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Declaration of National Emergency and Response to Flood Havoc in Pakistan: Exploring Corporate Perceptions of Relationship between CSR and SDG-13

Authors

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Abstract

The record-breaking floods in Pakistan (2022) plunging one-third of its land and resulting the most severe flooding since 1961, led to government declaration of national emergency. According to the World Weather Attribution Report 2022, more than 33 million people affected, and 1.7 million homes were destroyed. The Report states, “Damages likely exceed preliminary estimates of around US\$30 billion with further economic disruption certain in the months to come (Business Standard, 2022), as around 6700 kilometres of road, 269 bridges and 1460 health facilities were destroyed (OCHA, 2022), 18590 schools damaged (Save the Children, 2022), approximately 750 thousand livestock were killed (NDMA, 2022) and around 18,000 square kilometres of cropland were ruined” (September 14, 2022).

In these dilapidated conditions, a response is required from al and sundry and particularly from government and corporate sector. In the perspective of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), this study evaluates the response of corporate sector and aims to compare and contrast stakeholder theory, triple bottom line theory, Carroll theory, and institutional theory in the perspective of CSR practices adopted during and after the national emergency. The study will help to analyze and evaluate the role and responsibility of corporate sector towards SDG-13. The study will also highlight the use of social media by corporate sector for their CSR activities and response to national emergency. Top ten big business groups of Pakistan in terms of their worth (2021) are included in the study to evaluate their strategies, approaches, practices and models adopted to cope with the national emergency. The findings will establish that how corporate sector in Pakistan perceives climate change; to what extent they are contributing to control the change; and what measures they are taking (if any), to mitigate the effects.

Key Words

SDG-13; CSR; Stakeholder Theory; TBL Theory; Carroll Theory, Institutional Theory

Religious Ethical Values in Media Education and Practice: Comparing perspectives of media students, teachers and practitioners in Pakistan

Authors

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Abstract

Journalism education should be in a position to produce good leaders who can not only succeed in media jobs but also bring transformative ideas entrenched in ethical and moral values for the evolving media scene. One of the key challenges of journalism education is to strike the right balance between real-world and value-based approaches. In Muslim countries, it is argued that the teachings of Islam in education can play an important role in making media practitioners conscious of ethical values in the practice of journalism.

The study, through a survey of journalism students, teachers in public universities and media practitioners, aims to assess and evaluate the present status of religious ethical values taught in journalism education in Pakistan and explore to what extent the religious ethical values are adhered to by the media practitioners in meeting the commercial challenges in the media profession. How much do the media practitioners and media educators see themselves as agents for religious education and how do they integrate the teachings with their curriculum?

Key Words

religious ethical values; media education; media practice

Media Images of Islam in Transition? A Comparative Content Analysis of German Newspapers and Television Programs

Authors

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Abstract

Social cohesion requires an adequate representation of different societal groups for the purpose of improving intercultural relations and stimulating joint political efforts on a global scope. However, the representation of Muslims in Western societies reveals a persistence of anti-Muslim racism. In the context of Germany, several studies prove widespread Islamophobia (e.g., Bayrakli et al., 2020; Kaddor, 2020), leading to anti-Muslim violence (e.g., Mediendienst Integration, 2021). Considering that the media discourse significantly shapes public perceptions of social issues and groups, examining the mass media's image of Islam is crucial to situate these phenomena, to understand the media's role in reproducing anti-Muslim sentiment and to derive possible countermeasures. As a matter of fact, the public image of Islam in Germany has been proven to be "dominated by conflictual narrative patterns that are remote from everyday life and often (subtly) racist" (Hafez & Schmidt, 2020). Yet, empirical studies in this area are outdated (e.g., Richter & Hafez, 2009; Karis, 2013). In addition to this, representative and quantitative studies in this research area are still rare.

This paper addresses this research gap and discusses the findings of a quantitative, and over-time comparative study of Islam coverage in German newspapers and television programs. To obtain systematic results, national, regional, and tabloid newspapers as well as the non-fiction program of both a major public service and a major private station were included. A total of n=1.675 articles and n=339 TV shows published in 2014, 2019 and 2021 were examined in a standardized content analysis. The analysis centered on three categories: topics, country references, and cited actors.

