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Awarding of Citizenship to Afghan and Bengali Refugees: a Comparative Analysis of Pakistan's Print and Social Media Frames

Abstract: *This research focuses on the framing of Afghan and Bengali refugees in the mainstream print and social media as a result of the announcement made by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, for awarding citizenship to both Afghan and Bengali refugees. A comparative analysis explores the cross-media examination of print and social media framing regarding the respective issue. The results of the quantitative content analysis revealed that social media adopted more pro-citizenship frames by portraying the refugees as compared to the print media, which employed more anti-citizenship frames. Furthermore, the research highlights that social media adopted more humanitarian and legal framework topics to lay emphasis on the suffering of refugees. The Urdu newspapers framed the Afghan and Bengali citizenship issue in a more pro-citizenship manner as compared to the English newspapers. The mainstream print media employed more unfavorable frames to accentuate the refugees as an economic burden, as compared with the social media. The political apprehension and burden on the economy is the foremost rationale for the aversion to granting citizenship rights to the refugees.*

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Key Words: Refugee Crisis, Social Media, Print Media, Citizenship, Media Framing

Introduction

This study examines the comparative media framing of the Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government's policy announcement to award citizenship to the Afghan and Bengali refugees in print and social media (Hasan, 2018). The refugee issue in Pakistan is quite intricate because the refugees residing in Pakistan are not restricted to a particular ethnic group or region; they, rather,

belong to different nationalities and geographical origins (e.g. Afghan and Bengali refugees). After the independence of Pakistan, on the 14th of August, 1947, the newly created state faced administrative and socio-economic problems, which were further aggravated by the suffering and rehabilitation of refugees (Jamil, 2018). Most of the refugees were settled in the northwestern region of Pakistan rather than the eastern territories (Abdulluminov, 2015).

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With respect to this, the ideological divide between the Muslims and Hindus on the basis of the "Two-Nation Theory" had inculcated the notion of nationalism among the regional folks, which manifested into two sovereign countries, Pakistan and India. Later, in 1971, the creation of Bangladesh resulted in a new refugee crisis: Pakistani citizens of Bengali origin who chose to stay in West Pakistan were being treated as refugees. Another crisis took place during the aggression by the Communist regime of the USSR over Kabul; a new wave of refugees emerged from the western borders of Pakistan. These Afghan refugees seemed to take asylum for a long term and chose to be in mainland Pakistan than in specified refugee camps (Emery & Ruiz, 2001).

The refugee crisis in Pakistan is relatively different from Europe because the Islamic Republic of Pakistan dissolves the distinction between the immigrants and the natives based on the Charter of Medina. It upheld the principle of equality and justice regardless of tribe, race and nationality. Therefore, the paper focuses on how the Muslim countries portray the migrants from Afghanistan & Bangladesh.

The refugees' crisis, having political significance, is a humanitarian and an international basic right issue to flee the prosecution (Issac, 2017). The refugees are portrayed in stereotypical frames based on their ethnicity and racial backgrounds. Social capital was incapable of assimilating into the socio-cultural milieu of Pakistan. The migration of Afghan Refugees had not received a positive response because of the perceived symbiotic relationship between the Afghani people and a commendable Islamic struggle *against Jihad*. The inappropriate resolution, both in terms of qualitative and quantitative aspects, might pretend a threat to the socio-economic fabric of the state. Therefore, they must be equally treated as an organic part of society. Similarly, the Organization of African Union (OAU) convention regarding the refugees' problem in Africa prior to 1969, irrespective of international legal instruments, was also exilic bias (UNHCR, 1995).

The "Citizenship Act 1951" of Pakistan is relatively apparent in the respective consideration which states that anyone who was born in Pakistan after the enactment of this act would have been a citizen of Pakistan. The announcement made by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, to grant citizenship to the long-term "refugees" is significant and has the potential to positively transform the lives of many immigrants. Subsequently, the Prime Minister has announced granting citizenship to the Afghani and Bengali refugees (Hasan, 2018).

The thematic frames used in both print and social media have the power to influence the perception and insight of the target audience through the positive and negative representation of an event. Therefore, media reframe an event either in a conscious way or in an unconscious manner (Chyi & McCombs (2004)). This study quantitatively analyzes the media discourse of Afghan and Bengali refugees by examining the thematic context and framing communicated by means of print and social media. The study will enhance understanding of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) government concerns regarding the issue.

