15	(16.12)
6	July	31	16	(17.2)

Total	6	182	93	(100)
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Data Collection

For data collection, though, a coding sheet was developed including the credit line/ Byline of the news item, tone of news, visuals, number of words, number of columns, headline, representation/sources of news, and framing of the news item. The content was analyzed based on the given space analysis. News content analysis defines the positive, negative, and neutral types of news coverage included in the analysis of newspaper content. The analysis is also based on the source of the news and the order of the news.

For this study, two representative newspapers of Pakistan namely Daily Jang and Daily Nawa-i-Waqt were selected due to their large circulation around the country. The electronic version of both Dailies is distributed on their official websites (<https://e.jang.com.pk/>, <https://www.nawaiwaqt.com.pk/>). The portable file format (pdf) of the edition was downloaded on February 01, 2020, and July 30, 2020.

The front page of each newspaper was examined in the search of COVID-19 news and defined each news story as having nine attributes: *date*- date of the news, *item*- item number of the news, *credit line*-credit line/byline of the news, *visuals*- pictorial representation of the news, *headline size*- single/multiple, *tone*- tone of the news (Negative/Positive/Neutral), *columns*- number of columns of the news, *words*- number of words of the news, *Frames*- framing of the news.

Analysis and Results

The results of the study are given below and interpreted in the shape of frequency and Crosstabs.

Table 2: Total number of the COVID-19 related news stories

Newspaper	Frequency	Percent (%)
Daily Jang	335	(47.1)
Daily Nawa-i-Waqt	376	(52.9)
Total	711	(100)

The findings given in table 2 show that through a reading search from the online e-paper of Daily Jang and Daily Nawa-i-Waqt, the researcher found a total of three hundred and thirty-five news (335) related to COVID-19 issues in Daily Jang and three hundred seventy-six (376) news stories related to the COVID-19 issue in Daily Nawa-i-Waqt.

Table 3: Month-wise cross-tabulation of COVID-19-related news stories

Publication Month	Name of Newspaper		Total (%)
	Jang (%)	Nawa-i-Waqt (%)	
February	37 (69.8)	16 (30.2)	53 (100)
March	61 (39.6)	93 (60.4)	154 (100)
April	69 (40.8)	100 (59.2)	169 (100)
May	61 (50.0)	61 (50.0)	122 (100)

June	60 (51.3)	57 (48.7)	117 (100)
July	47 (49.0)	49 (51.0)	96 (100)
Total	335 (47.1)	376 (52.9)	711 (100)

The findings in table 3 are the month-wise comparison of the number of COVID-19-related news stories published in Daily Jang and Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspapers. In this way, it was observed that during February and June 2020 on average Daily Jang newspaper published a higher number of COVID-19-related news stories (69.8% and 51.3% respectively) compared to the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper. Against it, however, during March, April, and July 2020 the number of news stories related to COVID-19 was greater in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (60.4%, 59.2%, and 51.0% respectively) in contrast to the Daily Jang newspaper (39.6%, 40.8%, and 49.0% respectively). Whereas, regarding May 2020 it revealed that both the Dailies had published exactly an equal proportion of news stories related to COVID-19 (Daily Jang 50.0% and Daily Nawa-i-Waqt 50.0%).

Table 4: *Byline of a news story*

Byline	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Reporter	337	(47.4)
News agency	191	(26.9)
Monitoring desk	48	(6.8)
Author/Columnist	76	(10.7)
Social Media	21	(3.0)
Citizen	38	(5.3)
Total	711	(100)

Table 4 reveals findings of the byline of news stories published in Daily Jang and Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspapers. In this way, it was observed that a proportion of almost fifty percent (47.4%) had a byline “reporter”. The other proportion that was a bit bigger than a quarter (26.9%) was published with the byline of the name of the News agency. The third highest proportion a bit higher than one-tenth (10.7%) had a byline of the author/writer’s name. Whereas the remaining number of bylines were monitoring desk (6.8%), citizen (5.3%), and social media (3.0%).

