



**IAMCR  
Lyon 23**



**IAMCR  
OCP 23**



## **Crisis, Security and Conflict Communication Working Group**

Abstracts of papers presented at one or both of the 2023 conferences of the  
**International Association for Media and Communication Research**  
IAMCR Lyon23 – Lyon, France 9 to 13 July  
IAMCR OCP23 – Online 26 June to 12 September

**lyon2023.iamcr.org**  
**July 2023**

This abstract book includes original abstracts of papers accepted for IAMCR 2023 and included online at OCP23 and/or presented at Lyon23 in France

Version: 27/07/23

## Table of Contents

Framing Russia-Ukraine War and Vladimir Putin’s Image: A Content Analysis of New York Times Online Commentary Articles .....	5
Random Access Memories or clichéd representations? Exploring historical photographs of the Troubles on Instagram.....	6
Exercising Power in Media during Covid-19: The case of the “Stay at Home” Campaign on Twitter in Greece .....	7
Framing Covid-19 in the French Press.....	8
Media restraint in the polarized world of television: the message of Polish television news services in a situation of a political crisis after the hit of a Ukrainian rocket in the Polish village Przewodów. ....	10
A Review of Crisis Leadership: Implications for Crisis Communication Research and Practice .....	11
The Wounded Shangri-La: Examining the International Media Representation of the 2022 COVID-19 Crisis in Tibet .....	13
Offensive and defensive strategic narratives in Ukraine during the war with Russia.....	14
Impact of insecurity on journalistic work: a comparative analysis of security's role in managing sources during a socio-political and a socio-natural crisis.....	15
Immersive media and war reporting: uses, potentialities and challenges of 360° video to narrate armed conflicts.....	17
Framing military incompetence: An examination of media coverage of the Milicogate scandal in Chile.....	19
Covid-19 communication strategies of governments in Europe and US – a seven-country comparison.....	21
Can encryption save lives? Secure messaging tools as loci of convergence between cyber warfare and conventional warfare .....	23
The impact of sociotechnical discussion on environmental assessment policies: Analysis of two emblematic conflicts in Peru.....	25
Computer-mediated communication technologies for intercultural conflict management: A Conceptual Framework .....	27
Enhancing the Chinese Identity of Young People in Hong Kong and Macao Based on the Creation of Cinematic Virtual Reality Art, Taking the Cinematic Virtual Reality Work 'I Love Being Me: in my Place, my Home' as an Example .....	28
The backlash of expert trust premium: the trust violation caused by information inconsistency during the COVID-19 pandemic .....	30
Public-oriented or Government-oriented: Apologies in the Crisis Communication of Chinese Government .....	32

Domestication of International News in China: Discourse Analysis on Xinhua News Agency's Reports of Russia-Ukraine War .....	34
Facts or opinions? The emotion polarity driven stance taking expressions on Twitter during the Russia-Ukraine War .....	36
Who and what is represented, and why? Exploring international refugee organizations' public communication strategies for the Syrian and Central African crises (2015-2018) .....	38
Covid-19 and the dynamics of blame: the attribution of blame in UK online news coverage of Covid-19 .....	40
Mapping disconnective waves in crises: from Covid-19 to Russia-Ukraine war. ....	42
A Window or a Distorting Mirror of the Other World? A Content Analysis of Japanese News Coverage of Major Foreign Earthquakes in the 21st Century .....	44
How perceived threat in instructing information and crisis types influence emotions, crisis responsibility attribution and NWoM: Examining the role of ethical crisis response .....	46
The NATO eFP mission in the Spanish Defense's social media messaging during the Ukraine crisis .....	48
Images as moral objects: Humanitarian images and the moral limits of their circulation .....	50
Nationalised childhood during conflict: Analysis of the nationalist discourse in Turkish Cypriot children's magazines .....	52
Perils and perseverance in reporting conflicts .....	53
Public Health Organizations' Practices and Experiences in Communicating the COVID-19 Pandemic on Social Media: Lessons for Improving Social Media Crisis Communication .....	54
Consuming news about the 2022-2023 Russian-Ukrainian war in Germany and Israel: A comparative analysis .....	56
Understanding Municipal Crisis Communication during COVID-19: A Big Data Approach .....	58
Examining attribution theories in negative events: A systematic review of communication journals.....	59
Emotions Matter : Exploring the Effects of Emotional Framing in Disaster News on the Publics' Pro-social Motivation and Behavioral Intentions.....	61
Analysis of Covid-19 information consumption by Spanish citizens: disinformation, platforms and media.....	63
Handling violent extremism and terrorism online: the emergence of a global governance regime? .....	65
Us with them: The cosmopolitan potential of peace journalism .....	66
Covering the COVID-19 pandemic - Journalists' role perceptions in South Africa and France .....	67
Internet Shutdowns in India: Legitimacy, Impact and the Containment of Rumors .....	69
Slippery discourses of intertwined crises: migratory phenomenon and Covid-19 pandemic.....	71

Multimodal crisis communication: A comparative analysis of Instagram posts published by governments and health institutions in Germany, Turkey, the UK, the US during 2020–2021 ..... 73

Framing the future: Comparative news coverage of Syrians in Turkiye and implications for regional stability..... 75

Pandemic in times of social web — COVID-19 in the Arabic digital public sphere..... 77

The framing of USA and Russian school massacres in American mainstream media ..... 79

‘You can’t be a constructive Journalist and make it as a journalist in Kenya!’ Professionals’ Insights on Constructive Journalism Practice..... 81

Afghanistan’s media usage under the Taliban Regime: A changed habitus of media usage after the Taliban’s takeover? ..... 83

# **Framing Russia-Ukraine War and Vladimir Putin's Image: A Content Analysis of New York Times Online Commentary Articles**

## **Authors**

Dr. LIM LAI HOON - Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology

## **Abstract**

The news of Russia launching a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 shocked the world. However, the media has different interpretations of this invasion. Ukrainian and western media use the term "war," whereas the Russian media call it a "special military operation". The media play a constitutive role in this crisis. Storylines or frames provided by mass media have a great influence on public perception of the crisis. Once a frame has become extensive in a media discourse, it raises the public's expectation of the political legitimization actions by discussing the possible consequences of the crisis. From that perspective, this study aims to examine the framing of the Russia-Ukraine war and Russian President, Vladimir Putin's image in one of the renowned America-based media, *The New York Times Online*. A qualitative content analysis of commentary articles under the column of "Opinion" was performed. The commentary articles were filtered based on the keywords such as "Russia and Ukraine War", "invasion of Ukraine" and "Vladimir Putin". A total of 229 commentary articles' headlines from 24 February 2022 to 24 December 2022 were content analysed. Qualitative content analysis enables the study to scrutinise the framed content of the war, as well as the constructive and destructive character of Putin's image portrayal. Constructive frames interpret the actions of Putin by addressing the situational causal take while destructive frames blame Putin for the war without explaining the cause of his actions. Agenda setting and framing theory were used as the theoretical framework. The analysis inductively generates thematic frames by systemising the content of the articles. The findings reveal Russia has been framed as a provoked invader who has unmercifully onslaught Ukraine while Ukraine strives to put up an inspiring defense of its sovereignty. The image of Vladimir Putin carries a destructive character where the portrayal is conspiratorial and seclusive.

## **Key Words**

Ukraine-Russia war, Putin's image, media framing, agenda setting, content analysis.

# **Random Access Memories or clichéd representations? Exploring historical photographs of the Troubles on Instagram**

## **Authors**

Dr. Paul Reilly - University of Glasgow

## **Abstract**

Social media provide unprecedented opportunities for the distribution of photographs capturing experiences of conflict. Instagram in particular renders conflict photography searchable, whilst also aggregating the memories of traumatised communities. This paper adds to the nascent literature in this area by exploring how the photosharing app is used to share photographs of the Northern Irish 'Troubles,' a low-intensity conflict that resulted in 3,600 fatalities and left many more bereaved, injured and traumatized. Two decades on from the Belfast Agreement, Northern Ireland remains a deeply divided society in which competing narratives over the conflict and its constitutional status remain deeply entrenched. This study explored the visual representation of these narratives on Instagram, with a specific focus on who was represented in these images and whether they were personal memory materials. A content and visual framing analysis of 100 historical images tagged #thetroubles was conducted between August and December 2019 in order to explore these issues. Results indicate that images showing the 'peculiarity' of everyday life during the conflict, such as armed British soldiers standing in close quarters to children playing in the street, were the most prominent visual representations under this hashtag. While the affordances of Instagram broaden participation in processes of memorialization, the photosharing site nevertheless amplifies clichéd visual representations of the conflict which fail to capture the everyday experiences of many who lived through it.

## **Key Words**

Social Media, Instagram, Digital Memory, Conflict

# Exercising Power in Media during Covid-19: The case of the “Stay at Home” Campaign on Twitter in Greece

## Authors

Dr. Minos Athanasios Karyotakis - Hong Kong Baptist University

## Abstract

At the beginning of 2020, the Greek government initiated a campaign and a fund for supporting the country's media industry as it was facing severe troubles due to financial issues provoked by the Covid-19 pandemic. The main aim of the campaign and the fund was to promote through the media the message of staying at home to stop the spreading of Covid-19. That initiative seemed an important step for helping the news industry that was indeed in a bad situation. Nevertheless, the so-called “Petsas list” (or “Stay at Home” Campaign) named by Stelios Petsas, the representative of the Greek government formed by the right-wing party of New Democracy (ND), was perceived as another effort to manipulate the news in order to promote an ideal image of the government, including the extreme regulations for dealing with the pandemic, such as the lockdowns.

The current study employed Ideological Discourse Analysis (IDA) to investigate how the Twitter users of the hashtag #Petsas\_list (#Λίστα\_Πετσα) portray the relationship between the government and the “Stay at Home” Campaign. The paper emphasized exploring the Twitter users' ideological constructions highlighting the actor description, meaning the positive depictions of one group (“we”) against the “other” in 1623 Tweets of the relevant hashtag in Greek (#Λίστα\_Πετσα) on Twitter.

Former studies have shown that IDA and ideological constructions can play a crucial role in issues related to journalism and news coverage (van Dijk, 2009; Karyotakis, 2021; Fürsich, 2009). For instance, “news values are also ideological in the sense that they can work to reinforce other ideologies (rather than just an ideology of what is newsworthy)” (Bednarek & Caple, 2014, p. 137). As IDA is a form of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and a qualitative approach, the current paper does not present every single collected tweet but uses as examples the most representative tweets (exemplars) to show how the specific ideological constructions were developed and promoted by the users. After reading all the collected tweets, two main categories of constructions were identified: (a) the “Petsas List” (or “Stay at Home” Campaign) as a tool for controlling the media and (b) the support to the government by the corrupted media and journalists.

The results revealed that financial support when it is used in a controversial and non-transparent way could undermine the media's independence and empower anti-media sentiment. Lastly, the study enhances the literature about the mass media industry's problems globally during the pandemic, including the decline in media freedom that contributes to the democratic recession.

## Key Words

Anti-media Sentiment, Covid-19, Discourse, Media Independence, Twitter

# Framing Covid-19 in the French Press

## Authors

Dr. Nael Jebril - Doha Institute for Graduate Studies

Mr. Mohammed El bouzidi - N/A

## Abstract

With more than 650 million cases and more than 6.5 million deaths globally by January 2023 (World Health Organization, 2023), Covid-19 is one of the most severe global health crises of this century. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, it has caused unprecedented social, economic, political, and cultural consequences across the globe. The significance of this health crisis has sparked debates on the role of news media during major health crises. In France, a country with more than 38 million cases of COVID-19 and 159,000 deaths as of December 2022 (World Health Organization, 2023), concerns about the government measures to tackle the pandemic as well as the quality of news coverage had a substantial impact on trust in the political system and the national media.

According to a survey conducted by the Statista Research Department and published on March 8th, 2021, a majority of 64% of the French population expressed a lack of trust in the government's ability to handle the COVID-19 health crisis (Rivière, 2021). Additionally, the survey found that levels of media trust in the country have also decreased, with only 29% of those surveyed agreeing that they trust news most of the time (Rivière, 2021). The low levels of trust have been attributed to perceptions of misinformation among the public (Hameleers et al., 2022) and research suggests that political leanings also play a significant role in media trust in France (Sumida et al., 2019).

In light of criticism of the coverage of the COVID-19 crisis by French news media, the decline in public trust in the media, and the polarized attitudes towards the government's handling of the pandemic (Rivière, 2021), this study examines how four major national French newspapers with different political leanings and readership (Le Monde - centre left, Le Figaro - centre right, Libération - leftist, Le Parisien-Aujourd'hui en France - centrist) framed the COVID-19 crisis during the first six months of the pandemic. Using quantitative content analysis, the study compares the use of twelve health-related frames, identified from relevant literature (see e.g., Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; Shih et al., 2008), across the four newspapers. A stratified sampling method, using two constructed weeks (Riffe, Lacy, and Fico, 1998) and a total of 748 news stories focusing on the coronavirus as the main subject, were selected for analysis.

The findings of the study indicate that the frames of action and social impact were the most prominent across all the newspapers, while the new evidence frame was the least used. Additionally, while all newspapers tended to focus on disruptions, negative consequences, and mitigation strategies related to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were notable differences across newspapers with different political leanings in terms of emphasis on the government's management and response to the health crisis. Specifically, the centre-left and leftist newspapers



attributed greater responsibility to government actors than the centre-right and centrist newspapers did. These findings are discussed in the context of previous research on framing and health crisis reporting.

**Key Words**

Covid-19 pandemic, news media framing, French press, political leaning

# **Media restraint in the polarized world of television: the message of Polish television news services in a situation of a political crisis after the hit of a Ukrainian rocket in the Polish village Przewodów.**

## **Authors**

Dr. Monika Koźdoń-Dębecka - University of Warsaw

## **Abstract**

In an increasingly polarized media sphere, TV newsrooms promote their own journalistic policy as well as specific political options in many democratic countries. What's more, editorial offices also fight directly by commenting on other channels' materials on their own news sites. Against this background, the case of limiting the information transfer in all three most popular Polish television stations at the time of the mistaken strike of a Ukrainian anti-aircraft missile on Polish territory in November 2022 is one of the few exceptions. This temporary unification of the television media coverage in this European country, which borders Ukraine that is in a state of war with Russia, was a unique situation in the Polish media market. The article presents that the surveyed Polish TV editorial offices initially reported the explosion sparingly (albeit to varying degrees) on the main evening news services, which were broadcasted a few hours after the event. On the same evening, the American news agency Associated Press reported, as it later turned out imprecisely, about the explosion of a Russian missile in Poland, distributing the information around the world. As a rule, qualitative and quantitative comparative studies conducted using a categorization key are intended to show differences inter alia in television media coverage. In the case of the presented study that used the above methodology, the following were analyzed and compared 1) the selection of information about the explosion in Przewodów, 2) the visual layer of the news, 3) the presence and overtones of journalists and experts' comments in the materials of the three largest TV stations. The empirical basis for the study was the news materials of the three most-watched evening television news services: *Wiadomości* TVP – Polish public broadcaster controlled by the ruling party; *Wydarzenia* of Polsat TV, owned by the Polish businessman Zygmunt Solorz-Żak, and *Fakty* - the TVN news service controlled by the American concern Discovery Warner Bros. The analysis of news materials regarding the events in Przewodów covered the period of 5 days after the rocket explosion in this Polish border town. The presented study of individual elements of television coverage in a situation of a potential threat of armed conflict presents not only the initial restrained reaction of three Polish TV channels, but also shows in detail the way of constructing certain TV content that departs from polarization elements. The framing theory allowed the author to analyze how individual editorial offices created the message about this unusual situation for Polish public opinion.

## **Key Words**

Television news, unification of coverage, Poland, missile explosion, Russian-Ukrainian conflict

# **A Review of Crisis Leadership: Implications for Crisis Communication Research and Practice**

## **Authors**

Dr. Michael Collins - The University of Queensland Business School

## **Abstract**

An organizational crisis is a low-probability, high-impact event causing (or likely to cause) significant damage to organizations and individuals, often with little to no warning. While crises were once considered relatively rare, there are emerging signs that these events are likely to increase in frequency, intensity, and impact over the next decade (see International Monetary Fund, World Health Organization). Such dire predictions pose numerous challenges for organizational leaders and communications advisers who seek to provide clarity, reassurance, and hope to those impacted by such devastating events. One of the main challenges facing communication practitioners, however, concerns the variety of different crises and impacts (e.g., product failure versus terrorist attack), the diverse perspectives of affected stakeholders, and the most appropriate communication response.