There is an ongoing scholarly debate between the pro-immigrants and anti-immigrants in Pakistan. The former has taken the polarized position to make available the immigrants with aid and humanitarian support, and the latter is subjected to the notion of security concerns and an ethnocentric frame of perception against the immigrants. Harari (2018) argued that the anti-immigration forces had set a high bar in order to assimilate into the local culture, and the pro-immigration groups placed a much lower bar for assimilation (Harari, 2018).

According to Boehnert (2019), there are various types of oppression that the oppressed groups have had to suffer; their positions are more evident in the contradictions between capitalism and digital capitalism. The cross-examination of mediums is pertinent to understanding the intricacies of their treatment of an issue and how the coverage of an event in print media with a definite organizational structure is different from the online medium based on user-generated content. Dougalas (2019) empirically

examined the hashtags exchanged on Twitter during the general elections in the UK in 2015. The political discussions on Twitter are elite-focused discourse. He found the presence of elite status maintained by elites within its borders (Dagoula, 2019).

Media and the Message

McLuhan's (1964) statement, "Medium is the message," extends to us due to the use of new technologies and their active engagement in our daily affairs. New media technologies have changed the dynamics of information. The ability of user-generated content (Web 2.0) allows media users to express their views in democratic ways. Social media encompasses the ability to transform the virtual world with the help of feedback. An important fact that differentiates the form of feedback in print and on YouTube (as a social form of new media) is the content generation. The content generated is the produced, perceived and interpreted by one person's opinion about the product, whereas on YouTube, the content is generated by many people and a huge chain of multiple opinions (V & M, August 2018).

With the birth of Web 2.0, the new media provided the audience with a platform to provide feedback, which can be assessed at any point in time and the feedback could be accessed as a part of the message (V & M, August 2018). According to Amedie (2015), the unobstructed stream of information in social media has an imperative impact on our economy, view of the world and culture (Amedie, 2015). The media is a tool to articulate the ideological constructions by stereotyping-stigmatizing the specific event or groups. The media is an elite social institution that reproduces discriminatory discourse, through the structural and ideological role, by emulating racial discrimination (Ibrahim, 2017). The multiple options available to the media to report on refugees allow the press to choose what aspects to emphasize or neglect (Bushehri, 2016).

An influx of Muslim refugees from Afghanistan and India

In 1947, one in five Pakistanis was a refugee (Zaidi, 2018). The Bengali refugees arrived in Pakistan before the independence and after the debacle of 1971. The depreciated socio-economic

conditions in Bangladesh also proved to be the source of a large influx of immigration. The current study trifurcates the migration phase. The first phase of migration occurred from August 1947 to November 1947, the most violent and largest phase of migration. The second phase was the longest, from December 1947 to December 1971. The third and final phase of migration extended from 1973 to the 1990s. The point of distinction with this migration was that it included the "educated unemployed Muslims from different parts of India including the Urdu speaking Muslims" (Abddulmuminov, 2015). The refugee crisis has become a worldwide phenomenon in the 21st century. The right-wing politics and ethnocentric frame of sensitivity have made the way difficult for the refugees or immigrants to assimilate into the foreign country in order to live a better socio-economic life. The mass exodus of Afghan refugees began in 1979 when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan.

The foremost rationale behind the invasion was to safeguard the communist government and to install their like-minded president. The ideological confrontation with the United States of America during the Cold war had provoked the Soviet Union to establish its firm footprint in South Asia. The process of transmigration between the two nascent countries had been a daunting task to deal with, especially in Pakistan. There were about 3.3 million Afghan refugees living in Pakistan, and more than 2 million refugees lived in North-West Frontier Province (Lorch, 1988). In Pakistan, there were already 400,000 refugees at the end of 1979, according to the UNHCR. Meanwhile, during the ongoing period of Soviet invasion, foreign powers like the United States, Saudi Arabia and China had supported the mujahedeen. Resultantly, the state of Pakistan was plunged into a 10 year-long war, which had claimed thousands of lives.