Table 5: *Comparison by newspaper and byline of a news story*

Byline type	Name of Newspaper		Total (%)
	Jang (%)	Nawa-i-Waqt (%)	
Reporter	135 (40.1)	202 (59.9)	337 (100)
News agency	102 (53.4)	89 (46.6)	191 (100)
Monitoring desk	45 (93.8)	3 (6.3)	48 (100)
Author/Columnist	49 (64.5)	27 (35.5)	76 (100)
Social Media	4 (19.0)	17 (81.0)	21 (100)
Citizen	0 (0.0)	38 (100.0)	38 (100)
Total	335 (47.1)	376 (52.9)	711 (100)

Table 5 presents data of comparison between byline type and newspaper. In this way, it was found that the proportion of byline of “reporter”, “social media”, and “citizen”

on average were higher (59.9%, 81.0%, and 100.0% respectively) in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper compared with Daily Jang newspaper (40.1%, 19.0%, and 0.0% respectively). However, on the contrary, the proportion of byline of “news agency”, “monitoring desk”, and “author/columnist” on average was bigger (53.4%, 93.8%, 64.5%) in the Daily Jang newspaper compared with Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (46.6%, 6.3%, and 35.5%).

Table6: *Visual status of the news stories*

Visuals	Frequency	Percent (%)
Color photo	133	18.7
Black & white photo	10	1.4
Without visuals	568	79.9
Total	711	100.0

The findings in table 6 report the visual status of the news stories related to COVID-19 published in the Daily Jang and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper. Thus, it surfaced that out of the total of 711 stories proportion almost four-fifths (79.9%) of the stories were published without any visuals. However, the remaining proportion of slightly bigger than one-fifth of the published news storied (20.1%) was published with visuals. Added of the 143 stories published with visuals the proportion of little less than one-fifth (18.7%) was with color photos. Whereas the remaining tiny proportion (1.4%) of the news stories was published with black & white photos.

Table7: *Visual status of COVID-19-related news stories and newspaper*

Visual status	Name of Newspaper		Total (%)
	Jang (%)	Nawa-i-Waqt (%)	
Color photo	45 (33.8%)	88 (66.2%)	133 (100.0%)
Black & white photo	5 (50.0%)	5 (50.0%)	10 (100.0%)
Without visuals	285 (50.2%)	283 (49.8%)	568 (100.0%)
Total	335 (47.1%)	376 (52.9%)	711 (100.0%)

Table 7 reports findings of the visual status of the COVID-19 related news stories in the context of newspapers. Thus, it was seen that the color photos on average were published more in the Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (66.2%) compared with the Jang newspaper (33.8%). Additionally, regarding black & white photos it was observed that both the newspapers that the Daily Jang (50.0%) and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (50.0%) had published an equal proportion of black & white photos. Finally, about the news stories without visuals, it was seen that both newspapers had published an equal proportion without visual stories (The Daily Jang 50.2% and The Daily Nawa-i-Waqt 49.8%).

Table 8: *Size of stories in words*

Number of Words	Frequency	Percent (%)
100	146	(20.5)
200	208	(29.3)
300	101	(14.2)
400	71	(10.0)
500	16	(2.3)
600	71	(10.0)
700	15	(2.1)
800	39	(5.5)

900	17	(2.4)
1000 and more	27	(3.8)
Total	711	(100)

See table 8 regarding the word size of stories related to COVID-19 published in the Daily Jang and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper. Thus, in this regard, it was found that the first highest proportion (29.3%) was for 200-word stories. The second-highest proportion (20.5%) was 100-word stories. Whereas the third-highest proportion (14.2%) was of those stories whose word size was 300. In this way, it was deduced that collectively the majority proportion (64.0%) of the COVID-19-related stories published in the Daily Jang and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper were of size up to 300 words. However, the remaining proportion (36.0%) of the stories was of another varying size. Specifically, the proportion of 400-word stories was one-tenth (10.0%). The proportion of 600-word stories was also one-tenth (10.0%). Whereas the proportion of 1000 words and more was 3.8%.

Table 9: Comparison of the size of stories and newspaper

Size of stories in words	Name of Newspaper		Total (%)
	Jang (%)	Nawa-i-Waqt (%)	
100 to 300 words	235 (51.65%)	220 (48.35%)	455 (100.0%)
400 to 600 words	93 (58.86%)	65 (41.14%)	158 (100.0%)
700 and above words	7 (7.14%)	91 (92.86%)	98 (100.0%)
Total	335 (47.1%)	376 (52.9%)	711 (100.0%)

Table 9 reports findings on the size of stories and newspapers. In this context, it was seen that stories of 100 to 300 words, 300 words on average were published more in the Daily Jang newspaper (51.65%) compared to the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt (48.35%). Similarly, the stories sized 400 to 600 words were also published more in the Daily Jang newspaper (58.86%) than in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (41.14%). However, as far as the stories sized 700 and above words are concerned then they were found more published in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt (92.86%) compared to the Daily Jang newspaper (7.14%).