The results demonstrate how Muslim individuals and Islam continue to be represented and contextualized in conflictual settings. In fact, 37% of the Islam-related articles in German print media discuss Islam solely in connection with terrorism, war and unrest; on television, the figure is as high as 81%. Moreover, the news coverage regarding Muslims and Islam are geographically limited to Western actors, namely the U.S, and countries with political contentions, such as Syria and Iran and are therefore confining narratives that fail to provide further information for readers to learn about these societies beyond conflict. The actor analysis reveals a primary focus on (mainly German) elite politicians and the portrayal of Muslims as a homogeneous and rarely quoted group. In particular, media coverage regarding the areas of business and education do not refer to Muslims. Reports concerning social issues fixate on stereotypical topics such as the rights and clothing of Muslim women.

On another note, the findings also indicate more informative and balanced forms of Islam coverage: Specifically in local newspapers, we found a stronger focus on cultural, religious, and civic activities

of Muslims and direct quotes of Muslim individuals or Muslim civil society institutions in longer news items, such as interviews.

Key Words

Islam coverage, Germany, quantitative content analysis, print media, television

Public Diplomacy and Emotional Community: How Do Iran Strengthen Its Discursive Power in the Digital Age?

Authors

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Abstract

With the advent of 'Digital Age' and transformation of international order, strategic competition of discursive power among countries has become increasingly intense. A review of international communication history from World War I reveals that the progress of digital technology and non-western states participation enlargement are the most prominent driving factors of current international communication environment. In the past decade, many non-western countries have begun to seek to change their long-standing stigmatization both under internal demands and external pressures. By taking advantages of open, convenient, cheap, and efficient properties of digital media, they empower themselves technologically, thus to counter western pressure as well as fulfill their own national strategic goals.

Based on commonality mentioned above, different countries, influenced by their own traditions, statecrafts and resources, have developed distinctive systems and paths in the process of discursive power competing. This article takes Iran as study object to analyze how can Islamic world, and even in a broader sense, non-western countries strengthen their international communication capacities in the digital age. Sample representativeness is as follows: Firstly, Iran's institutional design, cultural system as well as discourse traditions are markedly different from those of western countries. And in some areas, they are now in a confrontational stance. Secondly, Iran has long been exaggerated as demonization by the U.S., which directly affects their reputation and effectiveness in international affairs. Thirdly, Iran has outstanding comprehensive strength in the Middle East and is the main force against external interference in regional affairs. So, it can lead more regional countries to compete with the West through military power, religious appeal, et al.

For this purpose, through an interdisciplinary perspective combining international relations and communication studies, this paper first systematizes the historical stages and current characteristics of Iran's international discursive power practice over the past half century by applying literature research method. Next, big data mining and discourse analysis methods are used to analyze Twitter accounts of Iranian national leaders (including Persian, English and Chinese posting texts), to explore how Iran design its strategic communication system in four aspects, respectively are subjects, channels, contents, and audiences.

This article finds that although with limited national power under prolonged sanctions, under the moderate Rouhani government, Iran has successfully utilized celebrity charm and empathy mobilization techniques to build up an 'emotional community' of sympathy to gain a relatively safe external political environment. We can call it as 'digital public diplomacy model', delicate but

sophisticated. Evidence shows that this model is still being continued by the new Raisi administration.

This paper suggests that in the future, represented by Iran, the Islamic world and even non-western countries should learn from each other, while keeping sharp mind on the West's communication hegemony in the new digital context. At the same time, the Islamic world can also cooperate with each other appropriately to create a convergence of public pressure and attention and to help reverse the common discursive disadvantages globally.

Key Words

discursive power; digital age; international communication; Islamic World

How the Atheism Phenomenon has been Linked to Modern Media A Study Case in Arabic Channels' Talk Shows

Authors

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Abstract

Despite that atheism phenomenon or the denial of the existence of God is not new in Arab Islamic history, many atheist groups and movements were elevated in more than one era in the Islamic times, including a number of leading philosophers such as Abu Bakr Al-Razi, Al-Farabi and Ibn Rushd (Marwa, 2008).