Pakistan and Iran each shared 3.1 million Afghan refugees (UNHCR). The USA perceived herself being the victim of terrorism, determined

to initiate a war against the Taliban as a future threat. Claiming responsibility for deadly attacks on Washington and New York and the refusal of Taliban leader Mullah Umar to hand him over, the USA attacked Afghanistan in reprisal and the situation worsened.

The US forces, formed an ally with Massoud's Northern Alliance to accomplish the joint motive to end the rule of the Taliban, began airstrikes which were followed up by the ground troops. In December 2002, a period of optimism was started to usher in Afghanistan when the interim government was led by the elected Hamid Karzai in December. The Pashtun refugees were reluctant to return because of the fear of prosecution at the hands of the Tajik and Uzbek majority (Noor, 2006). Afghan refugees, more than 1.5 million, in 2012 had returned to Afghanistan. Over the next few years, the rate of repatriation hovers between 300,000 to 400,000.

The issue of Afghan refugees surfaced during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Pakistan registered around 2.15 million Afghan refugees with the help of UNHCR during the period of 2006-7. Afghan refugees were provided by the government of Pakistan with registration cards that validated the stay of Afghan refugees in Pakistan till December 2009. On the 30th of June, 2018, the interim government of Pakistan extended the residential period of Afghanistan for 90 days. After the general elections in Pakistan, the incumbent government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf announced the awarding of citizenship to Afghan and Bengal refugees, ineligibility for them to get jobs and basic socio-economic facilities.

Yazgan et al. (2015) asserted that there is an imagined difference between a refugee and an economic migrant. All refugees have an immediate threat, along with an obvious economic cause, from the area they escape. The trouble behind the economic migrants is different ethnic, religious, caste or creed as compared to the host country.

War-stricken Afghans taking asylum in Pakistan made them vulnerable to isolation and social stagnation. Their improper documentation and low-level education led to their job ineligibility leading them to adopt illegal means

to cope with their daily lives. The UNHCR Pakistan and different NGOs have helped these communities to empower with the educational and social skills. There have been 4.4 million refugees repatriated between 2002-and 2019 from Pakistan to Afghanistan (Qayyum, 2019).

Generally, humanity has an entrenched readiness, based on ethnocentrism, to partition themselves into in-groups and out-groups (Kinder & Kam 2009, pp. 1-61). Individuals who possess an ethnocentric mindset tend to assume that the in-group members are virtuous and trustworthy. They are perceived to be friendly and share common symbols and practices within the in-group seem the pertinent sources of attachment and pride among them.

Literature Review

According to Immanuel Wallerstein's World System Theory (1976) and theory of critical International Political Economy (IPE), economic disparities provide a force to drive international politics and relations (László, 2018). In Pakistan, in relation to media and migration, the theme of "asylum seekers and refugees" accounted for a third of all messages and unfavorable messages still outnumbered favorable ones. The nature of unfavorable messages related to the country's camp and their inadequate accommodation (McAuliffe, Weeks & Koser, 2017).

The framing of refugees in the British and German media (Newspapers) argued that the women and children were predominantly featured. The integration of refugees and representations of state control was focused on by the German press. Furthermore, the very graphic imagery didn't refrain in the German tabloid. Though the British press featured both women and children in a high number of pictures, but none of the representations of refugees' integration in its press existed. The British tabloid, being notorious in expression, portrayed the refugees rather in a negative and partially criminal image (Ukmar, 2017).

Hunt (2017) analyzed the nature of American news media framing of Hungarian refugees in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. He found the relationship between the positive portrayals of refugees in the news media, which

matched the positive public opinion regarding the respective refugee group (Hunt, 2017). The postmodernist response by the Cypriots, Greek-speaking, to the discourse related to politics might be considered as the exponential growth of nationalism and dependence (Poupazis, 2016).

The British newspaper *The Guardian* has used both negative and positive framing and presents the refugees both as collectivist and individualistic. The presence of the 'jungle metaphor' and framing of refugees as 'wild' and 'violent' emphasize the partial way of news media reporting. *The Guardian* used the constructionist theoretical approach of representation where cultural stereotypes and the use of frames and metaphors were to communicate different views about the refugees (Radu, 2018).