Table10: Tone of news stories

News Tone	Frequency	Percent (%)
Positive	223	(31.4)
Negative	400	(56.3)
Neutral	88	(12.4)
Total	711	(100)

Regarding the tone of the news stories related to COVID-19 published in the Daily Jang and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (see table 10), it was found that a proportion of little less than one-third (31.4%) of the stories had a positive tone. The other proportion of higher than fifty percent (56.4%) was with a negative tone. However, the remaining proportion of a little higher than one-tenth (12.4%) of the COVID-19-related published stories had a neutral tone.

Table11: *Comparison between the tone of the news stories and newspaper*

The tone of news stories	Name of Newspaper		Total (%)
	Jang (%)	Nawa-i-Waqt (%)	
Positive	96 (43.0%)	127 (57.0%)	223 (100.0%)
Negative	237 (59.3%)	163 (40.8%)	400 (100.0%)
Neutral	2 (2.3%)	86 (97.7%)	88 (100.0%)
Total	335 (47.1%)	376 (52.9%)	711 (100.0%)

While comparing the tone of stories with newspapers it was seen in table 11 that the stories with a positive tone and neutral tone on average were published more in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (57.0% and 97.7% respectively) than in the Daily Jang newspaper (43.0% and 2.3% respectively). However, against it, the stories having a negative tone on average were published more in the Daily Jang newspaper (59.3%) compared with the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt (40.8%).

Table12: *Number of Columns of the stories*

Number of Columns	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	227	(31.9)
2	197	(27.7)
3	165	(23.2)
4	39	(5.5)
5	15	(2.1)
6	66	(9.3)
8	2	(0.3)
Total	711	(100)

Table 12 presents findings regarding the number of columns of the COVID-19-related news stories published in the Daily Jang and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt. Thus, it was found that the highest proportion was almost one-third (31.9%) of the stories were column stories. The second-highest proportion that was higher than one-fourth (27.7%) of the stories was two columns' stories. Whereas the third-highest proportion calculated as greater than one-fifth (23.2%) of the stories was three-column stories. However, the remaining proportion of 17.2% was of following a varying number of columns 5.5% four columns, 2.1% five columns, 9.3% six columns, and 0.3% eight columns.

Table 13: *Headline type of the news stories*

Headline	Frequency	Percent (%)
Single	354	(49.8)
Multiple	357	(50.2)
Total	711	(100)

The data in table 13 presents findings of the headline type of the COVID-19-related news stories published in the Daily Jang and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper. In this way, it was found that fifty percent (50.0%) of the stories had a single headline; and the other fifty percent (50.0%) were with multiple headlines.

Table 14: *Comparison of the headline of the news story and newspaper*

Headline type	Name of Newspaper		Total (%)
	Jang (%)	Nawa-i-Waqt (%)	

Single	182 (51.41%)	172 (48.59%)	354 (100.0%)
Multiple	163 (45.7%)	194 (54.3%)	357 (100.0%)
Total	335 (47.1%)	376 (52.9%)	711 (100.0%)

Regarding the headline type and the newspaper, it was seen in table 14 that the proportion of a single headline on average was greater (51.41%) in the Daily Jang newspaper than in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (48.59%). Against it, the proportion of multiple headlines was higher in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (54.3%) compared to the Daily Jang (45.7%).

Table 15: *Source of the News stories*

Source/Representation	Frequency	Percent (%)
Head of State	10	(1.4)
Government Officials	152	(21.4)
Politicians	65	(9.1)
Health Practitioners	16	(2.3)
Public	311	(43.7)
Labors	15	(2.1)
Students	16	(2.3)
Any other	126	(17.7)
Total	711	(100)

The findings in table 15 report the sources of the COVID-19-related news stories published in the Daily Jang and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper. Thus, it was observed that the first highest proportion of the source of COVID-19-related news stories published in the Daily Jang and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt was “public” (43.7%). The second-highest proportion that was greater than one-fifth (21.4%) was “Government Officials”. The third highest proportion accounted for almost one-tenth (9.1%) of the source of the COVID-19 related news stories was politicians. Whereas the remaining proportion (24.8%) was for varying sources such as head of state (1.4%), health practitioners (2.3%), laborers (2.1%), students (2.3%), and any other than above (17.0%).

