

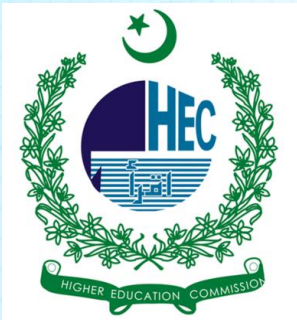
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Framing Pakistani Religious Minorities Through Linguistic Choices in Pakistani and International Newspapers: A Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Study



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Abstract

In this study, Pakistani religious minorities are examined in the discourse of Pakistani and international newspapers as a Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) study. This study selects the newspaper articles from Dawn (National Pakistani Newspaper), Express Tribune (Hybrid, National and International Newspaper), and Al Jazeera English (International Newspaper) with a purposive sampling method over a period from 2020 to 2024, which will be analyzed using the LancsBox software with frequency analysis, keyword analysis, collocation analysis, and concordance line analysis. The theoretical framework is based on van Dijk's ideological square, and this helps to analyze the positive self-presentation, negative other-presentation, inclusion, exclusion and polarization in the media texts. The investigation is structured by two overarching research questions that discuss the kind of collocations of key identity terms that build up divergent ideological connections within the three newspaper corpora, and highlights who gets to be heard and who does not in congruent lines of agency related to religious minority groups. This paper also examines the dominant lexical and semantic patterns in the tri-source corpus, to analyze collocational networks and interpret their ideological associations, and to compare discursive strategies and emergent thematic patterns in the tri-source corpus based on van Dijk's ideological square. The portrayal of minorities in Pakistani newspapers is done in a way that makes them appear as weak and vulnerable citizens whose constitutional rights are being violated, while at the same time portraying the state by using passive constructions and lexical mitigation. By contrast, Al Jazeera applies a human rights perspective, which makes minorities in Pakistan global actors who have been the victim of systematic abuse. This research adds to the increasingly strong Corpus-Assisted CDA research literature and provides a practically sound approach to analyzing minority representation in the media in the South Asian context.

Keywords: Corpus-Assisted CDA, religious minorities, Pakistan, media discourse, ideological framing, van Dijk, LancsBox, collocation analysis

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is more than a medium for exchanging information, it is an ideological tool that shapes, legitimizes and challenges social realities (Fairclough, 1995). The linguistic practices of newspapers, in the context of marginalized communities, have deep social and political implications in the realm of media discourse. The coverage of religious minorities in the Pakistani and international news media is one of the most important ideological battlegrounds because of the intricate socio-religious environment in Pakistan and the country's role in international debates regarding religious freedom, human rights, and minority protection. (Van Dijk, 1998)

There are various religious minorities in Pakistan, such as Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, Ahmadis and Shia Muslims, which together make up about 3–4% of the total population. Although these communities are officially citizens with equal rights, they have continued to be marginalized, socially discriminated and subjected to sporadic violence, especially due to the blasphemy laws of Pakistan and the work of religiously motivated extremist organizations. In what way the news is linguistically built, framed, and related in Pakistan and international media as liable victims, active citizens, invisible themes, or political symbols has direct insinuations for public perception, policy exemplifications, and ordinary experiences of minority societies (Richardson, 2007).

One methodologically comprehensive approach to research the possibility of such an ideological dimension of the language of media is Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). (Baker et al., 2008) The use of both quantitative and interpretive methods makes it possible to transcend impressionistic analysis of a text to uncover patterns of lexical choice, collocational patterns, and discursive framing that can be identified in large volumes of authentic language data. This is an integrated approach which has been used in the present study to examine the linguistic representation of the identity and social status of religious minorities in Pakistan in the Pakistani and international newspapers. (Wodak & Meyer, 2009)

Furthermore, newspapers do not sincerely file sports; they actively collect meanings thru selective linguistic alternatives, headlines, metaphors, and narrative systems. These linguistic strategies regularly mirror broader ideological positions and

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

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institutional hobbies (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1998). In the Pakistani context, the representation of religious minorities is regularly inspired with the useful resource of political sensitivities, religious narratives, and socio-cultural norms, whilst international newspapers may also frame the identical problems through the lenses of human rights, democracy, and international protection (Richardson, 2007). Such versions in framing can shape contrasting perceptions of Pakistan's minority groups at each countrywide and global tiers. Therefore, studying the language styles utilized in special media contexts is critical to understand how discourse contributes to the inclusion, exclusion, or stereotyping of marginalized companies (Baker et al., 2008).