Similarly, Isaac (2017) argued that the human interest frames were avoided by the far-right news outlets as compared to the liberal outlets. The Australian print media focused on border protection in relation to immigrants. The theme of criminal metaphor, using psychological discursive constructions, is used to differentiate the law-abiding Australians and 'criminal' asylum seekers. The print media of the UK convince the readers about the removal of failed asylum seekers (Parker, 2015).

Celeste (2013) argued that in *The New York Times*, there was a difference in the representation of Cuban and Haitian immigrants residing in the United States of America. The media frames used for Cubans was *Character Strength*, which encompassed characteristics such as courageous, hardworking, religious, forgiving, loyal, family-oriented, innovative, and compassionate. The framing of Haitians reflected already existing stereotypes, as this group is framed to the extent of being overwhelmingly negative. Haiti and Haitians were portrayed in the US media as impoverished, destitute and dependent on the US for their survival (Celeste, 2013). *Fox News* posted in the refugee category the articles about terrorism and crimes by non-refugees (Issac, 2017). Lawlor and Tolley (2017) argued that the media coverage of immigrants in the Canadian print media, more frequently, is associated with the economic considerations (positively) and

refugee coverage, more frequently (negatively), is associated with the validity considerations. The discursive distinction drawn between the immigrants and refugees indicates that the media coverage of refugees is episodic and their background focuses on the media coverage, while more durable and thematic coverage is given to the immigrants (Lawlor & Tolley, 2017).

Wirth (2016) highlighted that the European Union appreciated the Turkish actions concerning the European refugee crisis. In turn, it had a positive effect on the negotiations regarding EU membership (Wirth, 2016). Cissel (2012) analyzed the comparative content analysis of mainstream and alternate media to examine the framing of Occupy Wall Street demonstrations. The findings showed differences in the framing of an event between the mainstream and alternate media.

The alternate media used longer articles that focused on the brutality of the police and the demonstrators' struggle to accomplish their demands. Conversely, the mainstream media created confusion as the dominant theme of the event and the cause of the violence was placed on protestors (Cissel, 2012). The media framing of Matthew Shepard's story in the three newspapers outlet (*Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*) and two magazines outlet (*Time magazine* and *The Advocate*) stigmatized the LGBT to affirm the dominant discourse related to them and the event had named as a violent anti-gay hate crime. The employment of 'comic frames,' Burke's notion, for the coverage of public tragedies, is a potential correction (Ott & Aoki, 2002).

Alhayek (2014) examined the online and mainstream global media portrayal of Syrian Refugees, especially women in Jordan. He argued that there is a significant disconnection between the online and offline realities in relation to the issues of Syrian women refugees. The ethnographic study shows that the members of the online feminist campaign on the social media website Facebook, "Refugees Not Captives (RNC)," promote an orientalist depiction of Syrian women (Alhayek, 2014).

Vlaicu and Balauta (2017) argued that the portrayal of refugees in the social media shows

that the refugees, especially Muslims, coming to Europe are perceived as terrorists, rapists, criminals, and ill-intended people in the recurrent themes. The refugees may inflict a drastic brunt on the security of the nation. Besides, affluence can be threatened by the portrayal of the influx of refugees in an unfavorable manner, such as an invasion. However, the willingness to support the refugees to fight for their rights is still found among compassionate people.

Research Questions

RQ-1: Whether and to what extent did Pakistan's mainstream newspapers and Twitter cover the issue of citizenship for Afghan and Bengali refugees in pro-citizenship and anti-citizenship frames?

RQ-2: What are the similarities and differences in the framing of an issue of award of citizenships to the Afghan and Bengali refugees in Pakistan's mainstream newspapers and social media?

Theoretical Framework

Agenda setting theory determines "the prominence of elements in the news that influences the importance of those elements among the public" (Carol & McCombs, 2003, p. 36). This research is based on the second level of Agenda-setting theory, such as framing theory. Previous researches on framing describe how media portray news stories. Due to the conflicting dynamics of globalization, international events such as terrorism, war and health problems have considerably attracted media attention around the globe (Loeffelholz & Weaver, 2008). Framing theory provides us with substantial information about the nature of virtual reality, re-presented in print, electronic and digital media, being shaped by the juxtaposition of conventional text and audio-visual clips. In the domain of foreign policy, the frames can be employed at multiple levels, such as: prior to, during, and after the decision to make use of the force (Mintz & Redd, 2003).