In this paper I draw on the crisis typology of Coombs and Holladay (1996), and our recent review of the crisis leadership literature (Collins, Dasborough, Gregg, et al., 2022), to provide insights and guidance for crisis communication researchers and practitioners. The Coombs and Holladay (1996) crisis typology classifies crises events according to whether they arise internally or externally to the organization, and whether the crisis is caused by human action (intentional) or an “act of god” (unintentional). Accordingly, this crisis typology consists of four mutually exclusive categories: (1) internal–intentional crises, e.g., fraud, sexual transgressions, (2) internal–unintentional crises, e.g., product failures, industrial accidents, (3) external–intentional crises, e.g., war, terrorist attacks, and (4) external–unintentional crises, e.g., natural disasters, financial shocks.

Our review of the crisis leadership literature found that crisis communication strategies are shaped by the type of crisis experienced, namely: (1) internal–intentional crises strategies focus on public apology, taking ownership/accountability, and promoting ethical conduct; (2) internal–unintentional crises strategies focus on impression management techniques that enhance trust and minimize reputational damage; (3) external–intentional crises strategies emphasize a collective focus, overcoming adversity (e.g., against a common enemy), and supporting recovery post-crisis; and (4) external–unintentional crises strategies focus on protecting and guiding crisis victims to safety.

In addition, our review identified two overlapping crisis communication strategies that depend on whether the crisis is internal versus external. For internal crises (whether intentional or unintentional), crisis communication strategies focus on trust repair and promoting ethical leadership. In contrast, for external crises, communication strategies focus on protecting lives and livelihoods, optimism (via leader charismatic rhetoric), and emotional recovery post-crisis. Finally,

this article provides evidence-based guidance on ways to respond to specific crisis types. For example, the choice of strategy (e.g., apology versus denial), spokesperson (e.g., CEO versus other), and gender (male versus female) can determine the effectiveness of crisis communication in response to an internal–unintentional crisis (e.g., a product failure).

**Key Words**

Crisis communication, crisis typology, systematic literature review

# The Wounded Shangri-La: Examining the International Media Representation of the 2022 COVID-19 Crisis in Tibet

## Authors

Ms. Xinyi Tan - School of Media and Communication, Shanghai Jiao Tong University

## Abstract

On August 9, Lhasa, the capital city of Tibetan Autonomous, home to 900,000 people, has been closed for over two months after discovering a handful of COVID infections. It attracted media attention internationally. Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Tibet in the most of the European and American imagination has been as a paradise-like *Other*, the Shangri-La. To explore Tibet's image in the digital media during the 2022 COVID-19 crisis, this study used a multimodal discourse analysis to analyze the U.S. media representation of the 2022 Covid-19 crisis in Tibet. Data (n=46) is collected from major English language news outlets such as New York Times, Fox News, REUTERS, ANI, Bloomberg, the guardian and Washington Post, etc. Guided by a decolonial perspective based on Said's (1978) Orientalism and Hall's (1997) theory of representation, the author identified three key themes: 1) the wounded city by the repressive covid policy, 2) the injured paradise by the authoritarian government, 3) another place in China with abnormal and absurd life. Among Hall's representational strategies, the essentialist and reductionist have been frequently used to depict Tibet's capital Lhasa as a newly bad-wounded city solely due to China's zero-Covid policy. Informed by the conception of Orientalism, the U.S. media predominantly (re)shapes the image of Tibet by showing two contradictory imaginaries: the Oriental virgin-land Shangri-La, and the miserable hell on earth ruled by the Chinese Communist Party. The representative effect intensifies the ideological dichotomy between "China and Tibet." The study shows how international media repeats century-old Orientalist representation, and implicitly forms new images of Tibet in a recent covid-19 pandemic, even Tibet today is composed of different ethnicities, religions, and each ethnic Tibetan community develops different levels of identification with the Chinese government. The discussion of this study provides mindful strategies on how the international media report crisis in dispute regions from multiple standpoints.

## Key Words

news media, Tibet, representation, critical multimodal discourse analysis, Covid-19

# Offensive and defensive strategic narratives in Ukraine during the war with Russia

## Authors

Dr. Artem Zakharchenko - Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

## Abstract

Russia started full-scale aggression against Ukraine on February 24, 2022. The Kremlin hadn't reached its goal to take Kyiv by storm in three days: this goal is not achieved as of January 2023. We consider the comparative efficacies of two strategic narratives, the pro-Russian offensive, and the Ukrainian defensive, the most important part of this outcome.

Analysis of this issue challenges us to expand the methodological approach to strategic narrative analysis. Strategic narrative as an instrument of soft power that allows states to win the war is usually considered a story intentionally constructed by the authorities and told for their citizens and the enemy forces. Another common view is that this narrative is a kind of 'artwork' that must meet a list of requirements – so, there is less information about its construction.

We provide the concept of «connective strategic narrative», which is mostly produced by the 'affective public', according to the definition by Z.Papacharissi, which is necessary to analyze the defensive Ukrainian narrative. Also, we develop a structural approach for the strategic narrative analysis to show how to construct these narratives rather than create them. The pattern of such analysis is created based on K.Korostelina's pattern for the national narrative analysis.

Then, in a case study part, we provide the structural narrative analysis of both strategic narratives used in the ongoing war in Ukraine and deployed in the Ukrainian information space: offensive pro-Russian and defensive Ukrainian. This analysis of narratives deployed during the initial period of full-scale Russian aggression shows one of the reasons why the Ukrainian army and people are so highly motivated by the resistance. The Ukrainian strategic narrative is much more powerful than the Russian one because the second narrative is not coherent, has a poor set of characters, and a set of imperatives, and finally was disproved by new events. Ukrainian strategic narrative had no such disadvantages.

It is shown that both sides of the war apply irreconcilable stories. Ukrainian strategic narrative can be compared with Tolkien's story about the «Middle-Earth war», and the pro-Russian narrative – with the «Crusade» story. None of these narratives provide for any agreements or compromises, so, other scenarios of how to end the war are more likely to happen. This fact can explain the great Ukrainians' motivation for the resistance that occurs in both combatants and non-combatants and became one of the crucial factors of the struggle.

## Key Words

strategic narrative, war communication, social media, affective public, Russian-Ukrainian war

# **Impact of insecurity on journalistic work: a comparative analysis of security's role in managing sources during a socio-political and a socio-natural crisis.**

## **Authors**

Dr. Soledad Puente - Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile

Ms. Constanza Ortega-Gunckel - Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile

Dr. Daniela Grassau - Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile

Dr. William Porath - Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile

Ms. Muriel Alarcón - Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile

## **Abstract**

As in other parts of the world during the COVID-19 health crisis, in Chile, audiences strongly criticized the media for causing unnecessary panic, spreading misinformation, and exacerbating emotions in dramatic situations (Lira, 2020; Mellado et al., 2021(a)). In the country, this crisis came after the so-called "social outburst" of 2019, a citizen revolt product of social discontent. In this unprecedented context, Chilean journalists were also questioned for turning to a reduced number of traditional sources and leaving aside better-prepared citizen and academic-scientific voices (Mellado et al., 2021(b)).

The present study -developed in the framework of two formalized projects- seeks to explore, from the experience of its protagonists, the main factors that impacted the selection of sources during the two significant crises experienced in recent times in Chile.

To achieve this objective, under an exploratory qualitative approach, we conducted 50 semi-structured in-depth interviews with Chilean editors (press, radio, TV, and digital platforms) who participated in the most newsworthy events of the last three years (social outbreak and pandemic). We analyzed the data using open, axial, and selective data coding (Flick, 2004).

Our results show that during these crises, violence and insecurity put Chilean journalism to the test and influenced the selection of sources. In the 2019 uprising, journalists had to cover confrontations of unprecedented violence in the last 30 years, exposing them to risks (disqualifications, physical attacks, and virtual violence, among others). As a result, many professionals did not want to go to the field to report or resorted to "safe" and known sources. In such circumstances, according to the editors, the great challenge was to elucidate whether the voices selected were the best validated to refer to, reflect and analyze the complexities of the moment.

In the case of the pandemic, the editors say that the uncertainty and risk of contracting the virus conditioned the access to information. Due to the sanitary restrictions and the interviewees' willingness, new practices emerged in the journalist-interviewee relationship (e.g., sending press

releases instead of access to an interview or the provision of a WhatsApp message) that reduced the possibility of counter-questioning. In addition, Chilean journalists faced the fact that their traditional-expert sources were not the most relevant (they knew their field but did not master specific knowledge about a virus). The above challenged the media to look for new voices to provide unique views of what was happening.

From the testimonies, we could observe that, in both cases, the different forms of insecurity conditioned how journalists accessed information and evaluated the legitimacy and relevance of their sources.

The above-mentioned leads us to conclude that, in times of turmoil and uncertainty, using the "same" voices may often be related to journalists' conditions, risks, and capacities. Understanding how journalistic practices are affected by insecurity opens a way to refine and rethink professional protocols in "real world" conditions.

### **Key Words**

Insecurity; Sources; Chilean uprising; Pandemic; Crisis.



# **Immersive media and war reporting: uses, potentialities and challenges of 360° video to narrate armed conflicts**

## **Authors**

Mr. Andrés David Castro Lotero - University of Passau

Dr. António Baía-Reis - Utopia Academy

## **Abstract**

Immersive media has created unprecedented possibilities for the way we interact with content, allowing audiences to be transported into storyworlds by means of emergent virtual reality technology such as 360° video and VR glasses. In its turn, this encompasses new storytelling formats and narrative styles. Furthermore, immersive media also provides the opportunity to gain experiential insights into other people's experiences and viewpoints in a manner that has been transforming and impacting fields such as communication, education, conflict resolution and public policy making (Clark 2015). Since 2015 media outlets and journalists have been using virtual reality to explore new ways to tell news stories, thus giving birth to the subgenre of immersive journalism, where 360° video is a central practice (de la Peña et al. 2010).

Although the uses and impacts of immersive journalism are at a relatively early stage of exploration, specific research on immersive journalism related to war reporting is not only scarce but also the few studies don't provide a thorough empirical analysis. Thus, we believe it is necessary to delve deeper into the specific field of war reporting and its new intertwining with recent technology given that war reporting has not only been a central component of news since the emergence of mass media (Jungblut 2022; Knightley 2004; Wilke 1995), but also some studies have already linked immersive technologies with the ability to generate empathy and constitute itself as a potentially innovative tool for peace-building (Hasler et al. 2021; Sánchez Laws 2020). Therefore, the main goal of this research project is to analyze how reportage with 360° video is currently being used to narrate armed conflict, while providing a holistic understanding about the potentialities and challenges of implementing immersive technologies within journalistic storytelling. We will focus on the Colombian armed conflict given that it has been under the international media spotlight especially since the signing of the peace agreement in 2016 between the Government and the guerrillas FARC-EP. Moreover, the unique characteristics of this conflict have led it to be portrayed from different perspectives and journalistic formats (García-Perdomo, Harlow, and Brown 2022; Rodríguez 2011).

This research will draw on the combination of key studies on immersive journalism (de la Peña et al. 2010; Sánchez Laws 2019), war and peace journalism (Galtung and Ruge 1965; Lee and Maslog 2005; Lynch 2015), with an explorative, qualitative content analysis following Mayring (Mayring 2000) as our mode of inquiry. As our main methodological tool, we will adopt Benítez de Gracia's (Benítez de Gracia 2019) analysis system of 360° video and add to it variables related to armed conflict in order to tackle the specific thematic/narrative characteristics of our empirical sample.

Ultimately, we expect to develop an innovative, qualitative tool to analyze 360° video and similar immersive media productions related to the coverage of armed conflict. Finally, and apart from the advancement of knowledge within immersive media and war journalism, we seek to generate a set of guidelines and good practices that might be valuable tools for journalists and media producers experimenting with immersive media news reporting.

**Key Words**

immersive journalism, war reporting, immersive media, Colombian armed conflict

# **Framing military incompetence: An examination of media coverage of the Milicogate scandal in Chile**

## **Authors**

Dr. claudia labarca - Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile

Dr. Ingrid Bachmann - Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile

## **Abstract**

It is a well-known fact that institutional trust —understood as the specific trust citizens place in government and state organizations (Mattes and Moreno, 2018)— has had a sharp decline in Latin America during the last decade (Labarca et al., 2022; Letki, 2018; Wences and Güemes, 2016), affecting even those institutions considered impartial, such as the Army or the courts (Rothstein and Stolle, 2008). In this context, Chile is an interesting case. Once an example of democratic stability and sound institutions (Arana, 2017; Gamboa and Segovia, 2016), the country has experienced a series of scandals that have eroded institutional trust. Particularly relevant is the so-called “Milicogate” (“Milico” is a colloquial word to refer to military officers, often with pejorative undertones) scandal, which broke out in 2015. This was an embezzlement case where high officials defrauded the Army and has had wide coverage in Chilean media.

To understand to what extent media may be influencing political trust through framing (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000), the present study relies on content analysis to examine Chilean coverage of the Milicogate scandal and pay attention to trust as a multidimensional concept, considering its relational dimensions —integrity, competence, and benevolence (Meyer et al., 2005). The sample included almost 1,000 stories addressing the scandal in two major national newspapers, La Tercera and El Mercurio, and an online newspaper El Mostrador.

Attribution of responsibility was the most common frame, especially in El Mostrador, followed by the conflict and the descriptive/informative frames. Coverage tended to focus on individual actors rather than the Army as an institution. While less than 16% of the stories explicitly spoke of “corruption” or used the “Milicogate” moniker, most stories did mention specific criminal offenses, such as embezzlement and off-the-book operations. The Army was most often cast as the villain rather than the victim in the scandal, and most of the information on the case was rather damning.

In general, the stories analyzed did not reference relational attributes when describing the Army, its members, or their role in the scandal. However, when coverage referred to attributes such as integrity, benevolence, or competence, it was largely negative. Thus, when it came to the Milicogate scandal, the Chilean Army was presented as an obscure and incapable institution that could hold its members accountable.

Not surprisingly, while most of the stories had a neutral tone toward the Army, most of them also presented information that could be deemed negatively affecting the reputation and confidence in the institution and its members.

We hope that this case study contributes to shed light on the relationship between institutional crisis, media coverage, and institutional trust, moving forward to understand trust as a multidimensional concept.

**Key Words**

corruption, Chile, media scandal, trust

# Covid-19 communication strategies of governments in Europe and US – a seven-country comparison

## Authors

Prof. Martin Loeffelholz - Ilmenau University of Technology

Ms. Pauline Gidget Estella - Ilmenau University of Technology

Ms. Johanna Radechovsky - Ilmenau University of Technology

Ms. Kathrin Schleicher - Ilmenau University of Technology

Ms. Yi Xu - Ilmenau University of Technology

## Abstract

The paper comparatively examines the communication strategies of governments in Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States during the Covid-19 pandemic answering the **research question** how intra-, inter-, and extra-organizational factors have influenced government crisis communications at the national, regional and local levels of democratic political systems.

As an unprecedented crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic has triggered an **exponential increase in crisis communication studies** (Croucher & Diers-Lawson, 2023). Some of these studies focus on government public relations, few describe strategies, usually through analysis of government messages (Chon & Kim, 2022; Mazid, 2022; Zhang et al., 2020), but rarely through interviews with key actors (Liu et al., 2020). Although there is a growing body of analysis providing recommendations for effective risk and crisis communication (Hyland-Wood et al., 2021; Kim & Kreps, 2020), there is little research on how organizational factors influence government crisis communication. Comparative studies are even more scarce (Diers-Lawson, 2017).

Extra-organizational factors considered in this study include macro-level differences, such as those related to political and media systems (Hallin & Mancini, 2012) and "risk cultures" (Cornia et al., 2016), among others. Inter- and intra-organizational factors, meanwhile, include organizational structures and organizational memory (Foroughi et al., 2020), symmetric communication (Shen & Kim, 2012), organizational leadership (Yue, 2021), and communication strategies, all of which are essential for the "networked coordination of organizational crisis communication" (Johansson & Bäck, 2017).