In addition, the comparative assessment of Pakistani and global newspapers provides treasured insights into how international and nearby media structures characteristic within awesome ideological and cultural frameworks. Pakistani newspapers might also additionally emphasize countrywide crew spirit, religious harmony, or political balance, at the same time as global newspapers may also foreground problems consisting of persecution, insight, and freedom of faith. These contrasting representations may have an effect on global opinion, diplomatic participants of the circle of relatives, and insurance discussions regarding Pakistan's image on the global level (Said, 1997).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Comparative Corpus-Assisted CDA research on the framing of religious sectors in Pakistani newspapers in domestic and international contexts is relatively sparse. There has been little comparative Corpus-Assisted CDA research into the framing of religious minorities in Pakistani newspapers in the domestic and international context. The existing literature mostly focuses on either media discourse or treatment of minorities without using a combination of corpus-based linguistic analysis and ideological discourse analysis in the context of Pakistan. This gap is important because it affects the public perception of the minorities and their representation in the news, which in turn influences the government's actions, international advocacy and the self-concept of the minorities.

In addition, there is a majority of underexplored comparative research between the Pakistani national media (Dawn), the Pakistani hybrid media (Express Tribune), and the international Arabic-language/English-language media (Al Jazeera) which can

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help shed light on how the Pakistani media compares and contrasts the portrayal of a vulnerable population with that of the international media, and the ideological changes between the two.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study is structured around two focused research objectives:

- To examine collocational patterns surrounding religious minority identity terms and their ideological meanings.
- To analyze the attribution of agency to religious minorities in *Dawn*, *The Express Tribune*, and *Al Jazeera*.

1.4 Research Questions

The study is guided by two overarching research questions, each of which encompasses multiple analytical dimensions:

- How do collocational patterns around religious minority identity terms construct ideological meanings?
- How is agency attributed to religious minorities across *Dawn*, *The Express Tribune*, and *Al Jazeera*?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study has several major contributions to the areas of applied linguistics, media studies and South Asian studies. Methodologically, it contributes to the use of CDA using a corpus approach in non-Western media contexts, and highlights the use of the software tools in LancsBox such as GraphColl, KWIC concordancer, and generation of frequency list for CDA, for non-western context. Theoretically, it is a further extension of van Dijk's ideological square framework to the comparative analysis of Pakistani and international newspaper corpora, which will strengthen the application of the same in cross-cultural media research. On an empirical level, it offers systematic linguistic proof of the discursive processes through which Pakistani religious minorities are constituted as victims, citizens, or political symbols, thereby raising significant issues of media literacy, minority rights and advocacy, and journalism.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited to English-language newspaper articles posted among 2020 to onwards within the online variations of *Dawn*, *Express Tribune*, and *Al Jazeera*

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English. A corpus is limited to information reviews and opinion articles directly addressing Pakistani spiritual minorities, except for editorials, letters to the editor, and multimedia content material. The evaluation focuses in 4 main linguistic capabilities lexical alternatives, collocational patterns, pronominal usage, and evaluative framing as interpreted thru van Dijk's religious square framework.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Media Representation of Minority Groups

The relationship among media discourse and the social construction of minority individuality has been a primary problem in important media research for the reason that seminal work of Hall (1980) on indoctrination and decoding. Hall's quarrel that media representations are not obvious home windows onto truth but ideologically encoded assemblies of social relations laid the theoretic basis for next scholarship on minority design. Van Dijk (1991) extended this framework particularly to the area of racism and prejudice inside the press, representative via systematic discourse analysis that European newspapers automatically constructed ethnic sections as social troubles, threats, or deviant topics requiring control by means of the dominant mainstream.

Richardson (2004) in addition expounded at the mechanisms of linguistic othering in British newspaper coverage of Muslim groups, identifying lexical patterns of outlawing, risk inflation, and cultural essentialism that together construct Muslim groups as incompatible with liberal democratic values. Poole (2002) similarly traced the development of British media insurance of Islam through four decades, documenting the systematic privileging of terrible framing and the relegation of Muslim voices in national news discourse. These educations set up a sturdy procedural culture of CDA-knowledgeable media analysis that the existing have a look at attracts upon and extends to the Pakistani setting.