Scheufele (1999) identified four key links while explaining the framing theory. The first is "building of frame," which focuses on the

selection of frames on the basis of multiple influences like journalists, selection of frames and external sources (political authorities, interest groups and other elites); the second is "setting of the frame" which focuses on the salience of issue attributes, third is "effects at an individual level," focuses the impact of frames on behavioral, attitudinal and cognitive variables; finally, the fourth link, "journalist as the audience" describes how journalists, like their audience, are cognitive miser, while describing the events and issues, the journalist is equally susceptible to the frames (Scheufele, 1999). Ibrahim (2017) argued that media employs a range of devices, textual and discursive, to "reproduce such racial ideologies through articulating differences as a threat and violence as the basis of the identity of minority groups."

Research Methodology

The purposive sample consisting of two English daily newspapers (*Dawn* and *The News International*) and two Urdu daily newspapers (*Nawa-i-Waqt* and *Daily Express*) were selected.

The content was analyzed from all concerned newspapers numbering 146 newspaper articles. Afterwards by applying systematic random sampling, 73 newspapers' articles counted as the data for analysis. The selection time period is based on the current premier's announcement to grant citizenship to Bengali and Afghan refugees.

In order to collect the data from the social media website *Twitter*, the "Twitter Advance Search" was utilized by typing the relevant words: "Afghan Refugee," "Bengal Refugee," "Citizenship and Pakistan" in the embedded search engine. The Twitter Advance Search is an effective tool to collect the relevant tweets by specifying the time period.

Coding Scheme

Level-I: Coding of Frames

Pro-Citizenship Frame

It includes the articles and online posts in which the awarding of citizenship to Afghan and

Bengali refugees has been framed in a nationalized, favorable and positive manner in the Print and Social Media, for example, a username "Ijazkhan" tweeted: "the announcement to give Citizenship to 2nd generation refugees, which mainly affects Afghan and Bengali refugees. It will be a very progressive step that will also help build Pakistan's image as a Human Rights respecting State" (Khan, 2018).

Anti-Citizenship Frame

It includes the articles and online posts in which the announcement regarding the citizenship of Afghan and Bengali Refugees has been framed in a negative manner and unfavorable way in the Print and Social media. For example, one username, "Asad Rahim," tweeted with context to the respective frame: "One big 'demography upset' anyway (several critics are its biggest beneficiaries)" (Rahim, 2018).

Neutral Frame

It includes the articles which do not fall under the above-mentioned rules and contain visual materials and audio-visual posts on social media

Level-II: Topics related to the award of citizenship to Afghani and Bengali refugees

Humanitarian

It includes those newspapers' stories and Twitter posts in which the issue of awarding citizenship to Afghani and Bengali refugees is framed in a humanitarian way. For example "Afghan refugees who were the victim of the strategic policies of the great powers and the third generation of the Afghan refugees should be given citizenship" (Riffatullah, 2018).

Legal Framework

It includes the articles and online posts in the print and social media, in which the respective issue is framed in the legal framework, like Citizenship Act 1951 or international protocols, for example, "if we see the international citizenship setup, we would definitely come to

know that they do provide citizenship to Pakistanis living abroad just after five to eight years" (Kakar, 2018).

Refugees as Economic Burden

It includes the articles and online posts from print and social media in which the refugees are framed as an economic burden on the state or on the people of Pakistan. For example, the taxes are not being paid by the refugees.

Repatriation of Refugees

It includes the articles and online posts from print and social media in which the refugees are projected in a frame of repatriation. For example, the government of PTI, instead of giving citizenship to refugees, must send back the refugees to the country of their origin.

Miscellaneous

It includes the articles and online posts from print and social media which do not fall in the above-mentioned categories.

Inter-Coder Reliability

Inter-coder reliability is the level of measurement used to test the degree of agreement among the raters and to evaluate whether consensus exists in the ratings—the inter-rater reliability assesses the external consistency to examine the degree of consistency estimates of a respective construct.