**Methodologically**, the study relies on 117 semi-structured interviews with representatives of seven governments in Europe and the United States. Central to the comparative approach is the notion that crises are defined, perceived, communicated, and managed as a function of cultural values (Schwarz et al., 2016), citizen trust in governments (Pew Research Center, 2020), political and media systems, and differences in risk cultures. The sampling strategy for respondents is based on the assumption that political, health, and communication leaders perceive crises differently

depending on their specific roles. At the national level, interviewees were selected based on their role as executive leaders, top government public relations and public health officials. At the regional level, we interviewed political leaders (e.g., ministers), public relations officials and public health officials. At the local level, we spoke with mayors, heads of health departments, and representatives of municipality associations.

The **findings**, which will be presented in detail in the upcoming paper, describe not only the different dimensions of government crisis communication, but also the intra-, inter-, and extra-organizational factors that influence government organizations' communication in times of crisis, such as the lack of coordination, the appointment of trusted individuals as communicators, the relevance of public (dis)trust in government, among others. Overall, the results shed light on how communication about Covid-19 was coordinated at different levels of government and how organizational factors contributed to the (lack of) professionalism of government crisis communication. Based on this, we propose a conceptual framework that assumes that government crisis communication is a function of both political norms and organizational structures at the national, regional and local levels of political systems.

### **Key Words**

Crisis communication, government, strategies, pandemic, Europe, US, comparison, semi-structured interviews

# Can encryption save lives? Secure messaging tools as loci of convergence between cyber warfare and conventional warfare

## Authors

Dr. Ksenia Ermoshina - Centre Internet et Société, CNRS

Dr. Francesca Musiani - Centre Internet et Société, CNRS

## Abstract

The controversies surrounding the right to privacy of individuals in a hyperconnected world are long-standing debates, where particular emphasis is placed on encryption technologies, which encode information by converting its original representations into alternative forms that computers cannot decipher, thus ensuring the security of communications.

These technologies are at the heart of a public controversy, in which privacy advocates clash with claims that encryption is a threat to general security as an enabler of subversive action. We have analyzed this controversy and others in (Author, Date). Recent developments in the armed conflict in Ukraine renew questions that our previous work had begun to open up: In times of war, what is the role of encryption and privacy technologies? How does armed conflict challenge existing threat models, what are the new risks for civil society? Can encryption save lives? This contribution proposes to address these questions, by showing that encrypted messaging is the subject of convergence between the informational and physical aspects, "in the field", of war in the 21st century. The aim is to show how these messaging tools and the digital ecosystem that makes their deployment possible (interfaces, access providers, telecom operators) are now an integral part of a war and resistance infrastructure (see also Trauthig, 2022) where the border between cyber warfare and conventional warfare are becoming more and more blurred. However, we will also underline the limits of a tool-centered approach, and demonstrate how, in case of the war in Ukraine, physical threats to civilians and infrastructure damage make it so that encrypted messaging is one among several innovative technical and social practices of holistic self-defense deployed by Ukrainians.

This article is based on field research carried out within the European project NEXTLEAP ([nextleap.eu](http://nextleap.eu), 2016-2018) first, and then the ANR ResistIC project ([resistic.fr](http://resistic.fr), 2018-2022). Several years of semi-structured interviews were conducted with developers and users of secure messaging in a variety of national contexts, including Ukraine and Russia, and different levels of risk. The article also benefits from an analysis of legal and regulatory documents, and technical documents related to the development of the tools (bug reports, release notes, pull requests, etc.)

The deployment of secure messaging as a strategic tool in times of war invites itself into broader debates concerning the regulation of digital technologies by States, one of the central issues of what Laura DeNardis has called the "war for Internet Governance" (DeNardis, 2014). Between the privatization of regulation and the need for digital and physical protection, the encryption of

communications has not finished being a controversial issue – and shows how Internet governance is increasingly inviting itself into the conflicts of the 21st century.

#### References

DeNardis, L. (2014). *The Global War for Internet Governance*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Author (Date).

Trauthig, I. C. (2022). “Chat and Encrypted Messaging Apps Are the New Battlefields in the Propaganda War”, *Lawfare*, March 27. <https://www.lawfareblog.com/chat-and-encrypted-messaging-apps-are-new-battlefields-propaganda-war>

#### **Key Words**

Encryption; governance; Internet; warfare; conflict; infrastructure



# **The impact of sociotechnical discussion on environmental assessment policies: Analysis of two emblematic conflicts in Peru.**

## **Authors**

Dr. SANDRO MACASSI - Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú

## **Abstract**

The literature has paid attention to the economic, cultural, social, political and territorial impacts of communities in socio-environmental conflicts with extractive industries in Latin America (Gouley, 2005; Muñoz et al., 2007; De Echave et al., 2009; Bebbington et al., 2019; Gutierrez, 2018; Walls, 2022). However, there are few studies that analyze the impact of sociotechnical narratives on public policies resulting from conflicts.

Based on the "Network Actor" Theory, the recent literature applied to the analysis of socio-environmental conflicts is reviewed (Li, 2007; Magnani, 2012; Li, 2017; Tarabini, 2019; Salas Carreño, 2019; Parra-Romero, 2020). It is found that the analysis of the role that communicative actors play in the processes of conflict and its influence on public policies is not deepened.

This study analyzes sociotechnical controversies, since extractive industries construct their narratives of legitimacy based on the mastery of technology over the ancestral knowledge of communities (Latour, 2008). In particular, it studies how communicative actors promote "policy frames" (van Hulst & Yanow, 2016), questioning Environmental Impact Studies (EIA), thus destabilizing the sociotechnical premises of mining projects (Callon, 1986) and forming a second layer of conflict (Macassi, 2019).

The period of conflict between 2009 and 2012 was studied, where the public discussion on mining EIAs increased. Two emblematic cases "Tía María" and "Minas Conga" are analyzed, because the questioning of their EIAs is part of the dynamics of conflict. Moreover, these conflicts had long cycles of protest and public controversy.

The regulatory framework that regulated the elaboration and approval of the EIA was formulated by the Fujimori dictatorship. This legislation remained relatively unchanged in order to prioritize investments over the rights of communities and care for the environment.

It is found that a set of local and national communicative actors (radios; Blogs; social media; digital journalism; Newsletters) made visible the alternative reports of engineers and experts in EIA. It is possible to put on the decisional agenda the questioning of the validity of the National Environmental Assessment System, achieving what Latour points out as "opening the black box".

The narrative offensive of the communicative actors facilitated the suspension of both mining projects and served to form a commission for the reform of the environmental assessment system that led to a new public institutionality: The creation of the National Environmental Certification Service (SENACE), which put in the Ministry of the Environment the competences that previously fell to the Ministry of Mining.

The sociotechnical narratives promoted by communicative actors, through connective actions (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012), opened the windows of opportunity for the reform of environmental public policies. This achievement went beyond the suspension of questioned mining projects promoted by traditional collective action.

**Key Words**

Social conflicts; Network Actor Theory; Public Policy; Communication and conflict

# **Computer-mediated communication technologies for intercultural conflict management: A Conceptual Framework**

## **Authors**

Dr. Nadeem Akhtar - South China Normal University

Prof. Juana Du - Royal Roads University, Victoria BC

Ms. Gulshan Nadeem - Guangdong University of Foreign Studies

## **Abstract**

Conflict is both pervasive and ubiquitous. It is a social challenge amenable to being resolved through intercultural and interethnic conflict management lens with the advancement of communication technologies. Computer-mediated communication has been increasingly harnessed in managing the onset and impact of intercultural and interethnic conflicts. There has been accumulated scholarly attention on developing a theoretical framework to look into interethnic conflicts within geographic regions (Kungu, Omari, & Kipsang, 2015; Orbe, Everett, & Putman, 2013; Taylor, & Kent, 2014). Given the turbulent history of relationship management and engagement, Pakistan offers a unique social context to develop a theoretical approach to study inter-ethnic cultural conflicts and their manifestations in various forms of extremism in a social context that is confronting a paradox: a growing regional influence and international presence, even as it is threatened by terrorism and by other social constraints that besmirch its global reputation. It is noted that Pakistan's military is charged constitutionally with ensuring public safety, keeping the peace, and with ameliorating skirmishes among the country's warring factions. As a result, relationships, developed and sustained through intergroup contact and social presence, become critical to achieving national security, stability, and civility.

Drawn upon intergroup contact theory and social presence theory, this study proposes a conceptual framework to examine the impact of using computer-mediated communication technologies on fostering intergroup exchanges, managing violent extremism, and reducing societal stress and anxiety. It offers practical insights into promoting mutual understanding and respectful interethnic dialogue on intractable, sensitive issues that have morphed into interethnic conflicts. The implications of practices in managing interethnic conflict and extremism within Pakistan's social context are also discussed.

## **Key Words**

Computer-mediated communication, interethnic conflict, extremism, intergroup contact theory, Pakistan

# **Enhancing the Chinese Identity of Young People in Hong Kong and Macao Based on the Creation of Cinematic Virtual Reality Art, Taking the Cinematic Virtual Reality Work 'I Love Being Me: in my Place, my Home' as an Example**

## **Authors**

Mr. Zhiyun Lei - Faculty of Humanities and Arts, Macau University of Science and Technology

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to discuss how the problems caused by the ideological differences between Hong Kong and Mainland China can be mediated through the creation of new media art. I will examine the current social and political conditions of these two places from the theoretical perspective of relational aesthetics by using the notion of 'micro-utopia' as a critical lens to: 1) create a virtual reality (VR) model of artistic practice; 2) establish communication claims between the two places in ideological terms for the purpose of reconciliation; 3) produce a model of artistic creation to provide a new approach for mediating ideological differences.

Due to its historical circumstances, Hong Kong is ideologically different from Mainland China in its social and political context.[1] Hong Kong has long been the locus of a cultural clash between East and West. In March 2019, as a response to the Anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill, millions of people descended on Hong Kong's streets for a number of weeks, calling for the legislation to be withdrawn, which illustrates the tension between the two places. These phenomena also confirm Jürgen Habermas' argument: 'social systems possess specific organisational principles or core values that are critical to a society's continued existence and identity. Crisis occurs when system change is so significant that it threatens these core goal values, along with the continued existence and social identity of members of society' (Habermas, 1976).

In my research, I am using practice-based methodology in qualitative research; synchronously, I will adopt a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to respond to my research problems, such as questionnaires, interviews and data analysis. My research will progress as follows: First, I will need to acquire a deep understanding of the key contradictions in the ideology of Hong Kong and Mainland China. To solve this problem, from the relevant literature, combined with questionnaires, I will identify the key contradictions of these two places in terms of identity and divide them into a number of more specific, detailed contradictions. Second, after identifying the essential contradictions, I will try to mediate between these in a new media artwork (VR art) via relational aesthetics and virtual embodiment theory. Third, I plan to cooperate with local art galleries to allow audiences to experience and participate in my artworks through exhibitions. I will present the audience with questionnaires about their experience both before participating and afterwards, to collect data on changes in the audience's attitude to identity synchronously. Then I will conduct semi-structured interviews with the participants to collect the required information in an attempt to prove whether, and to what extent, my practical creation has ameliorated the

rupture in the sense of identity in the two places studied. Finally, a thesis will discuss and verify whether, and to what extent, this art practice can reconcile the sense of ruptured identity between the two places. The contribution of this study to scholarship will thus be both through practice and writing.

[1] Mainland China, on the one hand, has a socialist system; on the other, in 1997 the United Kingdom handed over sovereignty of Hong Kong to China, and both China and the United Kingdom agree that Hong Kong should implement a 'One country, two systems' policy (Hong Kong's capitalist system and way of life had remained unchanged for 50 years).

#### References

[1] Habermas, J. (1976). *Legitimation crisis*. Polity Press.

#### **Key Words**

Mediation, New Media Art, Identity, Relational Aesthetics, Embodiment, Virtual Reality

# The backlash of expert trust premium: the trust violation caused by information inconsistency during the COVID-19 pandemic

## Authors

Ms. Qixuan ZHANG - City University of Hong Kong

## Abstract

Background: The opinions of medical experts portend a substantial influence not only on the public's perceived severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, but also on their attitudes towards control policies. Within the Chinese context, experts such as Zhang Wenhong (Leader of COVID-19 medical expert group in Shanghai) are recognized widely as leaders in disseminating pandemic-related information due to their backgrounds and positive reputations established by state institutions, which are considered as political self-preservation strategy for blame deflection.

Research Topic: This study makes a turn to focus on the impact of **inconsistent interactions** between experts and the government on public trust and attitudes towards experts and control policies, while research has investigated the factors affecting public trust in experts or policymakers respectively.

Based on *expectation violation theory*, this study examines two classic examples: the first case is the inconsistency between the rampant spread of the pandemic and more muted forecasts by expert Zhang Wenhong's post on 24th March 2022. Another example is seen in the inconsistency between the statements of the government and medical experts on epidemic policies. On 29th July 2021, Zhang made a Weibo post championing the 'living with the coronavirus' paradigm. This strategy contradicted the strict 'comprehensive prevention' policy advocated by the official media at the time, seemingly leading to criticisms that Zhang was unreasonably following Western policies.

Method: This study employs Python to scrape all the comments of these two Zhang Wenhong's Weibo posts and then use a well-established Baidu API to perform quantitative sentiment analysis. In addition, the *Integrative model of trust* provides a framework for the content analysis of 625 comments after systematic sampling, focusing on changes in the public's trust in medical experts and control policies after these two incidents.

RQ: Based on case analysis and content analysis, this study asks: (RQ1) when there is a discrepancy between the expert discourse and factual pandemic developments, how does the public react? (RQ2) Next, do these contradictions lead to a distrust of the state's pandemic control policies? (RQ3) Finally, when there is a contradiction between the discourse of a medical expert and those from the state, to what extent would the public subsequently question the experts' ability, integrity and benevolence based on the integrative trust model?

Assumed Result and Significance: This study focused on the negative effect of experts' trust premium on the public's trust in pandemic control policies. Specifically, when experts make

judgments that are inconsistent with the facts or when there are inconsistencies in the discourse between the government and experts, trust violations can cause negative sentiment and mistrust in the epidemic control policies advocated by politicians. In other words, the politicians' strategy of trying to leverage the trust premium of experts to endorse control policies backfired when inconsistencies arose.

**Key Words**

Integrative model of trust, expectation violation, information inconsistency, crisis communication

# Public-oriented or Government-oriented: Apologies in the Crisis Communication of Chinese Government

## Authors

Mr. Yaoye Hou - School of Media & Communication, Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Mr. Jinhan Zhang - School of Materials Science and Engineering, Donghua University

## Abstract

### Background

Apologizing is prevalent in social life, but its manifestation and function differ in different contexts and cultural environments. Prior research has focused more on how they are affected by variables that are exogenous to interaction and how they inform theory, but less on the use of apology itself, especially in crisis communication.

In the past three years, due to the zero-COVID-19 policy, many social problems and even public crises inevitably arise. In response, press conferences have gradually been widely used by the Chinese government as a propaganda method. Unlike in the past when Chinese government officials rarely publicly apologized to the public, apologies made by key officials were frequent at press conferences at all levels of government during this special period. This provides an excellent opportunity for us to study and analyze the discourse strategy, politicized expression of emotions, and the logic behind Chinese government officials when apologizing publicly.

### Method

The paper adopted the innovative video-based ethnography research method and selected 20 influential videos of the press conference containing public apologies by government officials through the Internet. After that, we transcribed the apology fragments according to the conversation analysis transcription convention created by Gail Jefferson and analyzed them based on theoretical resources like the politicization of emotions (Nussbaum, 2013; Hunter 2015) and situational crisis communication theory (Coombs, 1995, 2007, 2010).