2.2 Religious Minorities in Pakistani Media

Scholarship mainly addressing the illustration of religious minorities in Pakistani media is fairly sparse but growing. Abbas (2010) examined the function of Pakistani Urdu-language press in structure spiritual minorities as pressures to national Islamic identification, tracing the historic roots of minority othering to the procedures of Islamization under General Zia ul-Haq inside the 1980. Zaidi (2018) analyzed the insurance of Ahmadi persecution in Pakistani television news, finding systematic

patterns of silencing and discursive invisibility that efficiently excluded Ahmadi perspectives from the nationwide media verbal exchange.

Karim (2019) carried out a qualitative content material assessment of Dawn's attention of Christian net violence among 2013 and 2018, figuring out a characteristic sample of persecution framing that concurrently stated minority suffering and deflected country duty thru passive structures and appeals to fanatical agency. While Karim's have a look at offers treasured qualitative insights, it lacked the systematic corpus-primarily based methodology vital to discover statistically extensive linguistic styles throughout a big and representative pattern of news texts a gap that the current study at directly discourses.

2.3 A Critical Discourse Analysis: Theoretical Foundations

A critical discourse analysis, as advanced by Fairclough (1992), van Dijk (1993), and Wodak (2001), proceeds from the foundational premise that language use is usually simultaneously a social exercise, a discursive exercise, and a textual exercise. For van Dijk (2001), discourse evaluation will become 'essential' when it investigates the role of discourse inside the reproduction of social inequality, power abuse, and ideological domination. Van Dijk's socio-cognitive technique to CDA emphasizes the placement of intellectual fashions and social representations in mediating between discourse systems and their social effects, making it particularly well perfect to the evaluation of media representations of stigmatized social concerns.

The ideological rectangular, considered one of van Dijk's maximum analytically green conceptual tools, describes the broad technique through which in-employer participants are absolutely represented and out-group contributors are negatively represented via systematic styles of emphasis and de-emphasis. Practical to media insurance of religious minorities, this framework predicts that dominant group views can be naturalized through high-quality self-presentation stressing the tolerance, constitutionalism, and moderation of Pakistani country and society even as minority perspectives will be framed through terrible different-presentation that constructs spiritual minorities as unceasingly inclined, politically tiresome, or culturally splendid.

2.4 A Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis

The integration of a corpus linguistics strategies with crucial discourse analysis has made a powerful hybrid method variously termed Corpus-Assisted CDA (Partington,

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2004), corpus-primarily based absolutely CDA (Baker et al., 2008), or corpus-pushed discourse assessment (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001). Baker et al.'s (2008) landmark examine of British newspaper discourse on refugees and asylum seekers validated the transformative capability of this aggregate, the use of Wordsmith Tools to find out collocational patterns in the course of a corpus of over 140 million words that could had been now not feasible to locate via guide near reading on my own.

The key methodological perception of Corpus-Assisted CDA is that methodical lexical patterns screen ideological orientations that individual analysts may also miss or unconsciously forget. As Stubbs (2001) argues, repeated collocational styles represent what he phrases 'semantic prosody the evaluative connotations that phrases collect thru their ordinary agency in real language use. When minorities continually collocates with attacks, fear and liability in a newspaper corpus, this sample constitutes corpus-linguistic evidence of a vulnerability-framing semantic prosody that CDA can then interpret ideologically. The present have a take a look at employs precisely this triangulated method, the use of LancsBox to generate quantitative corpus proof this is finally subjected to qualitative CDA interpretation.

2.5 Identification of Research Gap

The foregoing assessment reveals that at the same time as incredible scholarship exists on media representation of minorities, CDA frameworks, and Corpus-Assisted discourse evaluation, confined Corpus-Assisted CDA research has comparatively tested Pakistani and worldwide newspapers concerning the linguistic framing of Pakistani spiritual minorities. Existing Pakistani media research lacks the corpus-primarily based quantitative rigour crucial to transport from anecdotal to systematic claims about discursive patterns, at the same time as present Corpus-Assisted CDA studies on minority representation have awesomely targeted on Western media contexts. The present look at reports this compound hollow through utilizing corpus aided CDA technique to a purposively designed tri-source newspaper corpus, thereby generating empirical linguistic evidence that speaks each to Pakistani media research and to the broader global literature on corpus-based minority representation studies.