The 202 tweets collected from the 17th of September 2018 to the 17th of October 2018 were our sample population and by using systematic random sampling, the 101 Tweets will be counted as the data for analysis. In order to apply the inter-rater reliability methods in the current study, the selected coder analyzed all 17 (10% of 174) news articles and online tweets. The coding of level 1 and level 2 would be done on a separate basis. The Kappa value, which measures the level of agreement, for framing level 1 is .891, and the value for framing level 2 is .850.

Results Related to Research Questions

This study focused on finding answers to two research questions.

RQ-1: Whether and to what extent did Pakistan’s mainstream newspapers and

Twitter cover the issue of citizenship for Afghan and Bengali refugees in pro-citizenship and anti-citizenship frames?

Table 1. Distribution of stories in terms of pro- and anti-citizenship frames in Pakistan’s mainstream Urdu and English language newspapers and social media.

Media		Pro-Citizenship	Anti-Citizenship	Neutral	Total
Print Media	English language newspapers	26 (61.9%)	10 (23.8%)	6 (14.3%)	42 (100%)
	Urdu language newspapers	18 (58.1%)	10 (32.3%)	3 (9.7%)	31(100%)
Social Media	Twitter	50 (49.5%)	35 (34.7%)	16 (1.8%)	101(100%)

The data analysis showed that the print media gave less favorable coverage to the issue of the award of citizenship to both Afghani and Bengali refugees living in Pakistan, as shown in Table 1. The number of pro-citizenship frames was greater than 50 (49.5%) on Twitter as compared with the print media 44 (60.3%). In the print media, the frequency of pro-citizenship frames in the English newspapers was higher 26

(61.9%) than in the Urdu newspapers 18 (58.1%).

RQ-2: What are the similarities and differences in the framing of the issue of award of citizenship to the Afghan and Bengali refugees in Pakistan's mainstream newspapers and social media?

Table 2. Distribution of stories in terms of pro-citizenship and anti-citizenship topics in Pakistan’s print media and social media.

Media	Pro-Citizenship Frame		Anti-Citizenship Frame		Miscellaneous	Total
	Humanitarian	Legal Framework	Economic Burden	Repatriation		
Print Media	23 (31.5%)	19 (26.0%)	9 (12.3 %)	12 (16.4%)	10 (13.7 %)	73(100%)
Social Media	25 (24.8 %)	27 (26.7%)	7 (6.9 %)	26 (25.7 %)	16 (15.8 %)	101(100%)

The social media partially employed the anti-citizenship frames while reporting the award of citizenships to Afghani and Bengali refugees living in Pakistan. In the social media, the frequency of repatriation of refugees frame was greater than 26 (25.7%) than in the print media

12 (16.4%), as shown in Table 2. Similarly, Pakistan's print media employed an equal number of anti-citizenship frames across both the English and Urdu language newspapers, 10 (32.3%) and 10 (23.8%) respectively.

In the pro-citizenship frame, there are two major topics: the justifications for the award of citizenships to the Afghani and Bengali refugees on humanitarian grounds (i.e., the Humanitarian topic) based on the international law and Islamic Sharia (i.e., the Legal Framework topic). There were similarities in the coverage of the award of citizenship issue across the mainstream media and Twitter when it came to the humanitarian topic. In this category, 23 (31.5%) and 25 (24.8%) of the articles in the mainstream English and Urdu language print media and on Twitter respectively dealt with the award of citizenship issue in the context of humanitarian crisis.

The second major topic in the pro-citizenship frame was the Legal Framework, i.e., the justification of the award of citizenships to refugees based on the tenants of international law and Islam. There were major differences in the coverage of print media and Twitter in this particular category as 27 (26.7%) tweets on Twitter commented on the citizenship issue in the context of the legal framework compared to only 19 (26.0%) such as news articles in Pakistan's print media.

In the anti-citizenship frame, there were two major topics: the Economic Burden described refugees as a burden on the economy of Pakistan, a country that was in deep economic crisis due to the massive economic losses in the "War on Terrorism" and corruption in governance, and the Repatriation topic which stressed the need for the repatriation of the refugees to the country of their origin, as both the countries (Pakistan and Afghanistan) were somehow stable democracies – there is a West-backed government in Afghanistan supported by the presence of US forces and a rather more economic-based stable democratic government in Bangladesh.