### Results

We find that:

1. In terms of discourse strategy, with the stage of crisis changing, the discourse strategy of Chinese government spokespersons has changed. In the crisis stage, spokespersons are more likely to adopt a reconstructive strategy, which is manifested in expressing concern and sympathy for victims, and clearly informing victims of follow-up assistance and remedies. In the post-crisis period, spokespersons tend to adopt a weakened and denial strategy, which is manifested in trying to minimize responsibility for the crisis and preserve the government's image. Interestingly, in China's political environment, the target object of image maintenance is almost always the superior leadership of the spokespersons. However, in minimizing the



responsibility of the crisis, spokespersons tend to weaken the responsibility of their departments

2. In terms of the politicized expression of emotions, most of the emotions expressed by the Chinese government spokespersons are moved and grateful, and the objects of their expression are mostly typical individuals who have made outstanding contributions in the process of crisis response. Victims of crises are less likely to be the object of emotional expression by spokespersons. Correspondingly, sympathy, concern, regret, and other emotions are also rare in Chinese government press conferences.
3. In terms of embodiment communication, the embodied expression of Chinese government spokespersons is mostly restrained and implicit, which is more obviously influenced by the political and cultural fields. Decent bows, down heads, and choked condolences are common.

### **Conclusion**

We argue that:

In response to public crises, apologies made by Chinese government spokespersons are characterized as government-oriented, both in terms of discourse strategy and politicized expression of emotions. On the surface, the target audience of the apology is the public with relevant interests, but in fact, it is the higher-level government or leading department. This underlying logic diminishes the utility of apologizing in crisis communication. Besides, influenced by China's political and cultural fields, public apologies relatively cannot play a significant positive role in the Chinese government's crisis communication.

### **Key Words**

crisis communication ; video-based ethnography ; apology ; Chinese government

# **Domestication of International News in China: Discourse Analysis on Xinhua News Agency's Reports of Russia-Ukraine War**

## **Authors**

Ms. Baiyang LU - The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Ms. Shini CHEN - The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Ms. Jingyan ZHAO - The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Ms. Yuxin WANG - The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Ms. Manqi SHEN - The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Ms. Lanting YAO - The Chinese University of Hong Kong

## **Abstract**

### **Introduction**

The Russia-Ukraine War, which broke out in February 2022, has received widespread coverage from media organisations around the world. As a key aspect of strategic narratives, domestication, described as reporting far-away events in a framework that renders the events comprehensible, appealing as well as relevant to domestic audiences, evidently differentiates China's coverage of the Russia-Ukraine War from that of the west. The political motivations underlying the narratives have, in part, reflected China's 'not-so-neutral' position on this globally concerned event.

### **Significance and research questions**

Studies on the domestication of international news in China are scarce, and the majority of them concentrate on quantitative content analysis, omitting in-depth qualitative analysis in order to reveal the deeper political and cultural intentions. By examining how the Russia-Ukraine War was covered in China, we hope to make a contribution to previous research. Following are the proposed research questions:

RQ1: How does Chinese national media report the Russia-Ukraine War in a way that is familiar to local audiences?

RQ2: How do the strategic narratives of domestication reflect China's political hegemony?

### **Data collection and analysis**

A total of 695 news reports on the Russia-Ukraine War published by Xinhua, the pioneer of party-controlled journalism in China, from 24 February to 24 March 2022 are our prime focus. We used purposive sampling to select 6 typical news reports, involving a variety of expressions, reporting directions, characters, and their impressive remarks, to help enhance the validity of our findings.

To reaching findings, we adopted critical discourse analysis (CDA) by describing the properties of the news text, correlating discourses to societal context, addressing the ideological characters, and illustrating power relations resulting from the discourses.

### **Findings**

There are primarily 3 strategies of domestication. Firstly, by relating to China's foreign policies and international prestige, the reports could effectively draw the concerns of its domestic audience. Relevant coverage complies with China's consistent foreign policy principle of positioning itself as an independent and powerful country, without bending to external forces.

Secondly, the news reports brought the local audience closer by anchoring national perception and emotion. The construction of discourses is impacted by the correlation between stakeholders, portraying a strong and peace-loving Russian image and a conflict provocateur and war monger US image.

Thirdly, by presenting stories regarding the Chinese in Ukraine, the reports domesticated the global issue directly to the local audience. Reports depicted a responsible Chinese government that can protect its nationals wherever they are and a safe Ukraine for avoiding the blame on Russia's invasion.

### **Conclusions**

When contradictions still exist between different nationalities and cultural groups, through domestication, the bridge between global identity and localised national identity, international news can assist people in understanding the world. However, at the same time, domestication also raises questions about journalistic professionalism. While reporting international news, taking a national stand to defend national interests is common for the media. As our research reveals, Xinhua News Agency has served as the 'microphone' for the Chinese government's voice, conveying messages related to the country's position between the lines.

### **Key Words**

Domestication, strategic narratives, Russia-Ukraine War, international news, China, Xinhua.

# **Facts or opinions? The emotion polarity driven stance taking expressions on Twitter during the Russia-Ukraine War**

## **Authors**

Mr. Wujiong Ren - Beijing Normal University

Ms. Ke Ni - Beijing Normal University

Mrs. Yuan He - School of Journalism and Communication, Hebei University

Ms. Jingyi Wang - Beijing Normal University

Dr. Bei Zhao - Beijing Normal University

## **Abstract**

### **Research Background**

After the outbreak of the war between Russia and Ukraine, the two sides played public opinion games in social media. Parallely to the war, Twitter is fulfilled with contents about the Russia-Ukraine conflicts that are often emotionally loaded.

Emotion has become an influential variable in the online public opinion game. Existing literature has approved the impact of emotional content on information consumers' attitudes and behaviors (Nabi, 2003). Due to different positions, individual affective disparities sometimes may evolve into intergroup emotional polarization, which has been observed in previous interstate (regional) conflict events (Lucić et al., 2020). Up to date, social bots have been increasingly involved in war issues (Forelle et al., 2015), for example, in the Russia-Ukraine public opinion games (Geissler et al., 2022).

Thus, this study aims to investigate Twitter users' stance taking publications during the Russia-Ukraine war, as well as the emotional expression tactics of social bots.

### **Data and Methods**

Using Python "tweepy" package and Twitter API, we firstly gathered "Russia-Ukraine war"-related tweets that are generated from 21 February to 27 February 2022. Then, 9,466 users posting more than 16 tweets on this issue (457,531 tweets in total) were selected for further analysis.

Botometer was used to estimate the bot-likelihood scores of each account. "TextBlob" in Python was used to predict the emotion polarity of tweets. Based on SVM model's computing results, 3 stances are identified from the tweets: pro-Russia, pro-Ukraine and neutral. Finally, we define functions from the tweet to the user's account, to calculate the emotion polarity and stance polarity.

### **Results**

The study found that stance polarity had a significant positive effect on emotion polarity in both pro-Russia ( $p < .001$ ) and pro-Ukraine ( $p < .001$ ) users. Furthermore, the distribution of emotion polarity of users on these two sides showed significant difference ( $M_{\text{pro-Russia}}=0.054$ ,  $M_{\text{pro-Ukraine}}=0.051$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In addition, the emotion polarity of bot and non-bot accounts showed significant difference among pro-Russia users ( $M_{\text{bot}}=0.104$ ,  $M_{\text{non-bot}}=0.032$ ,  $p = .001$ ); however, this difference was not significant among pro-Russia users ( $p > .05$ ).

### **Conclusion and Discussion**

Preliminary results of the study revealed significant correlations between Twitter users' stance taking and their expression of emotion. Firstly, comparing to their counterpart, pro-Russia human users' posts were found to have higher level of emotional intensity, which are influential to other users' information processing and cognitive judgment regarding the war. Additionally, social bots played a tactical role in disseminating emotional inflammatory comments especially among pro-Russia users. Interestingly, results of sentiment analysis suggest contrasting emotion polarity among pro-Russia social bots' publications, which is stronger than their human allies and bots counterpart. Data analyses will be further validated.

### **Key Words**

Russia Ukraine War, Stance Expression, Emotion Polarity, Social Bots.

# Who and what is represented, and why? Exploring international refugee organizations' public communication strategies for the Syrian and Central African crises (2015-2018)

## Authors

Dr. David Ongenaert - Erasmus University Rotterdam

Prof. Stijn Joye - Ghent University

## Abstract

While forced migration has always occurred throughout history (Betts & Loescher, 2011), it has increased significantly in today's '(world) risk society' (Beck, 1992, 1999; Giddens & Pierson, 1998). Since 2015, the theme has dominated media and political agendas (Hellman & Lerkkanen, 2019). Therefore, this study investigates three major international refugee organizations' public communication strategies towards the Syrian and Central African crises (2015-2018). Through a comparative, longitudinal, intersectional quantitative content analysis of the press releases and news stories (N=1244) of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), and the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), we scrutinized '*who*' (i.e., types of voiced actors and represented sociodemographic groups of forcibly displaced people) and '*what*' (e.g., crisis and thematic foci) are (not) represented. Secondarily, we also investigated the underlying motivations and production and societal contexts of these communication practices (cf. *why*). We observe a mixed picture of '*what*' and '*who*' are (not) represented, involving organizational commonalities and differences. Both can be explained by various organizational, institutional and societal factors.

First, regarding *what*, the organizations predominantly communicated in 2015 and 2016 about forcibly displaced people involved in the Syrian crisis, because of various individual, routine, organizational, institutional and societal aspects. Following media logics (Hawkins, 2011), humanitarian communication also mainly covers 'high-profile' conflicts. However, reflecting its organizational focus, NRC reported significantly more on people involved in the Central African crisis than UNHCR and especially ECRE. Although usually adapting to mainstream media logics, humanitarian organizations sometimes bypass them (Powers, 2018), mirroring 'alternative media logics' (Pajnik et al., 2020). Furthermore, the organizations mainly but varyingly communicated about the same three themes, following organizational and medium-based focuses (Dijkzeul & Moke, 2005). Finally, we confirm an increasing (audio)visualization, professionalization, and specialization of their communication approaches (Powers, 2018).

Second, regarding *who*, we observed that, acknowledging medium-based differences, mainly forcibly displaced people and refugee organizations obtain voices about the investigated populations, refining earlier studies (e.g., Author, 2019; Chouliaraki, 2012). Further, the organizations mainly collectivize them (e.g., Author, 2019) but, considering organizational and medium-based differences, also individualize them. Shaped by production and societal contexts,

the organizations represent these individualized forcibly displaced people, to varying degrees, in sociodemographically unbalanced ways. Specifically, this paper confirms earlier findings that generally young people are represented in humanitarian communication, but nuances that mainly women are portrayed (Clark-Kazak, 2009; Johnson, 2011). Further, we examined various unexplored sociodemographics, and likewise found, acknowledging (significant) organizational differences, imbalances regarding (explicit) indicators of geographical location, legal status, current country and continent, nationality, life stance, sexual orientation, family situation, marital status and former and current profession. Summarized, connecting *what* and *who*, this study finds that, besides foreign news reporting (Author, 2010), humanitarian communication likewise reproduces and reflects quantitative mediated hierarchies of suffering, both between and within crises. Finally, we argue that well-balanced humanitarian communication is essential for both societal (e.g., influence on the public image of forcibly displaced people) and strategic reasons (e.g., positioning as reliable, authorised sources).

### **Key Words**

Forcibly displaced people, humanitarian communication, quantitative content analysis, refugee organizations

# **Covid-19 and the dynamics of blame: the attribution of blame in UK online news coverage of Covid-19**

## **Authors**

Dr. Jamie Matthews - Bournemouth University

Ms. Farzeen Heesambee - University of Derby

## **Abstract**

As publics have attempted to make sense of the Covid-19 crisis and its longer-term impacts there has been an inevitable search for blame. We know from research that in the early phases of the pandemic, blame was ascribed to China and that this fuelled xenophobia, racism and violence towards people of Asian descent (Karalis Noel 2020; Roberto et al. 2020). We also know from other crisis contexts (Malhotra and Kuo 2008) and from recent polling data (You Gov, 2022) that the British public have apportioned responsibility to the UK government and individual ministers for their handling of Covid-19.

This paper examines how particular actors (individuals, groups, or institutions) were constructed as figures of blame in UK news media coverage of Covid-19. By analysing online news coverage in three UK news outlets (BBC; Guardian; Mail Online), our study adopts a two-year longitudinal perspective, covering the initial waves of the pandemic, the UK's vaccine rollout, the evolution of the virus and subsequent Omicron wave. Following an initial mapping exercise to identify relevant Covid-19 news articles (n=710), a randomised subset of 150 articles were analysed by drawing on Van Leeuwen's (1996, 2008) framework of social actor representation to isolate the actors and structures constructed as figures of blame in UK news media coverage of Covid-19.

Our analysis shows that the figures of blame evolved across the course of the pandemic. As other research has established, during the early phases of the pandemic China was implied as a figure of blame. However, this also re-emerged later and as attention shifted toward understanding the origins of the virus, illustrated through the reporting on international inspectors visit to Wuhan in 2021. The institution of government, the prime minister and individual ministers were also prominent blame agents for the continuation of the pandemic and its impacts. This included blame ascribed for policy failures, such as the introduction and later relaxation of coronavirus restrictions and the discharge of vulnerable patients from hospital to care homes. It was also evident through the conduct of individual ministers and senior figures, during stories that emerged in December 2021 of alleged lockdown breaches at Downing Street, and reporting on failures in public health messaging. Other figures of blame across the course of the pandemic include young people, minority ethnic communities and experts and scientists. Our findings show that the textual features of blame demonstrated different characteristics. Blame was, for example, constructed through both direct attribution to a social actor but was also implied, where criticism or negative assessments were suggested through links made to different groups or individuals that may be perceived to bear some responsibility for a particular outcome.



We conclude the paper by exploring the significance of these findings for the communicative dynamics of the pandemic and and public understanding of its impacts.

**Key Words**

COVID-19; blame attribution; UK; online news

# **Mapping disconnective waves in crises: from Covid-19 to Russia-Ukraine war.**

## **Authors**

Dr. Gregory Asmolov - King's College London

Dr. Pavel Lebedev - Independent Scholar

## **Abstract**

Scholars pay a lot of attention to the role of connectivity and various manifestations of connective action (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012) as a dominant form of networked response to an exogenous threat (Boichak, 2018). Crises, however, often trigger increasing polarisation within online communities that relies on the digital disconnection between users. That disconnection can be seen, for instance, in the context of wars and conflicts (John & Dvir-Gvirsman, 2015; Schwarz & Shani, 2016; John & Gal, 2018). Disconnective action can be linked to the application of dividing practices of governmentality (Foucault, 1982) and the disconnective power of state actors that rely on propaganda and seek to neutralize the impact of cross-conflict horizontal networks (Asmolov, 2018). The rise of disconnectivity as a dominant form of social interaction may limit social resilience in the face of a variety of global catastrophic risks and restrict the capacity “to build a common future”, a goal identified as the top priority on the agenda of IAMCR 2023.

In that light, a more advanced analysis of the logic of disconnective action that relies on digital platforms as a disorganizing agent is essential to understand the ambivalent role of social media in crises within the context of the tension between connectivity and disconnectivity. However, from a methodological perspective, most disconnection analysis in crisis situations relies on qualitative methods. There is a challenge to explore disconnection in real-time since disconnective action is hidden by social networking platforms (John & Nissenbaum, 2019). The conceptualization of disconnection as a performative act that sets social boundaries in crises offers an opportunity for a quantitative turn in exploring disconnection and enables analysis of large-scale disconnective waves. The article presents a methodological framework for analyzing disconnection relying on social media listening (Trackmaven, 2018).

The first empirical phase of this project identified the patterns of disconnectivity as a performative action related to discussions of vaccination during Covid-19 pandemic. That analysis conducted relying on data collected from Russian-speaking social networks during spring of 2020, allowed us to identify essential variables that need to be considered to detect large-scale disconnective waves during crises. The second phase of the project allowed us to illustrate the framework's value based on the analysis of 78512 public posts collected from Russian-speaking social networks from February to June 2022. The analysis identifies a significant wave of disconnection after the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 2022 and several additional waves. The analysis also allows identifying key discussions, authors and platforms that play a vital role in triggering the

disconnective waves and driving networked polarization. It offers insights that explain the logic of disconnective action as a dominant behaviour in crises.