Table16: *Source of the news stories and newspaper*

Source	Name of Newspaper		
	Jang (%)	Nawa-i-Waqt (%)	Total (%)
Head of State	1 (10.0)	9 (90.0)	10 (100)
Government Officials	40 (26.3)	112 (73.7)	152 (100)
Politicians	22 (33.8)	43 (66.2)	65 (100)
Health Practitioners	4 (25.0)	12 (75.0)	16 (100)
Public	174 (55.9)	137 (44.1)	311 (100)
Labors	9 (60.0)	6 (40.0)	15 (100)
Students	10 (62.5)	6 (37.5)	16 (100)
Any other	75 (59.5)	51 (40.5)	126 (100)
Total	335 (47.1)	376 (52.9)	711 (100)

The data in table 16 present findings of the comparison between the source of COVID-19-related news stories and the newspaper. Thus, it developed that “public”

(55.9%), labor (60.0%), students (62.5%), and “other” various (59.5%) sources were higher in the news stories published in the Daily Jang newspaper compared with the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (44.1%, 40.0%, 37.0%, and 40.5% respectively). However, the sources for COVID-19-related news stories such as “Head of the state”, Government officials, “Politicians” and “Health practitioners” were higher in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (90.0%, 73.7%, 66.2%, and 75.0% respectively) than in the Daily Jang (10.0%, 26.3%, 33.8%, 25.0% respectively).

Table17: *Framing of news during COVID-19*

Framing of the COVID-19-related news stories	Frequency	Percent (%)
Positive/Negative cases, deaths, recovered patients	264	(37.1)
Economic crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic	47	(6.6)
Lockdowns, and following SOPs	89	(12.5)
Labor market disruption	12	(1.7)
Education related news	22	(3.1)
Government activities, policies	163	(22.9)
Reliefs, funds, and favors	64	(9.0)
NGOs activities and performance	28	(3.9)
Sports during the COVID-19 pandemic	2	(0.3)
Treatment, corona vaccination	14	(2.0)
Infodemic, rumors during the COVID-19 pandemic	5	(0.7)
Research on the COVID-19 pandemic	1	(0.1)
Total	711	(100)

Table 17 presents findings of the framing of COVID-19-related stories published in the Daily Jang and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper. About this, it was observed that the first highest proportion of almost two-fifths (37.1%) was framed with “Positive/negative cases, deaths, and recovered patients”. The second-highest proportion which was bigger than one-fifth (22.9%) of the published stories was framed as “Government activities and policies”. And the third highest proportion was greater than one-tenth (12.5%) of the published stories that were framed with “Lockdowns and following SOPs”. Whereas the fourth-highest proportion that accounted for almost one-tenth (9.0%) had a frame of “Reliefs, funds, and favors”. Added the remaining proportion of the published stories was with other various frames “Economic crisis (6.6%)”, “Labor market disruption (1.7%)”, “Education related news (3.1%)”, “NGOs activities and performance (3.9%)”, “Sports during COVID-19 pandemic (0.3%)”, “Treatment, corona vaccination (2.0%)”, “Infodemic, rumors during COVID-19 pandemic (0.7%)”, and “Research on COVID-19 pandemic (0.1%)”.

Table 18: *Framing of the COVID-19 related stories and newspaper*

Framing of the COVID-19-related news stories	Name of Newspaper		Total (%)
	Jang (%)	Nawa-i-Waqt (%)	
Positive/Negative cases, deaths, recovered patients	123 (46.6)	141 (53.4)	264 (100)
Economic crisis	33 (70.2)	14 (29.8)	47 (100)
Lockdowns, and following SOPs	42 (47.2)	47 (52.8)	89 (100)
Labor market disruption	6 (50.0)	6 (50.0)	12 (100)
Education related news	12 (54.5)	10 (45.5)	22 (100)

Government activities, policies	71 (43.6)	92 (56.4)	163(100)
Reliefs, funds, and favors	12 (18.8)	52 (81.3)	64 (100)
NGOs activities and performance	18 (64.3)	10 (35.7)	28 (100)
Sports during the COVID-19 pandemic	2 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (100)
Treatment, and corona vaccination	11 (78.6)	3 (21.4)	14 (100)
Infodemic, rumors during COVID-19	4 (80.0)	1 (20.0)	5 (100)
Research on the COVID-19 pandemic	1 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (100)
Total	335	376 (52.9)	711(100)
	(47.1)		