However, the question of the spread of atheism in contemporary Arab societies is still complex, uneasy, and not subject to the principle of freedom of belief and conscience. Conservative Arab society does not accept publicly atheist people who acknowledge themselves as atheists, even though it accepts individuals not practicing religious teachings. In some Arab countries, the publicity of atheism is illegal and subject to punishment as an insult to religion. (De Angelo and Balduzzi, 2016).

The growth of the Arab world's atheism phenomenon between 2000 - 2020 has been largely linked to modern media, namely digital media and television channels, which have allowed new atheists and young generations to freely express their views and openly reveal their own atheism, a matter Arab audiences are not used to.

This study aims at building a vision of atheism in the Arab-Islamic world through a revealing the features of the media speech on atheism and atheists in television talk shows many Arabic-speaking channels, which will provide knowledge about the concept of atheism and the image presented by the mass media on atheism and atheists. The image atheists reflect about themselves, the strategies they present to prove their existence and survival, hence, the concepts, expressions, and images presented by the counterparties.

Key Words

Atheism; Media; Talk shows; Arab world; Islam; Hate speech; Tv.

Amid exclusions and seclusions: South African Indian Muslim women connect and consume on Instagram

Authors

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Abstract

In Johannesburg – economic hub of South Africa, and home to a sizeable Muslim population – some South African Indian Muslim women have established space on Instagram to mediate their identities, and connect with each other through food. What insights does this lend us into consumption, against a charged backdrop?

The South African Muslim community is multicultural, but is primarily comprised of those of Indian descent, who are concentrated in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, and Gauteng (where Johannesburg is), and those of Cape Malay descent, more concentrated in the Western Cape. Mandivenga (2000: 350) writes “the Indian Muslim women, although held in esteem, are subjected to social segregation, unlike their counterparts in the Cape who are socially treated as equals of men.” In Johannesburg, a harshly patriarchal Muslim community sometimes discourages and excludes women from key facets of community life, such as mosques. Using food as a way to connect, this hybrid community negotiates their own space through their Instagram communities.

In her signature neon spectacle frames, Fehmida Jordaan – @Fehmz – provides easy recipes from dishes ranging from Indian favourites like curries and puris, to pasta recipes, testament to the taste of a fusion community straddling a third-culture identity. She is famous for her eponymous cocktails and in recent years, through her online community, launched the hugely-successful Halal Goods Market, where pop-up vendors sell food, clothing, and other items targeted at Muslim consumers on a few weekends a year.

Naqiyah Mayat became popular after posting her children’s lunchboxes close to a decade ago, and has risen to become a personality whose Instagram (@naqiyah_mayat) contains recipes, advices, fashion, and beautiful tablescapes. In 2020, she launched a lauded cookbook – *The Beginning: Indian Recipes From My Home* – infused strongly by the heritage she grew up with in a Hindu family in Johannesburg. She is public about the fact that she is a convert (or revert) to Islam.

And debates around ethical consumption can be found on @nafisaeats, where Johannesburg-based Nafisa Akabor reviews the food she eats at restaurants all over the world. Her review of sushi containing wine vinegar at an eatery at Nelson Mandela Square – located in the heart of Sandton, which is known as “the richest square mile in Africa” – launched fiery discussions online around the term “halaal-friendly.”

These women are only a few examples of a niche community, who negotiate and mediate their niche identity in an online space. They create commonality in a unique cultural background that is influenced by national, religious, and racial identity. Against this complex backdrop, they deal with

a multitude of issues; the patriarchal dynamics of this community remain prevalent. While not a direct response to it, they show that they can develop, maintain, and sustain their own spaces through online communication, to stay connected, creative, and experimental. In an evolving world, these women represent the tenets of creativity enacted by the Almighty in 36:82 – *kun faya kun*, ‘be, and it is.’

Further, this community is worthy of study to ask the questions; as Muslim consumers, how do we consume media, how do we consume what media presents of us, and how do our habits as consumers not only affect us, but guide us along? How does this digital diet foster community, connection, and mindful consumption – does it?

Key Words

Muslim women, instagram, consumption, community, food, South Africa, identity, online