**Key Words**

disconnectivity, conflicts, social polarization, the Russia-Ukraine war, Covid-19, performativity

# **A Window or a Distorting Mirror of the Other World? A Content Analysis of Japanese News Coverage of Major Foreign Earthquakes in the 21st Century**

## **Authors**

Ms. Zihan Wu - The University of Tokyo

## **Abstract**

Along with increasing transborder human resources, capital, and information, the world has become more interconnected. The consequences of disasters have also become more “international”. Due to the rapid development of modern digital technologies, people can more easily see these cross-border consequences. Nevertheless, is “seeing” enough to arouse moral emotions and facilitate understanding of distant others? In recent years, there is growing academic interest in people’s attention, perception, and reactions to distant suffering. Specifically, media scholars emphasize that media representation of distant suffering might establish a distinction between us (spectator) and the other (sufferer). However, I argue there is one limitation here. Previous scholarly works mainly focus on Euro-American countries where actual suffering in disaster settings is lacking. It is now necessary to bring more empirical results from non-Western countries, especially those with frequent disaster experiences, to fill in the research gap. For this reason, this research chooses to focus on Japanese news coverage of major foreign earthquakes.

In terms of methodology, this research focuses on Asahi newspaper’s report of 11 foreign earthquakes. The 11 earthquakes (magnitude $\geq$ 7.0, fatalities $\geq$ 1000) all happened in the 21st century. By analyzing the content of Asahi news stories about these foreign earthquakes, this paper aims to answer three main research questions. First, how does the Japanese news media frame foreign earthquakes? Second, how does the Japanese news media relate foreign suffering to the prevalent and collective earthquake suffering in Japan? Third, how does the Japanese news media relate foreign countries’ experience of disasters to Japan’s own experience of disasters? By exploring Japan, this research can not only broaden extant literature by adding new empirical evidence from the non-West but also provide a chance to closely interpret how the suffering of the “self” influences the process on which people rely to make sense of the suffering of “the other”.

From the preliminary research based on Asahi news stories (n=479) about five earthquakes (i.e., 2001 Gujarat Earthquake, 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami, 2005 Kashmir Earthquake, 2008 Sichuan Earthquake, and 2010 Haiti Earthquake), this paper has found that core nations receive more attention than semi-peripheral and peripheral nations even in disaster reporting. This result is in line with previous research on international journalism. Plus, a nation’s economic relevance to Japan and the number of Japanese citizens affected are two important factors determining the amount of coverage an earthquake will receive from Japanese news. However, unlike previous research, this paper notices that the active role of Japan in disaster mitigation in a foreign disaster is another important factor that influences news coverage. Moreover, news stories

from time to time focused on individuals who once suffered in previous domestic earthquakes (e.g., the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake) and then decided to help in foreign earthquakes. The future research will continue to evaluate and compare how Japanese news media portray different foreign earthquakes.

**Key Words**

earthquake; mediated witnessing; distant suffering; Japan

# **How perceived threat in instructing information and crisis types influence emotions, crisis responsibility attribution and NWoM: Examining the role of ethical crisis response**

## **Authors**

Ms. Huai-Kuan Zeng - Institute of Applied Arts, National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University

Prof. Shu-Chu Li - National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University

## **Abstract**

Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) has become a dominant framework to explain the response strategies an organization should take under different types of crises to repair an organization's reputational damages. According to SCCT, there are two main crisis responses: (a) ethical crisis response and (b) reputational repairment (Coombs, 2007; 2009). When a crisis occurs, an organization should protect its stakeholders before repairing its reputation (Coombs, 2007). However, previous crisis studies have neglected the effects of ethical base response (Coombs, 2016; 2022). As indicated by Coombs (2022), one error when applying SCCT is that researchers frequently overlooked ethical base response. Hence, the effect of the ethical base response has not been sufficiently addressed.

The ethical base response has two components: (a) instructing information and (b) adjusting information. Instructing information is to tell stakeholders what they must do to protect themselves from physical threats while adjusting information is to express their concerns for the victims (Coombs, 2007; 2009). One important feature of instructing information is that it contains a threat message addressing the severity and vulnerability of a crisis event. These two components correspond to the perceived threat in the fear appeal theory (Witte, 1992; 1994). Although a high threat in instructing information would elicit more crisis responsibility (Zhang & Zhou, 2020), crisis types may moderate its effects. For example, Zhou and Ki (2018) found that higher crisis severity would increase crisis responsibility in the accidental crisis, but such an effect does not appear in the victim and preventable crises. Therefore, researchers have not yielded a consensus on the role of perceived threat in instructing information.

Based on these reasons, our study aims to fill this research gap by using SCCT with the fear appeal theory to examine the relationships among ethical base response, emotions, and behavioral intentions in a food crisis issue. The current study adopts a 2 (Crisis type: accidental vs. preventable) x 3 (Perceived threat in instructing information: High vs. medium vs. none) between-subject experimental survey to (1) evaluate how the level of perceived threat in instructing information would affect individuals' perceived degrees of crisis responsibility, (2) examine what kinds of emotions would be elicited from the perceived threat, and (3) explore how emotions felt by the public would influence an organization's negative word-of-mouth (WOM).

The stimulus messages were adapted from a real crisis case reported by news media. To ensure the effects of stimulus messages, a pretest was conducted by recruiting 57 participants to participate in an online survey. After the pretest, an online experimental survey was conducted, and a total of 195 valid questionnaires were collected.

The results revealed a main effect of crisis type on crisis responsibility, but no main effect of perceived threat was found. However, the results revealed a significant interaction effect between crisis type and perceived threat. Specifically, in a preventable crisis, subjects in the medium-threat condition perceived a significantly higher degree of crisis responsibility than those in the high-threat condition. Moreover, subjects' perceived threat elicited negative emotions, which in turn, led to NWoM.

**Key Words**

crisis responsibility, ethical crisis response, NWoM, Situational Crisis Communication Theory

# The NATO eFP mission in the Spanish Defense's social media messaging during the Ukraine crisis

## Authors

Dr. Sira Hernández - Centro Universitario de la Defensa de Zaragoza

Dr. Samuel Negredo - Universidad de Navarra

## Abstract

NATO's multinational Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) force aims to protect the Baltic allies from a potential Russian aggression and prevent future conflicts on its eastern flank. 4,000 soldiers from 16 countries including Spain were deployed in early 2017 in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, distributed in four Battle Groups (BG). However, the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022 forced NATO to readjust its military position and to increase the troops in Eastern Europe.

Simultaneously with the development of the military strategy, the Atlantic Alliance has carried out a communication strategy in coordination with the participating countries (Vyklický & Divišová, 2021) to legitimize the eFP mission internationally and to deter Russia, also at a rhetorical level, from an attack on its easternmost allies (Miliušas & Denisenko, 2020). Spain, as a member of the BG led by Canada, deployed in Latvia, contributes to the aforementioned strategy with the Strategic Communication Section of the Chief of Defense Staff Cabinet's own plans.

The objective of this research is to determine if the recent Russian-Ukrainian crisis has motivated any change in the Spanish Defense's social media messaging about NATO's eFP mission.

Specifically, this study carries out through a multimodal content analysis of messages from the Spanish Ministry of Defense, the Spanish Defense Staff and the Spanish Army, published in 2021 and 2022 on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube containing the eFP keyword or phrases closely related with it.

To implement this methodology, a codebook was developed, two coders were trained and subject to agreement tests, and they classified the posts based on language, multimedia content, interactions with other profiles, location, people, objects and symbols, topics, actions and values. The authors also conducted semi-structured interviews with the community managers of these institutional profiles to contrast their findings with the communication strategies and policies applied in their messaging.

Preliminary results show that tens of messages by these official Spanish military social media accounts started making explicit references to their commitment to "collective defense" with NATO allies after the outbreak of the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine (April to December), whereas no mentions were found in February and March, and they appeared very sporadically in previous months (January 2022 and earlier). "Alongside our allies" is also a recurring phrase. As the deterrence mission involves the international deployment of Spanish tanks for the first time, these elements are visually prominent in the messages, alongside military training and capabilities. Posts



about engagement with the population of the hosting country increased since the start of the invasion. Mentions of “peace” were scarce and mostly associated with political leaders and the value of “security”. No explicit references were made to the countries in conflict.

After the Russian invasion of Ukraine and in face of the increased risk, the Spanish Armed Forces and the Defense Ministry’s social media messages about NATO’s eFP kept focussing on the collective defense of allied territories and Spain’s contribution. Therefore, social media are an institutional communication tool, rather than part of the deterrence and defense actions abroad.

### **Key Words**

Social media, armed forces, defense, deterrence, strategic communication, institutional communication

# Images as moral objects: Humanitarian images and the moral limits of their circulation

## Authors

Dr. Richard Stupart - University of Liverpool

Prof. Lilie Chouliaraki - London School of Economics and Political Science

## Abstract

In May of 2022, the humanitarian organization Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) found itself a target of criticism for creating and circulating images of patients under its care. At issue were two perceived moral failings: a breach of the organisation's ethical duty to protect its patients from its photographers and the sale of humanitarian images on stock photography website Alamy. The two scandals became a matter of public debate after MSF contracted the Magnum-affiliated photographer Newsha Tavakolian to take photographs at one of their clinics in the Democratic Republic of Congo - a context especially associated with humanitarian discourses of violence and sexual assault.

The images that Tavakolian produced included two identifiable images of a 16-year-old girl described as having been gang raped by three armed men, leading to extensive criticism of both Tavakolian and MSF's practices on various grounds: as a violation of the dignity of the girl; as potentially dangerous, given that her attackers had not been apprehended; and as a violation of MSF's medical ethics, in which patients' private information ought not to be disclosed. During the course of the debate about Tavakolian's photography, it emerged that a substantial portion of MSF's humanitarian images beyond this case were available for license as stock imagery from the Alamy website, allowing the public to purchase images of sufferers in other parts of the world as art for a few dollars.

The debate that surfaced around MSF and Tavakolian's conduct was not the first time that some of these moral concerns had surfaced, particularly for communities interested in the intersection of photojournalism, art photography and humanitarianism. Magnum (Tavakolian's photo agency) had only recently emerged from a damaging public-relations battle after it emerged that it was licensing images of child survivors of sexual assault on stock art websites, from where the images appeared to have been licensed by pedophiles. Concerns around the appropriate circulation of images of conflict go back at least ten years, to when photographer Ron Haviv was criticized for licensing an image from the war in Afghanistan for use in a precision missile advert by Lockheed Martin.

This paper interested in the interplay of norms and objects (image objects, but also people and organisations) that underlie the kinds of concerns in these cases. What the MSF case clearly illustrated is the existence of moral norms around the creation and circulation of images of war and suffering. It reminded us that images can come into the world as *moral objects* – objects that must be created and circulated in specific ways if they are to be accepted by particular publics. In

the discussion that follows, it is these processes of creation and circulation that we are interested in interrogating further. What does it mean to create a 'good' humanitarian image, for example? What (or who) do practices of making morally good images create besides the images themselves? How, in spite of these concerns, does a moral image end up circulating as commercial stock photography and why is such circulation ultimately unsustainable?

**Key Words**

Humanitarianism, photography, ethics, photojournalism, conflict

# **Nationalised childhood during conflict: Analysis of the nationalist discourse in Turkish Cypriot children's magazines**

## **Authors**

Mr. Mazlum Kemal Dagdelen - Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague

## **Abstract**

Conflicts influenced many societies throughout the twentieth century, and Cyprus was no exception. Starting from the early twentieth century, Cyprus witnessed armed conflicts shaped by two ethnic-nationalist movements. Becoming increasingly prominent in the late 1950s and the 1960s, the inter-/intra-communal armed conflicts profoundly influenced the lives of every woman, man, and child on the island. Within this context, childhood inevitably intersects the nationalist discourses in myriad ways, and the warring parties attempt to align childhood with their discursive constructions of the self and the enemy (Jabri). Children's magazines published in this period reflect the intense violence and the hegemonic nationalist discourse that exacerbated the conflicts on the island.

This paper analyses the construction of the nationalist discourse in the media exclusively targeting children with a sample of a Turkish Cypriot children's magazine within the context of the Cyprus problem to understand how childhood is incited, suppressed, and moulded to embrace the hegemonic claims of the nationalist discourse. The theoretical backbone of this research is developed through Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory (DT). As a part of a poststructuralist tradition, DT sees discourse as a framework of intelligibility that provides meaning to social phenomena. Accordingly, this research approaches nationalism as a discourse and considers childhood a discursive construct whose meaning is an object of political struggles.

This research focuses on a particular Turkish Cypriot children's magazine, *Tuncer*, published between 1965 and 1970, during the times when armed conflicts gradually escalated and left their mark on the social body, with war and military institutions becoming internal to society and the hegemony of the Turkish (Cypriot) nationalist discourse became more sedimented in Turkish Cypriot community. The selected data comprise twelve issues published between January 1967 and May 1968. This period is selected because 1967 was one of the significant turning points in the Cyprus problem, with fighting breaking out between (para-)military formations.

To better understand how the nationalist discourse is articulated in these children's magazines, a discourse-theoretical model is developed first through the discourse-theoretical rereading of the literature on nationalism and childhood. For the analysis, this research employs the discourse-theoretical analysis (DTA), an analytical variant of DT developed by Carpentier and De Cleen, as well as the multimodal analysis techniques as support. Methodologically, this research takes a retroductive (Glynos and Howarth) approach with its iterations between theoretical framework and empirical analysis. Although the analysis has been developed in a cyclical fashion, for practical reasons, this paper first sketches the theoretical components and then reports on the analysis.

## **Key Words**

nationalism, childhood, discourse theory, Cyprus problem

# Perils and perseverance in reporting conflicts

## Authors

Dr. Abdullahi Tasiu Abubakar - City, University of London

## Abstract

News value elements and the journalistic creed of reporting in the public interest are key drivers of news media's attention to violent conflicts – so are politics and profit motives. But covering conflicts is a risky undertaking for journalists. They face physical attacks, threats and intimidation, and endure emotional injuries in doing so. The consequences tend to be more severe for local journalists who cover protracted conflicts in their communities. This paper explores how long-term coverage of violent conflicts impacts on the lives of local journalists and on their work. It employs a grounded theory approach to examine the lived experiences of journalists working in hostile environments. It also analyses how conflict reporters negotiate their safety concerns with their responsibility to adhere to journalistic norms. It equally assesses the coping strategies they employ to withstand adversities in reporting conflicts. Using the case studies of covering three different conflicts in Nigeria (the Boko Haram crisis, the Biafra insurgency and herder-farmer clashes), the paper unpacks the perils and perseverance in journalism practice in conflict zones. The empirical data were drawn from semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups with Nigerian journalists who have covered the conflicts and from newsroom ethnography at three news media organisations in Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the participants: Only journalists who have covered at least one of the three conflicts were selected for the study. Two-thirds of the participants had covered at least two of the conflicts. Preliminary findings detail the nature of physical and psychological suffering journalists endure in covering the conflicts; their modes of resilience and resistance; and the nature of support they receive from professional and civil society groups when they face hostility. Journalists' narrative accounts of their responses to challenges in reporting the conflicts provide conceptual categories such as "feeling distressed", "feeling apprehensive", "feeling discouraged", "resorting to religious meditation", and "giving up". Conversely, journalists' responses to support they get from colleagues and others provide conceptual categories such as "feeling empowered", "feeling motivated", "feeling encouraged", and "desire to do more". The findings also highlight the way conflict reporters navigate the risks they routinely encounter in their work, and how they sometimes feel compelled to compromise journalistic norms as part of survival strategy, both at personal and professional levels, with negative consequences on their journalism.

## Key Words

Conflict reporting, safety of journalists, hostile environments

# **Public Health Organizations' Practices and Experiences in Communicating the COVID-19 Pandemic on Social Media: Lessons for Improving Social Media Crisis Communication**

## **Authors**

Ms. Saman Choudary - Universitat Pompeu Fabra

## **Abstract**

COVID-19 pandemic is seen as a multifaceted health crisis where governments, public health authorities, and political leaders were presented with a challenge of not only managing the pandemic but also communicating with the public for providing timely, credible, and consistent information (Lindholm et al., 2023; Ngai et al., 2020). In an attempt to tame the virus and responding to the crisis, the responsible actors made serious efforts to communicate risk information to the public and other relevant stakeholders (Slavik et al., 2020). The responding organizations specifically public health organizations extensively leveraged social media for providing critical information regarding disease prevention, mitigation measures and counteracting misinformation (Drescher et al., 2021). Keeping in view the central role of social media for crisis communication, there is a need to acquire deeper insights into how public health entities utilized and navigated these platforms for carrying out risk communication, coordinating responses, and shaping public perception and behaviors (Lilleker et al., 2021a; Tsao et al., 2021; Génèreux et al., 2021).