3. Methodology and Materials

3.1 Research Design

In this study, a mixed method research design using quantitative corpus linguistics

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and qualitative critical discourse analysis is employed. The quantitative dimension refers to the systematic analysis of the frequency patterns, the list of keywords and the statistics of collocations, which are collected in LancsBox software. The qualitative dimension is the ideological interpretation of concordance lines, lexical selections and discursive plans within the basis of the ideological square as suggested by van Dijk. The procedural triangulation used here deals with the lack of pattern identification in purely quantitative corpus analysis and the lack of systematic patterns in the ideology interpretation in purely qualitative CDA.

3.2 Data Collection

The corpus has been purposively sampled from English-language newspaper articles from three different news sources: Dawn (Pakistani national newspaper), Express Tribune (Pakistani hybrid/internationalized newspaper) and Al Jazeera English (international news source covering South and Central Asia). The articles were chosen as they directly related to Pakistani religious minorities Christians, Hindus, Sikhs or Ahmadis in relation to Pakistani home affairs, religious violence, and application of the blasphemy law, advocacy of minority rights or other aspects of Pakistani domestic affairs. The sampling period is from January 2020 to December 2024, reflecting current times of the post-COVID conversation, in which minorities' vulnerability became more apparent than ever in the face of other social disruptions. The final corpus is made up of about 100 articles, which are distributed as shown in the table below (Table 1).

Table 1: *Corpus Composition*

Newspaper	Type	Articles	Approximate Word Count
Dawn	Pakistani National	35	~52,500
Express Tribune	Pakistani Hybrid/Internationalized	30	~45,000
Al Jazeera English	International	35	~52,500
Total	—	100	~150,000

3.3 Sampling Strategy

Purposive sampling was used because the study aims to examine a specific and barely beset type of discourse English-language newspaper articles that specifically reference Pakistani religious minorities. This non-probability sampling technique has been used in qualitative and mixed method studies where representativeness of a larger population is not of chief importance when attempting to understand a specific phenomenon. Articles were selected through keyword searching the online archives of newspapers with the search terms 'religious minorities, Christians Pakistan,' 'Hindus Pakistan, Ahmadis, blasphemy law minorities,' etc. Articles shorter than 300 words and duplicate articles, wire service reprints, were not included.

3.4 Analytical Tool

LancsBox (Lancaster University Corpus Toolbox - version 6.0) was chosen as the main corpus analysis tool. Frequency list generation, keyword analysis, visualizing the collocation network of a node word in the corpora in relation to a reference corpus, and the close reading of all occurrences of a given search term with the roughly plus or minus 5 words of context around the node word can be provided by LancsBox's integrated suite of corpus analysis functions, which are relevant to the present study's analytical needs.

3.5 Analytical Procedure

The analytical process used was a sequential seven-step procedure which had been specially created for this study. Corpus Construction. The articles were saved as plain text (.txt) files and uploaded as separate corpora to LancsBox so as to allow for comparison of sub-corpora (Dawn, Express Tribune, Al Jazeera). Frequency Analysis frequency lists were created for each sub-corpus. As for the content words, those that occurred in more than 50 percent of the texts were selected and grouped into semantic fields, except for grammatical function words. Two of the sub-corpora were used as reference corpora for the other, the keyness statistic ($p < 0.01$) of log-likelihood was used, and lexical items that are disproportionately frequent in each newspaper were extracted. Collocation networks were created for node words such as minorities, Christians, Hindus, Ahmadis, blasphemy and rights by using the tool called GraphColl, which is used for collocation analysis. The significance criteria used were MI score (>3) and frequency threshold (>3). Concordance Analysis: All node words in KWIC

concordances were studied with respect to agency attribution, passive constructions, modality and evaluative lexis. CDA Interpretation: Corpus findings were analysed using van Dijk's ideological square in order to interpret the patterns of positive self-presentation, negative other-presentation, inclusion and exclusion. Thematic Analysis and Comparative Discussion: Themes that are discursively developed from the corpus data have been identified and compared among the three sub-corpora of newspapers

3.6 Theoretical Framework

The main theoretical perspective for the study of corpus findings is called ideological square. The four complementary discursive strategies described in the ideological square are:

This model explains how language is used to construct ideologies. It focuses on four discursive strategies in text and discourse. These include positive self-representation of the in-group. It also includes negative representation of the out-group and minimizing their positive aspects. In this study, the in-group refers to Pakistani state and society as represented in newspapers. The out-group includes religious minorities, international critics, and extremist groups, as represented in media discourse.

Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Frequency Patterns across Sub-Corpora

Systematic differences in the dominant lexical items of Pakistani religious minorities coverage in the three newspaper is observed by using the frequency analysis technique in this study. In order to observe the systemic difference in the dominant lexical items used by the three newspapers in the coverage of Pakistani religious minorities, the frequency analysis technique has been applied to the corpus. For all three sub-corpora the most common content words are: community, violence, rights, minorities, attack, law, religious, protection, government and Pakistan.

The terms that are related to constitutional and legal discourse in the Dawn sub-corpus have a significantly higher relative frequency in comparison to the Al Jazeera sub-corpus, such as the terms law, constitutional, rights, government, courts. This is reflective of the fact that the majority of the coverage of Dawn is largely domestic and legal-political, with minority issues perceived as issues related to the country's constitution. The Express Tribune corpus falls somewhere between the

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Dawn and Al Jazeera in terms of the constitutional vocabulary, but is more similar to Dawn in the use of international human rights vocabulary (international, persecution, discrimination), at levels close to those found in Al Jazeera. The quantitative patterns form the basis for more specific keyword and collocation analyses that will follow.

Table 2: *Top 10 Frequency Items by Sub-Corpus*

Rank	Dawn	Express Tribune	Al Jazeera
1	community	minorities	persecution
2	rights	violence	minorities
3	minorities	rights	violence
4	government	community	discrimination
5	law	attacks	oppressed
6	constitutional	government	rights
7	protection	religious	community
8	citizens	blasphemy	international
9	religious	extremism	human rights
10	Pakistan	Pakistan	marginalization

4.2 Keyword Analysis: Divergent Ideological Vocabularies

This is the fourth part of the Keyword Analysis. This is the fourth Keyword Analysis: Divergent Ideological Vocabularies. A look at the differences in ideology with respect to the use of words reveals striking evidence of divergent ideological vocabularies by performing keyword analysis across each sub-corpus, with the other two corpora serving as reference corpora. The Keynes analysis reveals the statistically highly occurring lexical items in the newspapers, which shows different conceptual frameworks in which each newspaper presents the social reality of the religious minorities in Pakistan.

The most characteristic terms of Dawn are: harmony, citizens, sensitive, tolerance and coexistence. The semantic field they make up is one of managed pluralism, a type of discourse that recognizes the concerns of minorities and yet

Liberal Journal of Language & Literature Review

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places them in the context of national concerns of social stability and inter-communal accommodation. The prevalence of the terms 'harmony' and 'coexistence' in the keywords Dawn uses to describe minority issues suggests a subtle but ideologically important focus on threats to the national social order instead of on human rights violations.

This gives a distinctly different semantic profile to the most distinctive keywords of Al Jazeera: persecution, oppressed, systematic, global, condemned, and accountability. This vocabulary places religious minorities of Pakistan in an international human rights context, builds their situation as one of global concern and places the blame for their situation on the Pakistani state structures and legal frameworks. Remarkably, the word systematic is often included: Dawn often frames violence against minorities as the actions of non-state extremists, thus leaving the state somehow off the hook, but Al Jazeera's employment of it suggests institutional causation and state complicity. Individual of the most vital ideological findings of the study is this difference in agentive edging.

Table 3: Top Keywords by Sub-Corpus (Keyness Log-Likelihood > 6.63, $p < 0.01$)

Dawn Keywords	Express Tribune Keywords	Al Jazeera Keywords
harmony	minorities	persecution
citizens	violence	oppressed
sensitive	attacked	systematic
tolerance	extremism	accountability
coexistence	blasphemy	condemned
constitutional	sectarian	global
law	discrimination	international community
protection	security	human rights violation

4.3 Collocational Patterns and Semantic Prosody

This unit examines the aspects of collocation patterns and semantic prosody in the context of writing. Collocation analysis is used as the methodological backbone of the

present Corpus-Assisted CDA study and unveils the systematic associative networks in which the key terms from the minority refer to a particular newspaper corpus. Minorities, Christians, Hindus and Ahmadis have been taken as the node words with significance criteria of MI score > 3 and minimum frequency > 3 within the ± 5 word areas.