Table 18 presents findings of the framing of COVID-19-related news stories and the newspaper. Thus, it was seen that the news stories were framed with “positive/negative cases, deaths, recovered patients (53.4%)”, lockdowns, and following SOPs (528%)”, “government activities, and policies (564%)”, and “reliefs, funds, and favors (81.3%) on average published more in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper than the Daily Jang (46.6%, 47.2%, 43.6%, and 18.8% respectively). However, in the contrast, the news stories framed as “economic crisis (70.2%)”, “education-related news (54.5%)”, “NGOs activities and performance (64.3%)”, “Sports during the COVID-19 pandemic (100.0%)”, “treatment, and corona vaccination (78.6%)”, “infodemic, rumors during COVID-19 (80.0%)”, and “research on COVID-19 pandemic (100.0%) on average were published more in the Daily Jang newspaper than in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper (29.8%, 45.5%, 35.7%, 0.0%, 21.4%, 20.0%, and 0.0% respectively). Whereas, about the news stories framed as “labor market disruption” it was seen that the proportion of the news stories published in both the Daily Jang (50.0%) and the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt (50.0%) was equal.

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study analyzes the framing of COVID-19 in the Pakistani press. In this context, this study analyzed media coverage from February 2020 to July 2020 of the COVID-19 pandemic in Pakistani newspapers with attention to the frequency, by-line, visuals, news sources, media tone, and framing. In this way, for frequency of coverage, it was found that the said newspapers reported a total of 711 stories on COVID-19 during the specified period. However, the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper on average published more COVID-19 pandemic-related news stories. Nevertheless, in February and June 2020 the Daily Jang has given more coverage than the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt; whereas in May 2020 both the Dailies gave equal coverage.

Regarding the by-line of the COVID-19-related news stories in both the Dailies, it was observed that the three most frequent by-lines in descending order were “reporter”, “news agency”, and author/columnist name. However, the by-line of “reporter” was in great numbers in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt. Whereas, on the contrary, the by-lines of “news agency” and “author/columnist name” was more frequent in the Daily Jang newspaper. Added to the visual status of the news stories it was found that just one-fifth (20.1) of the stories were published with the photo, and those pictures were mostly color photos. The other main distinguished point related to visuals was that on average the stories with photos were published more in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt.

Subject to the size of the stories it was known that the three highest-size stories in descending order were 200 words stories (29.3%), 100 words stories (20.5%), and 300

words stories (14.2%). However, the tone of most of the stories was negative. Additionally, in comparison, it was found that the number of negative tones of COVID-19-related stories was higher in the Daily Jang than in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper. Moreover, regarding the number of columns of the stories, it was seen that the highest number was for one-column stories. However, accumulatively 82.1% of all the stories were in the space from 1 to 3 columns. Moreover, fifty percent of the stories were published with a single headline, whereas the other fifty percent of stories had multiple numbers of a headline. However, the greater number of stories with a single headline was in the Daily Jang newspaper. On the contrary, the ratio of the stories with multiple headlines was higher in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt. Else the other important fact found was that the first highest information source of the stories was “public” then a second “government officials” and third “politicians”. In this way, related to sources it was also interesting to know that the “public” as a source was greater in the Daily Jang newspaper, whereas, in the contrast, the number of the “government officials” and “politicians” as a source was greater in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper. Finally, about the framing of stories, it was found that the first highest ratio of COVID-19 pandemic-related stories was framed as “positive/negative cases, deaths, recovered patients”. Then the second-highest ratio was brought into the frame of “government activities, policies”. Whereas the third greater number of the stories was assigned the frame as “lockdowns, following SOPs”. Additionally, the stories framing “positive/negative cases, deaths, recovered patients, “government activities, policies, and “lockdowns, and following SOPs” were published more in the Daily Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper compared with the Daily Jang newspaper.

Overall, the findings revealed that by providing proper attention to COVID-19, the Pakistani newspapers (Daily Jang and Daily Nawa-i-Waqt) did not publish in-depth stories. Both newspapers relied on elite sources such as government, health department officials, and paramedical staff. The marginalized sources such as the public and labor were also cited in the news. The finding further revealed that most of the frames used were alarming and inducing panic. However, reassuring frames were used rarely. The stories emphasized more on death tolls and cases of COVID-19 in comparison to offering solutions frames.

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