In order to address this vital aspect, this study intends to dwell deeper and identify the motivations, challenges and best practices of experts and decision-takers in conducting effective social media crisis communication during COVID-19 pandemic. This research study focuses on two crucial aspects, that is, examining the firsthand experience of organizational personnel involved in the management and communication of COVID-19 pandemic and secondly, drawing the lessons for improving social media crisis communication. Thus, this study aims to: (1) identify the motivations, challenges, strategies, and best practices in conducting effective pandemic communication according to experts' views and decision-takers' viewpoints; and (2) approach the reflection and learning process for making well informed social media crisis communication strategies.

The research study draws on a qualitative approach and in-depth interviews have been employed as a viable methodology for attaining the outlined objectives. Public health organizations have been targeted as the prime focus of in-depth interviews and the population sample comprises of organizational personnel from World Health Organization (WHO), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). Interview scripts have pivoted around the following core areas: (1) social media operations: structure and practices; (2) social media crisis communication plans and procedures; (3) timeliness, consistency, and misinformation management during COVID-19; (4) listening, feedback, and engagement practices during the

pandemic; and (5) organizational problems and internal and external challenges involved in carrying out crisis communication.

The qualitative analysis of conversations with experts and decision-makers contributes to outline the specific motivations, practices and challenges underlying social media publications carried out by leading health organizations during the pandemic, facilitating the development of a framework for strengthening social media crisis communication strategies. The findings of this study provide a deeper understanding of organizational social media usage during the COVID-19 pandemic and contribute to informing and enabling strategic actors to effectively use digital platforms in future emergencies.

**Key Words**

COVID-19 pandemic, crisis communication, social media, and public health organizations.

# Consuming news about the 2022-2023 Russian-Ukrainian war in Germany and Israel: A comparative analysis

## Authors

Dr. Julian Unkel - LMU Munich

Dr. Vered Elishar Malka - Yezreel Valley Academic College

Dr. Yaron Ariel - Yezreel Valley Academic College

Dr. Dana Weimann Saks - Yezreel Valley Academic College

## Abstract

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 shook the entire world. It was the first time a country invaded its neighbor's territory in Europe since World War II. During the war's first months, there was extensive media coverage of the war on legacy and social, public, and commercial media, especially in Western countries.

Studies of wartime media represent a prominent area of media research. Many of the studies in this field focus on the influence of the news media's war coverage on public opinion in the countries involved, in third-party countries, or globally. The perspective of media consumers exposed to foreign news has been studied extensively beyond the wartime context. Some studies have focused on people's motivations for following news from remote places and correlations between their characteristics and foreign news consumption patterns. Consumers' objective or subjective proximity to the foreign countries involved and their level of identification with said countries are among those characteristics. This study combines these theoretical approaches with the question of media trust.

The current study examines news media consumption patterns of individuals in Germany and Israel during the first two months of the war (February and March 2022), and how these patterns are related to individuals' objective and subjective proximity to Ukraine, interest in politics, and perceptions of the media. A structured questionnaire was administered to a nationally representative sample of participants in May 2022 in both countries, with 1,310 valid responses in Germany and 509 in Israel.

Findings indicate that the consumption of legacy media in both countries was significantly predicted by greater objective and subjective proximity to Ukraine, greater political interest, and increased age. However, greater media trust and media cynicism significantly predict legacy media use in Germany but not in Israel. In contrast, greater media skepticism predicted greater legacy media use in Israel but not Germany. Fewer similarities appeared for the use of social media. In Germany, social media use was significantly predicted by greater objective proximity, media cynicism, political interest, decreasing age, and being female. Conversely, greater objective and subjective proximity, lower media trust, and greater media skepticism were associated with greater social media use in Israel.



These findings contribute to our understanding of how meaningful people's objective and subjective ties with a foreign country motivate them to consume news about it on both mainstream and social media. These results highlight the importance of considering both objective and subjective proximity and perceptions about the media system in understanding media use for information about significant events such as the Russian-Ukrainian War. Findings also reinforce existing literature about the importance of media trust as a predictor of people's tendency to rely on mainstream vs. social media for information and news updates on a meaningful event.

**Key Words**

Russian-Ukrainian war; Foreign news consumption; Legacy/social media; Objective/Subjective proximity

# **Understanding Municipal Crisis Communication during COVID-19: A Big Data Approach**

## **Authors**

Dr. Duncan Koerber - Brock University

Prof. Tim Ribaric - Brock University

Mr. Fletcher Johnson - Brock University

Mr. Cal Murgu - Brock University

Mr. David Sharron - Brock University

## **Abstract**

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges for governments in terms of crisis communication to citizens. The effective communication of information and measures to citizens is crucial in reducing the impact of the crisis and building community resilience for when the next one hits. This study examines the role of municipalities (also called local governments) in crisis communication during the pandemic in the Niagara Region of Ontario, Canada. The study collected gigabytes of municipal web page content over nearly two years (March 1, 2020 to December 31, 2021). It analyzes the communication of Niagara Region municipal governments on these pages, using computational research methods and close reading. This study is significant because it employs computational methods on a large-scale dataset—the Big Data of a mega-crisis—to analyze crisis messaging, which has not been often done in the field of crisis communication research.

The results of the study show that the website and social media communication of the upper-tier municipality, Niagara Region, addressed the needs of citizens; however, the communication of the lower-tier municipalities was inconsistent and showed deficiencies, which are outlined in the paper. This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the nature, extent, and effectiveness of crisis communication in the development of community resilience and highlights the importance of effective crisis communication in dealing with large-scale, long-term crises. Furthermore, the study provides a valuable example for crisis communication researchers looking to collect, process, and analyze the Big Data of a crisis that extends over a long period.

Overall, this paper highlights the crucial but understudied role of municipalities in crisis communication for community resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings of the study emphasize the need for effective crisis communication and consistency in messaging between different levels of government in the same region. The study also sheds light on the significance of utilizing computational research methods on large datasets in crisis communication research.

## **Key Words**

crisis communication, risk communication, health communication, big data

# Examining attribution theories in negative events: A systematic review of communication journals

## Authors

Dr. Yingru Ji - Zhejiang University

Dr. Weiting Tao - University of Miami

## Abstract

**Introduction and Research Questions:** During negative events such as crises, people have a fundamental psychological need of attributing causes and responsibility. Attribution theories provide frameworks to explicate such attributional processes (e.g., Coombs, 2007; Heider, 1958; Kelly, 1974; Weiner, 1985; Iyengar, 1991). Every year, a great number of published studies are devoted to advancing our understanding of the attribution perspectives of human behaviors when it comes to communicating about negative events. Despite the fast growth of this valuable body of literature, no systematic efforts have been undertaken to review, synthesize, evaluate, critique, and guide this area of study.

In the communication discipline, several clusters of scholars frequently applied attribution theories to negative events. A cluster is concerned with individuals' daily life events such as cancer and interpersonal conflicts (e.g., Palazzolo & Roberto, 2011). Some scholars are interested in organizational crises such as mismanagement and product recall (e.g., Choi & Lin, 2009). Other scholars investigate societal-level events such as terrorism, economic crises, and climate change (e.g., Chang et al., 2016). Despite their common application of attribution theories, the three clusters have barely referred to each other. Such limited references may hinder the development of a knowledge base of higher quality. Through a systematic literature review, this study would contribute to the advancement of attribution theories in the context of negative events. Specifically, this study addresses research questions below.

RQ1: What patterns exist regarding published articles that focus on attribution theories in negative events?

RQ2: What are the methodological approaches in these articles?

RQ3: What are the theoretical approaches of these articles? For instance, which attribution theories/concepts are applied? How do attribution theories link with other theories? How do attribution theories evolve and develop in the communication discipline?

**Methods:** To retrieve articles, all Social Science Citation Index journals classified in the category of communication served as the sampling frame. A search was performed using the key term "attribution theory" or "attribution theories". Results of the keyword search yielded 255 articles, published from 1999 to 2022. Among them, 119 articles set the research context in negative events.

The unit of analysis was each article. A codebook was developed based on previous literature and revised during coding training sessions. The intercoder-reliability of the three coders was satisfactory, ranging from .80 to 1.00. The finalized codebook included four sections. Section 1 examined each article's basic information, such as article title, journal name, and publication year. Section 2 shed light on the research context including country/region, type of negative events, media setting, and practical implications. Section 3 investigated methodology. Section 4 addressed theoretical aspects.

**Conclusion:** This study is concerned with which and how attribution theories are applied and developed during negative events at the individual, organizational, and societal levels in the field of communication. Through a systematic review across a variety of research streams, this study aims to provide and explicate overarching insights and facilitate the development of attribution theories.

#### **References:**

Chang, J. J., Kim, S. H., Shim, J. C., & Ma, D. H. (2018). Who is responsible for climate change? Attribution of responsibility, news media, and south Koreans' perceived risk of climate change. *Mass Communication & Society*, 19, 566-584.

Choi, Y., & Lin, Y. H. (2009). Consumer responses to Mattel product recalls posted on online bulletin boards: Exploring two types of emotion. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 21(2), 198-207.

Coombs, W. T. (2007). Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of situational crisis communication theory. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 10(3): 163–177.

Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal relations*. NY: Wiley.

Iyengar, S. (1991). *Is anyone responsible?: How television frames political issues*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kelley, H. H. (1973). The processes of causal attribution. *American psychologist*, 28(2), 107.

Palazzolo, K. E., & Roberto, A. J. (2011). Media representations of intimate partner violence and punishment preferences: Exploring the role of attributions and emotions. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 39(1), 1-18.

Weiner, B. (1985). An attributional theory of achievement motivation and emotion. *Psychological Review*, 92, 548–573.

#### **Key Words**

attribution theory, crisis communication, negative events

# **Emotions Matter : Exploring the Effects of Emotional Framing in Disaster News on the Publics' Pro-social Motivation and Behavioral Intentions**

## **Authors**

Mr. Yuhang Yuan - Beijing Normal University

Prof. Jinghong Xu - Beijing Normal University

## **Abstract**

### **Background**

Studies in social psychology and communication have shown that emotion is a significant predictor and key intermediary variable in understanding people's behavioral motivations. Although the role of emotions has been extensively validated in studies of media trust, crisis communication, and online activism, little attention has been paid to how an individual's accumulated emotional experience interacts with media frameworks. In particular, in the context of disaster news, do individual-specific emotional experiences affect people's cognition and behavior when they are linked to the context of news reports and comments? The current study aims to fill these gaps.

### **Theoretical Background**

According to Izard (1984), if the audience perceives that the information they receive includes certain relational themes and is closely related to them personally, this text tends to arouse specific emotions and form a stable "affective-cognitive structure". Based on this, Nabi (2003) proposed "the emotion-as-frame perspective", arguing that "discrete, context-related emotions selectively affect information processing, recall, and judgment." This hypothesis emphasizes how receivers' emotional experiences guide their perceptions of media messages, and provides a better explanation for corresponding cognitive and behavioral changes.

### **Method**

In this study, a  $2 \times 2 \times 2$  mixed-design experiment will be conducted. The first two factors are between-subjects variables: (1) emotional experience: present vs. absent, and (2) emotional appeal: present vs. absent. The third variable is a within-subjects variable: comment valence (positive vs. negative). Dependent variables include participants' pro-social motivations and behavioral intentions (online behavior and offline behavior) influenced by different emotional frameworks.

Specifically, we will recruit 80 college students as experimental subjects. Among them, in order to meet the experimental requirements of emotional experience (present vs. absent), 40 college students will be required to have personal experience of floods in the last five years, and be equally divided into two experimental groups; the remaining 40 subjects who have no experience of floods will be assigned to the other two experimental groups.

The independent variable manipulation of emotional appeal and comment valence will be mainly achieved through experimental stimulus. We will adapt a news about a flood that was posted on Weibo. The first stimulus is emotional appeal. News that contains emotional appeals emphasizes the concern of rescue organizations and affected people about the flood situation and the help they need, while news that does not contain emotional appeals omits this part. Five user comments serve as the second stimulus. The version with the predominantly positive comments will include four comments in which the user was concerned about the flood situation, and showed a willingness to take action to help. One comment was negative. The version with the predominantly negative comments will include four critical comments and one positive comment.

### **Expected Results**

The current study will provide a wealth of data to examine the impact of emotional framing on public perceptions and behavioral intentions, which can provide a new perspective for understanding emotional communication and disaster news.

### **Key Words**

Emotional Framing, Disaster News, Pro-social motivations, behavioral intentions

# **Analysis of Covid-19 information consumption by Spanish citizens: disinformation, platforms and media**

## **Authors**

Mr. Aleix Martí-Danés - Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Mr. Roger Cuartielles - Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Dr. Carles Pont - Universitat Pompeu Fabra

## **Abstract**

The circulation of information becomes notorious during a crisis situation since there is an immediate social interest about the difficulties caused by the emergency (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015; Mayo-Cubero, 2020). Covid-19 pandemic, which has already caused more than 118,000 deaths in Spain (Ministry of Health, 2023), is one example of this phenomenon. Different factors such as the spread of misinformation, the credibility of the legacy media and the irruption of Twitter, Facebook and Instagram as information sources have led to talk about an "infodemic" (WHO, 2020).

The disintermediation of the media between citizens and politicians (Katz & Dayan, 1994) and the universalization of social networks, among others, have modulated the way in which public debate is structured and the way in which opinion climates appears (Herbst, 2011). Due to the main features of social networks: global interaction, fast viralization and the capacity of publishing messages from anonymity, it becomes a perfect space for the spreading of misinformation (Kavanagh & Rich, 2018), which is shared faster than verified content (Vosoughi et al, 2018).

This study is based on a quantitative analysis of a survey (n=1,006) realized between May 12 and 13, 2021 by the survey company YouGov Spain. The main objective of this research is to identify the information habits of Spanish citizens during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The research provides relevant results such as the emerging role of social networks, especially in younger citizens; 80% of the Spanish population have the perception of having come across with fake news during the Covid-19 pandemic; social networks and traditional media (radio, TV, written press) have been the main channels for detecting disinformation content, concretely, Facebook is the social network that has been detected with the highest number of misinformation

Taking a closer look to social networks we observe that in Facebook those over 35 years old are the population segment that detects more misinformation, while on Instagram and Twitter it is the younger segment who detects it. The results also show that the detection of misinformation is influenced by educational level and economic income.

Another of the main conclusions recollected in the survey is that 55% of the Spanish population considers that the Administration is not prepared to communicate. Despite this, the different levels of public administration receive approval from the Spanish population, as well as the role of journalists and media in the communication of the pandemic, however, they both receive a weak

approval. The most well-regarded in the field of institutional communication are the regional government levels. Finally, 50.3% of the survey states that the news that affects them the most are those related to human victims.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ardèvol-Abreu, A. (2015). Building the agenda and news frames about countries facing humanitarian crises: news values and selection of information sources. *Communication & Society*, 28(1), 43-62. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.28.35967>
- Berger, C. R., & Calabrese, R. J. (1975). Some explorations in initial interaction and beyond: Toward a developmental theory of interpersonal communication. *Human Communication Research*, 1, 99-112. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2958.1975.tb00258.x>
- Deci, T. E. (1975). *Intrinsic motivation*. Plenum.
- Herbst, S. (2011). (Un)Numbered Voices? Reconsidering the Meaning of Public Opinion in the Digital Age. In G. Kirby (Ed.), *Political Polling in the Digital Age: The Challenge of Measuring and Understanding Public Opinion*, (pp. 85–98). Louisiana State University Press.
- Katz, E. (1988). Disintermediation: Cutting out the middleman. *Intermedia*, 16(2), 30–31. [https://repository.upenn.edu/asc\\_papers/162](https://repository.upenn.edu/asc_papers/162)
- Katz, E., & Dayan, D. (1994). *Media events*. Harvard University Press.
- Kavanagh, J., & Rich, M. (2018). *Truth decay*. RAND Corporation.
- Mayo-Cubero, Marcos (2020). News sections, journalists and information sources in the journalistic coverage of crises and emergencies in Spain. *El profesional de la información*, 29, n. 2, e290211. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2020.mar.11>
- Ministerio de Sanidad, Gobierno de España (2023). *Covid-19, situación actual*. <https://www.sanidad.gob.es/profesionales/saludPublica/ccayes/alertasActual/nCov/situacionActual.htm>
- Vosoughi, S., Roy, D., & Aral, S. (2018). The spread of true and false news online. *Science*, 359(6380), 1146-1151. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aap9559>
- World Health Organisation (2020). Let's flatten the infodemic curve <https://www.who.int/en/news-room/spotlight/let-s-flatten-the-infodemic-curve>

## Key Words

Crisis communication, Covid-19, Spain, media, social networks, information consumption, disinformation



# Handling violent extremism and terrorism online: the emergence of a global governance regime?

## Authors

Ms. Marguerite Borelli - CARISM (EGIC ED 455) Université Paris Panthéon Assas

## Abstract

Various categories of content were identified as problematic in the midst of the so-called “techlash” series of social media-related scandals around 2015-2016. Amongst these, in the context of Daesh attacks on European and American soil, terrorist and violent extremist content (TVEC) has been prioritized by public and private actors alike due to the pressing nature of the terrorist threat “in real life”.