4.3.1 Collocates of 'Minorities'

The word 'minorities' occurs most often with 'rights', 'protection', 'constitutional', 'sensitive', 'government', and 'community' in the Dawn sub-corpus. The construction of minorities in this collocation profile is primarily as bearers of constitutional rights that subject them to protection by the state, which is a sympathetic and paternalistic construction, where minorities are considered not as active political agents, but as recipients of the state's benevolence. It would be especially interesting to consider the strong collocation with 'sensitive' which implies that Dawn frame minority issues as politically sensitive topics in which care must be taken and in which one must be diplomatic in dealing with minority rights claims, thereby writing a discourse of caution and diplomatic restraint surrounding minority rights claims.

For the sub-corpus of Al Jazeera, the word 'minorities' has the strongest collocation with the following words persecution, face, and violence, fear, attacks, systematic, taste, and marginalized. This collocation profile creates a dramatically different semantic prosody: and one in which the existence of the minorities is mainly linked to threat, vulnerability and suffering. Of particular interest, however, the Al Jazeera collocation network also features the presence of terms of activism like condemned and accountability, suggesting that the vulnerability discourse is found alongside a rights-claiming discourse not found in Dawn's coverage. The Express Tribune's constitutional vocabulary is blended with that of Pakistani newspapers, while it uses the latter's hybrid collocation space as well.

4.3.2 Collocates of Ahmadis

The collocational analysis of Ahmadis shows that there are significant differences between the sub-corpora, especially between the religious and non-religious ones. The period Ahmadis is connected by Dawn and Express Tribune with rule, avowed, non-Muslim, and constitution, which find Ahmadi identity inside the limits of Pakistani constitutional and permissible classification. This collocational pattern validates and

perpetuates the prevailing Pakistani legal discourse which treats the Ahmadi issue as a settled matter of constitution rather than as a contemporary human rights issue as the 1974 Second Amendment declared Ahmadis to be non-Muslims.

In the sub-corpus Al Jazeera, the collocations that are used with Ahmadis are: persecuted, targeted, attacked, killed, and most vulnerable, which emphasize the physical threat and systematic discrimination of Ahmadi communities. The difference in language – the legal-administrative approach of Pakistani newspapers (law, declared, constitution) and the human rights approach of Al Jazeera (persecuted, targeted, killed) – is corpus-linguistic evidence that shows that the Pakistani and international media have two fundamentally different orientations regarding the Ahmadi question..

4.4 Concordance Analysis and Ideological Framing

In the analytical phase that follows the quantitative patterns in the concordance analysis are qualitatively interpreted by means of the KWIC lines as shown in the concordance analysis. The following section includes representative lines from each of the sub-corpora and examines how gentility, victimization, and ideology are constructed.

4.4.1 Agency Attribution

There is a systematic usage of agentive building in both Pakistani and international newspapers. Ferocity against minorities is always blamed on non-state actors in the concordance used in Dawn's stories, such as builds create the impression of the state as a passive bystander to extremist violence, rather than a possible facilitator, and diffuse the blame from the state's institutional actors. There was a condemnation of the use of passive voice' – further undermines state accountability by foregrounding the action (condemnation) over the actor's institutional power. In disparity, Al Jazeera's concordance lines more often deploy constructions that explicitly attribute accountability to legal contexts and state institutes

4.4.2 Victimhood Construction

Minority groups are clearly and consistently represented as victims in each of the three sub-corpora. But the type and nature of victimization varies widely, however. Dawn and Express Tribune tend to talk about victimhood in terms of instantaneous physical threat attack, violence, threat whereas at the same time it portrays

constitutional protection as a offsetting discourse. Whereas Al Jazeera builds a more systemic victimization, not just physical, but structural, legal, and denying full citizenship. The distinction between the way minority experiences are framed in Pakistan's newspaper paradigm (event-based) and Al Jazeera's (context-based) can be attributed to the difference in the way minorities are covered with the two paradigms.

4.5 Comparative Discussion van Dijk's Ethical Square

Based on the use of van Dijk's ideological square in the comparative corpus analysis, systematic patterns of ideological positioning from both Pakistani and international newspaper discourse are found. In the Pakistani media (mainly Dawn), there is a regularity of in-group positive presentation in which the Pakistani state and society is presented as constitutionally tolerant, lawfully protective, and dedicated to the rights of minorities even when there is empirical evidence of systematic minority persecution. Such optimistic self-presentation is talented by lexical mitigation which redefines violence as incidents or 'unfortunate proceedings, agentive displacement which redirects blame for violence away from the state onto extremists, and constitutional prayer which relies on legal protections as proof of official capacity.