Since then, faced with pressure from the authorities, advertisers and their userbases, large social media platform firms Meta (at the time Facebook), Google, and Twitter have progressively invested their new role in the policy area of countering terrorism (CT) and violent extremism (CVE), using the various levers at their disposal, including policymaking, technology and human resources (Borelli, 2021). But platform firms, of course, do not act in a vacuum. Rather, their involvement within a wider public-private ecosystem of online counterterrorism efforts has progressively fed into a governance regime, as emerged “sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge” (Krasner, 1982: 186). These include various innovative fora and instruments at national (Internet Referral Units), supranational (EU Internet Forum) international (Christchurch Call) and industry (GIFCT) levels and norms such as the EU’s Regulation on preventing the dissemination of terrorist content online (TERREG).

At the crossroads of the privatization of security (de Goede, 2017 ; Tréguer, 2019), platform governance and content regulation (Klonick, 2017 ; Gillespie, 2018 ; Badouard, 2020 ; Common, 2020; Douek, 2020;), this paper draws on my ongoing PhD research to retrace the emergence of the governance regime on online threats relative to terrorism and violent extremisms, which started in the EU in 2015, and was finally joined by the US in 2021 through its adherence to the Christchurch Call, following the Capitol insurrection. The paper mobilizes interviews with stakeholders and publicly available information to analyze the complex networks of actors, policies and discussion fora on the issue. It raises two increasingly salient questions for stakeholders : a) Can this regime become a truly global one ? and b) Can it adapt to a changing threat landscape, considering the rise in less centralized forms of violent extremism, chiefly from the far right (Conway, 2020) ? Finally, the paper also reflects on the significance of this governance regime in the wider context of content regulation efforts, at a time when some of the instruments and fora created specifically to tackle terrorism online are being repurposed or expanded to include other forms of undesirable content, such as disinformation, hate speech or child sexual abuse materials (CSAM).

## Key Words

counter-terrorism, terrorist content, platforms, social media, governance, regulation, public-private relations

# Us with them: The cosmopolitan potential of peace journalism

## Authors

Dr. Ayesha Jehangir - University of Technology Sydney

## Abstract

Over the last two decades, peace journalism scholars have borrowed from a myriad of theoretical underpinnings, such as media sociology, critical realism, and critical pragmatism to contextualize and define the complex process of war and conflict reporting. While some have developed the idea of peace journalism as a symbolic intervention in conflict (Lynch 2016), others have defined it as a 'normative mode of responsible and conscientious media coverage of conflict' (Shinar 2007, 2).

The main idea behind peace journalism is to report in ways that inform the public about non-violent options to war and conflict, contribute to peace and peace-building, present a vision of a peaceful society by transforming incapability to opportunity, catalyse compassionate engagement with distant suffering, question the use and abuse of power, and as Galtung (1998) argues, explain *what* and *who* led to the conflict in the first place – a foundation of public knowledge in any democracy. As a moral imagination of common humanity, peace journalism puts a special focus on the people, where cosmopolitan interconnectedness is deemed fundamental to the progress and sustainability of the human race. There is a strong aversion to loss of human life, a value that stems from Immanuel Kant's sympathy-based vision of cosmopolitanism (1795), where the democratic publics prefer to prevent conflict and not to go to war not only against other democracies but also against autocracies. Why is it then that despite being grounded in media ethics, peace journalism practice continues to be largely missing from mainstream media coverage of war and conflict, and more so from debates around media's role in conflict prevention?

Grounded in Lilie Chouliaraki's (2008) vision of a cosmopolitan public, this paper develops a theoretical framework for understanding peace journalism as a method of conflict prevention and ethical witnessing. Taking guidance from an already established relationship between cosmopolitanism and peace-building (Kaldor 1996; Lidén 2009), I explore peace journalism's potential as a cosmopolitan practice, and one which is paramount to the democratisation of media and a wider public engagement leading to response. In addition to explicating some ways in which peace journalism can play a contributory role in conflict prevention, I also emphasise the need to decolonise international war and conflict reporting by empowering local journalists.

## Key Words

peace journalism, war journalism, cosmopolitanism, conflict prevention, ethical witnessing, agency.

# Covering the COVID-19 pandemic - Journalists' role perceptions in South Africa and France

## Authors

Ms. Pauline Renaud - City, University of London

Dr. Carolyne Lunga - City, University of London

## Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic that unfolded in 2020 confronted journalists with a new set of challenges regarding crisis reporting. Not only did they have to communicate about a virus, despite having little prior knowledge about it, but they were also faced with a deluge of disinformation and misinformation, forcing them to reconsider their practices. For several news professionals across the globe, lockdowns meant they had reduced access to sources and means of verifying content, as well as limited financial resources to continue fulfilling their reporting duties.

Meanwhile their authority and freedom of expression were, at times, challenged by fact-checking organisations, social media platforms and, in some countries, governments rushing to implement various initiatives to limit the spread of content deemed false and dangerous (Mare & Munoriyarwa, 2022). The imperative, for many journalists, was, therefore, to not only continue providing accurate information but, also, to maintain their legitimacy as 'truth mediators' (Michailidou & Trenz, 2021) towards audiences.

As journalists reported on a crisis while experiencing it themselves (Lewis, 2020), attention must be paid to examining the impact of the pandemic on their role perceptions, that is the roles they deem important in society. Consideration must also be given to analysing whether what they think they should do fits with what they, in fact, do. Prior research (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2017) has shown that, through role negotiation, journalists may adjust their professional aspirations to fit with their own practices.

This manuscript compares the role perceptions of journalists in South Africa and France to understand how they made sense of the pandemic vis-à-vis their professional ideologies and to which extent their ideals matched their practices, as they navigated COVID-19-related challenges. The two countries, South Africa and France, were chosen due to their similarities – both benefit from pluralist political and media systems – but also their differences. Indeed, social, economic, and technological challenges in these nations of the Global South and North, respectively, differ greatly.

Using in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 10 journalists in each country, the research demonstrates that role perceptions are affected by several factors, including the national context (economic and political factors), the global context (the pandemic) as well as professional characteristics (general versus specialist reporters). Bringing new perspectives on cross-national crisis reporting, findings suggest that efforts at role negotiation were mostly present among South

African and French fact-checking journalists, as they struggled to reconcile their ideals with their practices.

**Key Words**

pandemic, journalistic roles, comparative studies, crisis, media

# Internet Shutdowns in India: Legitimacy, Impact and the Containment of Rumors

## Authors

Dr. Peng Hwa Ang - Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University

Ms. Smriti Srivastava - Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University

Dr. Varsha Jain - MICA, Mudra Institute of Communications Ahmedabad

Dr. Komal Vora Shah - Department of Communication & Journalism, Gujarat University

Dr. Ruchi Tewari - MICA

Dr. Binod Agrawal - Independent Scholar

## Abstract

India has witnessed numerous Internet bans and mobile internet disruptions in many parts of the country from 2016 to 2022. By some estimates, India accounts for almost two-thirds of such Internet outages. The frequency and duration of the outages vary from a few hours to hundreds of days, as happened in the Jammu and Kashmir region. According to the government, an Internet outage eliminates the spread of rumors, disinformation, and misinformation.

This paper describes the results of a multi-site survey of almost 900 respondents in three cities in the state of Gujarat (2016) and two cities of Jammu and Kashmir (2017). Gujarat was chosen because it is a fairly developed state and so a ban in 2015 was expected to impact a fairly modern economy; the Jammu and Kashmir region was chosen when it was possible to travel safely.

The study found that in Gujarat, where the Internet ban in 2015 was shorter, people were more willing to accept the legitimacy of the ban. In contrast, the ban in Kashmir, having seen decades-long conflict, faced longer and more frequent bans causing greater hardship. Residents had to travel to get access to Internet services such as national exam results and job applications that were online.

Contrary to the assertion that the bans quelled rumors, respondents in Kashmir felt that the Internet could also be used to fact-check information. Without the ability to fact-check, it was not possible to verify the information.

Women were more impacted than men by the Internet ban in both regions. The smartphone had features that enable communication and can also track users. It was safer to travel with it than without.

Interestingly, we also found that many respondents were resilient in this context. They were agile and flexible. In Gujarat, many switched to using the Internet on the landline for communication

and to traditional media for information. Businessmen interviewed in Gujarat often said they took the ban in their stride and in many cases, the ban affected their business minimally in the worst case.

In contrast, businesses in Kashmir felt that they had been severely impacted. For example, houseboat operators said that they could not accept bookings online. Software entrepreneurs were frustrated that their products could not be used.

Government servants were least able to respond flexibly. They were not able to use Internet cafes to continue their work. But they were also not able to criticize the official policy.

Also interesting was that residents in rural areas seemed to be more affected than those in urban areas.

The paper concludes that overall, the Internet bans were disruptive. The Gujarat experience suggests that when the reasons are accepted as legitimate and the bans are for a short duration, the bans may be accepted by the populace albeit reluctantly. These conditions are absent from the Kashmir experience and may explain the disaffection of the populace.

### **Key Words**

Internet Ban, Digital Media, Digital Media Governance, Internet Shutdown, Rumors

# Slippery discourses of intertwined crises: migratory phenomenon and Covid-19 pandemic

## Authors

Dr. Ester Minga - Universidade Católica Portuguesa

## Abstract

The outbreak of a pandemic inevitably links with migration since containment measures usually involve the closure of borders. In the current globalized world, the most effective way to contain the spread of diseases is to limit the movement of people within and between borders, but there is also a more subtle relation between both phenomena. When a new threatening virus appears, people tend to make sense by objectifying the 'invisible other' as an invader, an enemy or an immigrant.

In the context of Portuguese migratory phenomenon, the mediated discourses of these intertwined crises are varied and multifaceted, reflecting the country's postcolonial peculiarity as both a provider of emigrants and host country to different fluxes of migrants. As we will critically analyse, the Portuguese emigrants and the migrants from distinct geographical origins, with also distinct migratory statuses in Portugal, were differently framed in news pieces related to Covid-19 pandemic.

Through a framing analysis of pieces published between 2020 and 2021 in the influential newspapers *Expresso* and *Diário de Notícias*, and the tabloid *Correio da Manhã*, we will discuss how this unstable coverage dialogues, and collides, with the deep social imaginary of Portuguese emigration and the common-sense idea of a Lusophone space characterized by the harmonious conviviality of different people.

The analysis will focus on pieces' main themes, the reasons for and the responses for the topics covered, with special attention to the pieces about the Portuguese emigrants, in which they were sometimes paradoxically framed as a threatening 'Other' bringing the virus to homeland and, sometimes, as the privileged representatives of Portuguese national identity who needed to be support. We will also focus on three highly mediated occurrences: the promulgation of temporary laws to regularize the status of immigrants and asylum seekers during the pandemic, the outbreaks of infection among asylum seekers sheltered in overcrowded hostels, and the wide criticism following the government's request of private houses to shelter immigrant agricultural workers under quarantine.

While the promulgation of regulatory laws was predominantly framed in a (self)celebratory tone reminiscent of the colonial imagery, emphasizing the exceptionality of the Portuguese people, the framing of the other issues was distinct. The concern with the arrival of Portuguese emigrants, the outbreaks at hostels, and the infuriation of people who did not want immigrants infected with Covid-19 near to them generated varied and fragmented frames, bringing to the fore the (un)established narrative around the Portuguese national identity. By simultaneously colliding with

the prestigious position acquired by the emigrants after the decolonization and the widespread idea of an absence of racism among Portuguese people, the media framing of these issues was a symptom of the crises itself, revealing an unsettled discourse and alternating anxieties.

**Key Words**

Media framing, crises, coloniality of migration, covid-19 pandemic, Portugal.



# Multimodal crisis communication: A comparative analysis of Instagram posts published by governments and health institutions in Germany, Turkey, the UK, the US during 2020–2021

## Authors

Ms. Yi Xu - Ilmenau University of Technology

## Abstract

**Background:** During public health crises like the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, there is a critical need to amplify instructional messages in a professional and intelligible manner. Governments and health institutions have widely engaged in using social media as a tool for providing preventive messages and encouraging the public to adopt appropriate actions (Chon & Kim, 2022; Mazid, 2022). Effective risk and crisis communication can help promote self-protective actions, slow down the spread of the virus, reduce morbidity and mortality, and mitigate economic and social disruptions (Guidry et al., 2017; Jin et al., 2014; Sellnow et al., 2017).

The rise of the visually-dominated social media platforms, such as Instagram, resonates with the multimodal turn that signals how digital technologies make manifest changes to the inherent multimodality of communication (Ravelli & Van Leeuwen, 2018; Russmann & Svensson, 2017). However, the strategic use of visuals still needs more scholarly investigation in the health crisis response (Brennen et al., 2021; King & Lazard, 2020). Besides, there is scarce research on visual and multimodal messages (Xu et al., 2022) and comparative studies of government crisis communication (Diers-Lawson, 2017). The present paper attempts to evaluate multimodal crisis messages of the Covid-19 disseminated by four countries' governments and health institutions on Instagram.

**Methods:** A quantitative content analysis is carried out to evaluate 2140 Instagram posts published by president's (or prime minister, chancellor) offices and health institutions between 1 February 2020 and 31 December 2021, including Germany (N=417), Turkey (N=388), the UK (N=684), the USA (N=651). The country selection is guided by the contextual factors that might shape the crafting of multimodal messages, such as risk cultures (Cornia et al., 2016). Drawing on the theoretical assumptions of multimodality (Jewitt et al., 2016), the codebook is derived from the IDEA model (Sellnow & Sellnow, 2019), visual framing (Rodriguez & Dimitrova, 2011), and personalization of politics (Metz et al., 2020). The intercoder reliability results are: German sample  $\kappa=0.85$ , Turkish sample  $\kappa=0.84$ , and English sample  $\kappa=0.89$ .

**Results:** Comparative results reveal cross-national similarities and differentiations. Germany represents the state-oriented risk culture, as institutional Instagram posts emphasize the national proximity of the health crisis, differentiate target groups, provide more political explanation of mandatory measures, highlight the institutional responsibility to take care of the citizens. In the individual-oriented risk culture, the UK and the US instructional messages focus on both the national and regional proximity, redirect audiences to other channels, promote more self-

protective actions, and emphasize individual responsibility to look after oneself and protect other people. Turkish Instagram posts show mixed a result of the institutional and personal responsibility, report more local proximity of the crisis, and provide less scientific explanation. In addition, visual representation reveals that German and Turkish posts represent more photos of politicians, while the UK and the US posts use more illustrative images or animations. German instructional messages show more iconic sign (mimetic image of coronavirus). The US and Turkish Instagram posts use more indexical signs. The findings are further discussed from the perspective of effective crisis communication and risk cultures.