At the same time, the Pakistani newspapers demonstrate a tendency to de-emphasize non-dominant or minority voices, reduce international critique, and restrict structural critiques of the Pakistani legal framework. The relative lack of minority voices in the concordance lines in Dawn is corpus-linguistic evidence of systematic discursive exclusion of the minority voices. In contrast, Al Jazeera's reporting shows signs of out-group negative presentation that builds Pakistani legal and political frameworks as tools of minority persecution, and offers comparatively more discursive voice to minority and international human rights arguments.

Conclusion

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study has performed a critical discourse analysis of Pakistani religious sectors representation in three newspaper corpora (Dawn, Express Tribune, Al Jazeera) that has been assisted by the use of corpus techniques (frequency analysis, keyword analysis, collocation analysis and concordance examination) for the purpose of finding systematic linguistic evidence of Pakistani religious minorities' representation as an ideological framing. The following may be cited as the main conclusions. In the

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first place, the frequency analysis showed that there is a distinct lexical profile that is specific to each newspaper sub-corpus; constitutional/legal terminology was found in the Pakistani newspapers, while Al Jazeera newspaper was characterized by human rights and persecution related terms. Second, the analysis of the keywords has resulted in the identification of two divergent ideological wordboxes one with keywords from Dawn (harmony, citizens, sensitive) that can be grouped into a discourse of managed pluralism, and one with keywords from Al Jazeera (persecution, oppressed, systematic, accountability) that can be grouped into a discourse of human rights violations. Third, the collocation analysis showed that the term 'minorities' appeared with the constitutional and protective terms in Pakistani newspapers, while it appeared with persecution and violence terms in Al Jazeera, where the meanings of the same terms are different in different corpora, as revealed by the different semantic prosodies. Fourth, during the concordance analysis, it was found that the Pakistani newspapers ascribe the blame for minority persecution mainly to non-state actors but ascribe the responsibility of the state as a reactive protector, on the contrary Al Jazeera tends to blame more often on Pakistani legal frameworks and the inaction of the state. Lastly, four major themes of discourse were found: victimization discourse, national identity discourse, religious tension discourse, and international human rights framing.

5.2 Theoretical Implications

The use of van Dijk's ideological square on a comparative corpus of three newspapers proves the fruitful synergy between ideology theory and corpus methodology. The analytical categories used in the square positive self-presentation, negative other-presentation, inclusion and exclusion occur naturally when applied to the corpus data, in the shape of collocational patterns, agentive constructions, and keyword profiles, allowing to interpret the quantitative data in a theoretically informed manner. The methodological contribution is of special interest to applied linguistics scholars interested in the representation of minorities in non-Western media contexts in which Corpus-Assisted CDA has not been widely used.

5.3 Practical Implications

The results of the study have practical implications for media professionals, minority rights activists, as well as policy makers. Systematic documentation of passive constructions, agentive displacement, and minority voice exclusion in the Pakistani

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newspaper reports can be the tangible proof for the editorial changes for more accountable and inclusive reporting practices among journalists and editors. In the eyes of minority rights advocates, the study focuses on looking at the discursive leverage points (constitutional framing, international human rights framing, and agentive attribution) in which alternative representations can be strategically represented and disseminated. The study offers pedagogically useful examples for newspaper language buildings that do not mirror social reality, and helps media literacy educators to critically interpret the ways in which newspapers are used to ideologically frame minority communities.

5.4 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The present study has a number of limitations that suggest fruitful avenues for future research. First, although the corpus was methodically developed, it is relatively small, containing about 100 articles, which is suitable for Corpus-Assisted CDA, but needs to be expanded in further studies. Third, it had focused exclusively on English-language newspapers, and Urdu-language Pakistani newspapers (such as Jang, Nawa-i-Waqt and Daily Pakistan) have not been included as they may be able to provide further information about how the Urdu language is ideologically shaped in the coverage of religious minorities. Third, the synchronic nature of the study means that diachronic analysis of the development of minority framing over time is not possible. Future studies could overcome these limitations by creating a more extensive, longitudinal, multilingual database of Pakistani religious minorities that included visual framing analysis, reader response, and social media discourse, thus providing a more complete picture of the discursive construction of Pakistani religious minorities in the contemporary media ecology.

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