**Key Words**

Crisis communication, multimodal message, government, comparative studies, content analysis, Instagram

# **Framing the future: Comparative news coverage of Syrians in Turkiye and implications for regional stability**

## **Authors**

Dr. Emel Ozdora AKŞAK - Bilkent University, Ankara

Dr. Colleen Connolly-Ahern - Penn State University

Dr. Lee Ahern - Penn State University

Ms. Triwik Kurniasari - Penn State University

## **Abstract**

### **Framing the future: Comparative news coverage of Syrians in Turkiye and implications for regional stability**

Turkiye is the world's largest refugee host, housing more than 4 million refugees within its borders. When the ongoing crisis in Syria began in 2011, the Turkish government's response was swift and positive, opening its borders to those at risk. Since the early days of the Syrian conflict, the popular attitude towards the Syrians in Turkiye has shifted: those who were once termed "brothers/sisters," or "neighbors" in the press, have now become "outsiders" who do not fit in socially and cause a financial burden. Despite the fact that Syrians usually work in the least preferred jobs (Liszkowska, 2020), such as seasonal agricultural work (Ozdora Aksak and Dimitrova, 2021), Turkish citizens still feel discontent about perceived competition for employment and falling wages (Şafak-Ayvazoğlu, Kunuroğlu and Yağmur, 2021).

To combat negative public opinion, Turkiye's government institutions, politicians, and public service providers have pushed forward rhetoric highlighting the refugee populations' social, economic, and other contributions to the host society. But it is unclear to what extent the Turkish press is adopting this long-term sustainability framing. The current study details the frames currently employed by major news organizations regarding the long-term viability and sustainability of Turkiye's Syrian refugee population, guided by the following research questions:

RQ 1) How does the coverage frame long-term sustainability for the displaced Syrian population?

RQ 2) What are the other dominant frames employed in the coverage of Syrian refugees in Turkiye?

RQ 3) Who are the key figures and sources mentioned and quoted in the news stories?

Sample. LexisNexisUni was used to collect *Anadolu Agency* and *The Associated Press* news stories published between January 1, 2019, and June 30, 2022, employing the Boolean terms "Refugees, Syrian/Syrians" and "stay, work, employment, vocation, economic contribution, support, development, and future." The two news agencies were selected because they represent the largest internal and external distributor of syndicated news content about Syria's refugees. The

total number of news articles analyzed was  $N= 1,234$ , with 981 articles from Anadolu Agency and 253 from the Associated Press.

**Method.** The current study employs discourse analysis to reveal how sustainability and related frames were incorporated in the coverage of Syrian refugees in Turkiye. The researchers used an inductive approach, paying particular attention to issues of long-term sustainability. The 1,234 news articles were coded according to the following themes; People quoted as source (include ORGs), Accusation, Praise, Security, Ostracization, Internal Solution, Extrenal Solution, Safe Zone Issue, Return Home Issue, EU-Turkey Deal, EU Membership status, Infrastructure Investments, Economy, Mentions of Support, East Relations, and West Relations.

**Results.** Preliminary findings indicate that “long-term sustainability” is a dichotomous concept, one internal and one external. Internal sustainability is framed as long-term settlement of Syrians, particularly focusing on their employment and the economy within Turkiye. External sustainability is framed as the creation of a safe zone within Syria to ensure the safe return of Syrian nationals. Both the AA and AP coverage reflected current AKP narratives, aligning the Syria issue with Turkiye’s international political agenda, such as its EU membership status and anti-terrorism laws. Turkish coverage included many news stories that include international praise about Turkiye from international organizations such as the EU or UNHCR on its humanitarian support and providing access to education, health and social opportunities to refugees. AP stories focused on Turkiye’s geo-political role, especially in light of the growing tension between the US and Russia.

### **Key Words**

Syrian Refugees, Migration, Sustainability, Future, Framing, News Agencies

# **Pandemic in times of social web — COVID-19 in the Arabic digital public sphere**

## **Authors**

Mrs. Sarah Amina Benedikta Kandil - University of Bonn

## **Abstract**

Crises, conflicts, wars, and the resulting consequences like poverty and danger are as old as humanity is. But this does not mean that these are rigid constructs that are not affected by the conditions and influence of the respective time. In this regard, the last decades added a new dimension: the social web. Looking at the global climate crisis, the war in Ukraine, or the recent earthquake in Turkey and Syria, you can see the different but not inconsiderable roles the social web plays: from a place where social movements are organized via a platform to cause awareness to a possibility to collect donations easily. Nevertheless, there is a downside to everything.

The beginning of the spread of the coronavirus was not only the start of a pandemic but also an infodemic (Alam, et al., 2020). A wave of disinformation has flooded the internet, especially social media platforms, and fallen on sympathetic ears. Although the issue is global, this paper focuses on the Arab world because it shows a certain level of responsiveness to disinformation and conspiracy theories in general.

*Studies:* This paper gives an insight into a project on the digitally conducted debates related to COVID19 in the Arab World. The base is an empirical study of relevant tweets posted in Arabic that, for example, react to rumors regarding COVID -19 or spread opinions or (dis)information on the topic. Both existing data sets and their own collections are used for this purpose. Some examples of search queries are كورونا (corona), مطهر (disinfectant), or فيروس (virus) (Haouari, Hasanain, Reem, & Elsayed, 2020). In addition to Twitter, TikTok is also highlighted as another medium. As the most downloaded mobile app worldwide, TikTok has undeniable relevance in the context of social media platforms.

*Discussion:* The research examines whether the Arab digital public sphere in the context of COVID -19 differs from other public spheres in this regard and, if so, what exactly these differences seem to be. In this context, aspects such as origins, transmission, prevention and precaution, freedom of expression, the responsibility of the government, and the role of religion are considered. But distinctions do not only occur in a global comparison but also within the Arab digital public sphere. Therefore, the dissertation investigates the variable focuses depending on different geographical areas in the Arab world as well. TikTok brings the aspect of visuality into play and often deals with the serious topic of COVID -19 in a humorous way. This approach also enables a comparison of microblogging versus short-form video.

*References:*

Alam, F., et al. (2020). *Fighting the COVID-19 Infodemic: Modeling the Perspective of Journalists, Fact-Checkers, Social Media Platforms, Policy Makers, and the Society*. Association for Computational Linguistics.

Haouari, F., et al. (2020). *ArCOV19-Rumors: Arabic COVID-19 Twitter Dataset for Misinformation Detection*. Qatar University.

**Key Words**

*pandemic, COVID-19, Arab world, disinformation, Twitter, TikTok, social web*

# The framing of USA and Russian school massacres in American mainstream media

## Authors

Mrs. Anabela Gradim - University of Beira Interior / LabCom - Communication and Arts

Prof. João Pedro Baptista - University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro; Labcom - Communication and Arts

## Abstract

Framing studies are increasingly popular within communication sciences and journalism studies, representing a growing field of applied studies (Piñeiro-Naval & Mangana, 2019). Alternatively seen as categories to organize experience (Bateson, 1972; Goffman, 1974), ontological metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 2008), through the image of “special glasses” (Bourdieu, 1996), “windows to the world” (Tuchman, 1980), productive routines (Gitlin, 1980), and as a fractured paradigm (Entman, 1993), frame studies, akin to agenda setting and priming studies (Reese, 2001), have successfully shown how diversely the world can be framed, as myth and narrative (Bird & Dardenne, 2009), depending on very intense and wide range cultural packages (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

In this research, inspired by previous work from Entman and Birkland (Birkland & Lawrence, 2009; Entman, 1991), we analyze the framing of three school massacres in Russia and the United States, searching for differences in news coverage regarding the particular problem definition, its causal interpretation, moral evaluation and treatment recommendations.

Historically, the proliferation of military-caliber weapons in the US and the deregulation of a market protected by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment has led to an increase in shootings (firearm incidents) and massacres (more than four dead victims) in the United States, with a significant proportion occurring in schools or universities. Those involving young children in primary schools are particularly shocking, given the characteristics of the victims and the devastating effect they have on the community. In this study we will evaluate the news framing of three of these massacres, two in the United States, with very similar characteristics and with an interval of a decade between them (Sandy Hook, in 2012 [A1] and Robb Elementary, in 2022 [A2]), and one in Russia (Beslan, 2004 [A3]), which is 8 and 18 years apart from the American counterparts.

The purpose of the analysis is to understand the evolution of the framing of news reports in North American newspapers and the most salient news values in each case.

We hypothesize the following:

- H1. There are significant differences in the North American and Al-Jazeera coverage of A1 and A2;
- H2. The framing of A1 and A2 in North American media is different from A3;
- H3. The news values considered in A1 and A2 in the North American press are different from A3.

H4. The framing of the massacres by Al-Jazeera (A1, A2 and A3) is more homogeneous than in North American media, where considerable differences on the framing of national *versus* foreign tragedies are observed..

To carry out the study, we collected all the news published in the ***New York Times***, ***Washington Post*** and ***Al-Jazeera*** in the three months following each of the massacres, resulting in a selected *corpus* of 1659 news. The *corpus* was subject to a content analysis using the NVivo software, with results that indicate notable differences in the coverage of domestic vs. international incidents, an uneven contextualization of the topic in North American society, and of its effects on the community, in the space of the almost two decades considered here. A quantitative analysis of expressions and their frequencies in the text using the Vos Viewer software will also be performed, with results that are expected to reinforce the conclusions of the NVivo Study.

Other aspects already emerging from the preliminary approach to the *corpus* are that American reference media reserve much more space and emphasis regarding the North American massacres (news value of proximity); and present a more varied coverage, with frequent video and multimedia insertions. Also, the coverage changes over time, going from factual to analytical, with the number news features and updates decreasing as time goes by. Victims are treated differently, with a cleaner layout in A1 and A2, and the reaction of the international community is represented very differently. Moral judgments are diverse, with Mr. Putin being held personally responsible for the tragedy, something that does not happen with both presidents in exercise in the two North American cases.

Despite its applied content, this research also encompasses a methodological strand, in the sense that it seeks to translate the framing categories inductively, transforming them into proper variables for an intersubjectively validated content analysis. Furthermore, the preliminary approach to the corpus, in the inductive construction phase of the methodological instrument, shows that all starting hypotheses are significant. The coding of these variables, a work still in progress, will allow us to present the framing of the massacres in a much more objective light than any of the previous studies carried out so far.

### **Key Words**

Framing, frame analysis, news values, journalistic narratives, terrorism, school massacres



# **‘You can’t be a constructive Journalist and make it as a journalist in Kenya!’ Professionals’ Insights on Constructive Journalism Practice**

## **Authors**

Ms. Loise Macharia - University College Dublin

Dr. Marguerite Barry - University College Dublin

## **Abstract**

Constructive Journalism (Cojo) is an emerging genre in journalism practice that considers journalists as responsible for the quality of the news process and product and its impact on society (Hermans & Drok, 2018). Cojo seeks to address negativity and mistrust in the media, cultivating a responsible journalism reporting culture (Hermans & Gyldensted, 2019). Since journalists are responsible for the way the news reflects the world around us, they can influence people to become active citizens; develop balanced opinions, make decisions and take action regarding societal issues (McIntyre & Sobel, 2018). However, few studies have focused on the attitudes of journalists themselves to the potential use of Cojo in conflict-laden contexts like East Africa in the wake of terrorism. This paper explores journalists’ perceptions of Cojo practice in Kenya, the opportunities it presents and its potential usefulness in the context. Terrorism and consequently the response of counterterrorism threatens the peace and security of a country. Kenya’s experience with terrorism since its incursion into Somalia in 2011 has been characterized by terrorist attacks, destruction of life and property, strained relationships with its neighbours and human rights violations. The communicative power of violent death means that coverage of the conflicts in Kenyan media has focused reportage on every turn and twist in events (Nyakomitah et al., 2021). But Kenya’s legacy media houses have been at the centre of problematic reportage, with representations of the conflict creating ‘othered’ groups and causing further divisions (Media Council of Kenya, 2016). Cojo practice may help bring change to the journalism traditions and practices that characterize Kenya’s news processes. In addition, Kenya has a vibrant media and enjoys relative media freedom in a media sphere that makes a good case for investigation. The context also presents questions for journalism practices in conflict-laden democracies and how journalism practices can contribute to the understanding of conflicts and potential peacebuilding and prevention of violence (Ogenga, 2020). This paper reports on a qualitative study of journalists who have covered issues related to conflict both within Kenya and East Africa about their perceptions of Cojo in practice. Semi-structured interviews were carried out and interviewees (n=18) were selected based on their experience in coverage of terrorism and conflict issues in Kenya. The interviews were transcribed and coded through qualitative software NVivo12, and selected findings are presented and discussed. The findings indicate that although there are challenges in the adoption of Cojo practice, there are opportunities for it to flourish at professional, structural and individual levels. At a professional level, journalists are often times conflicted with their role to advocate change in society and the interests of the media house they work. At the structural level, journalists’ practice of Cojo practice struggles in traditional media

houses but has potential in alternative media like international press or other media outlets; At a personal level, journalists see the development of journalism practice in context as fluid, seeking to uncover what else they can individually do to champion societal change. This fluidity, allows for learning, unlearning and re-learning new ways to change their journalistic approaches in the context. The findings further advance Cojo scholarship and conceptualization in African contexts, bridging gaps noted in prior research (McIntyre & Lough, 2018)

**Key Words**

Constructive Journalism; In-depth interviews; Kenya; Alternative media; Conflict Coverage

# **Afghanistan's media usage under the Taliban Regime: A changed habitus of media usage after the Taliban's takeover?**

## **Authors**

Ms. Julia Eyrich-Welzl - Universität der Bundeswehr

Ms. Linda Henke - Universität der Bundeswehr

Prof. Sonja Kretzschmar - Universität der Bundeswehr

## **Abstract**

Media usage in Afghanistan has undergone significant changes in recent years, considering the country's ongoing political and social transformation (Yousaf & Jabarkhail, 2022). This study examines Afghans' media usage after the Taliban took power in August 2021. Previous research has shed light on the question, how media outlets in Afghanistan use social media differently since the takeover (e.g., Karimi, 2022). Studies have also shown that the Taliban have adopted a multi-faceted media strategy utilizing various tools and tactics to achieve its objective. Through its use of official spokespersons, websites, social media, and propaganda, the group has been able to advance its ideology and further its cause (e.g., Eyrich-Welzl & Obhani 2022; Bahar, 2020). The conditions of journalists as well as the media landscape have changed significantly in recent years reflecting the country's ongoing political and social transformation. The question remains open as to what extent media usage has also changed. To understand the media usage in Afghanistan nowadays, it is necessary to consider both the rich history of past developments in media context and the various factors that have influenced it.

The Taliban takeover in 1996 had a profound impact on media usage in Afghanistan. At that time, the Taliban imposed a strict interpretation of Islamic law and imposed strict restrictions on the press, including the closure of independent media outlets, the ban of women's voices on the radio, and the censorship of news and information deemed "un-Islamic" or "anti-Taliban.". The only source of information allowed was the official Taliban news agency, which served to spread the group's ideology and propaganda (Johnson et al., 2017; Khalvatgar, 2014). However, after the US-led coalition overthrew the Taliban in 2001, media in Afghanistan experienced a resurgence. The Afghan government introduced new laws to promote freedom of expression and encourage the in promoting transparency, accountability and democracy in the country (Hatef & Cooke, 2020; Isaczai, 2014). Since the Taliban regained power again in 2021, the media in Afghanistan is facing development of independent media (e.g., Relly & Zanger, 2017). Since the fall of the Taliban, the media has remained a crucial tool for promoting freedom of expression and played an important role new challenges including enormous threats to journalists', safety, censorship, and government interference. This has made it difficult for journalists to work and has limited their ability to travel and gather information (Sediqi & Shuaib, 2020) – it can be assumed that these facts influence media usage as well.

This study makes a valuable contribution in terms of comparing media usage before the Taliban came to power (based on existing data) and under the Taliban regime nowadays. What are differences and similarities in media usage between 1998 and today?

An online survey was conducted and will be available in all 35 provinces in Afghanistan. The study is currently being carried out. By referring to very recent developments in Afghanistan, this study provides a starting point for future research to examine media usage in times of transformations in digital environments in conflict regions.

Our goal is to identify the habitus of media usage in Afghanistan that has been shaped by a range of historical, cultural, and social values, as well as by limited access and technology.

**Key Words**

Audience, Media Usage, Taliban Regime, Conflicts, Wars, Insecurity