While there were not so many differences in the Economic Burden topic related coverage in print media 9 (12.3%) and social media 7 (6.9%), the differences were more pronounced in the repatriation frame to which the print media gave 12 (16.4%) coverage while Twitter 26 (25.7%).

In the category of Miscellaneous frames, Twitter was more vibrant: the social media platform published a range of visuals, audio

clips, and videos with regard to the award of citizenship to Afghani and Bengali citizens and such coverage constituted 16 (15.8%) of the total sample tweets. On the contrary, the miscellaneous category in the mainstream print media was not only less diverse compared with Twitter, but in numerical terms, it also constituted only 10 (13.7%) of the overall coverage given to the award of citizenship issue.

Discussion

Due to the powerful interactive characteristics of communication, social media has used more pro-citizenship frames as compared to Pakistan's traditional mainstream print media. The reason for this disparity can be analyzed with respect to the government policy as well as its somewhat unprecedented positive and negative criticism on social media. As the government announced the award of citizenship to Afghani and Bengali refugees, the online media endorsed the policy statement given by the government and subsequently employed the pro-citizenship frames regarding the Afghan and Bengali refugees residing in Pakistan. The research findings are inconsistent compared with Hani's (2018) examination of the frames used in the print media. As he argued that the stories that cover the refugees are constant with respect to the policies adopted by the host country.

In the case of the PTI's government's refugee policy, the social media has offered more support compared to the traditional print media, which considered the Afghan refugees as a major social, financial and political burden on the host country and thus supported the repatriation of Afghans to their country of origin. The development of prospective public opinion is also pertinent for the bilateral relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan and how social media is used to frame it from time to time. The political relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan have seen ups and downs, mostly rocky paths, with respect to the issue of Taliban and refugees' resettlement.

Instead of forceful repatriation of refugees into their war-torn country, the government of Pakistan's decision of granting citizenship to refugees is commendable, despite 'ethnic and

caste differences' (Yazgan et al. (2015). On the one hand, it may able the 'victimized refugees' (Riffatullah, 2018) to get the fundamental human rights, and on the other hand, it may likely to further improve the level of 'economic migrants' (Yazgan et al., 2015), socio-economic well-being

The 'socio-economic conditions' (Zaidi, 2018) for Bengalis, the ethnocentric sensitivity and assimilation (Abdul Muminov, 2015; Celeste, 2013) seemed to be bigger problems for refugees due to different cultural traits to have better socio-economic life. In order to be assimilated into the host culture, there are certain social variables that need to be fulfilled by the refugees with respect to their probable proximity to the culture. As Celeste (2013) has argued that Cubans can be easily assimilated into the US mainstream culture because they possess the relevant cultural traits and Haiti's variable identities are portrayed as black, poor and outside of the dominant culture.

On the other hand, the prevalence of partially-less "anti-citizenship" frames in social media has shown the general public opinion about the issue. The social media adopted more repatriation frames by citing the social, economic and political reasons, as compared with the print media. The media discourse on migrants and refugees focuses on racial differences that give way to their exclusion by defining them as others: racially and culturally (Ibrahim, 2017). The most likely rationale for these discrepancies in social media is that the refugees' debate on the social media focused on the reception of refugees by the western countries and their respective far-right stances on the policy related to the assimilation of refugees. Due to the ubiquitous nature of social media, the social cognition of the perceivers is persistently destined and primed by the messages, especially related to refugees.

The spillover effects of the Donald Trump policies, the President of the US related to immigrants and the prominences of far-right politics in Europe have legitimized the real and virtual line of control between the resident and immigrants. The perceived atrocities being meted out on the refugees are the major force of deterrence against the voluntary repatriation

among the community of refugees. The constructive building measures (CBM) in the respective countries might be able to appeal to the down-trodden people to start an optimistic and futuristic life in their country of origin.

There were also significant variations of coverage given by the English and Urdu newspapers. The English language newspapers have employed more pro-citizenship frames as compared to the Urdu language newspapers. The difference in coverage between the English and Urdu press showed the perceived relationship among the language-specific newspapers and the nature of framing of an issue. The study shows that both the far-right and far-left news outlets are alike when it comes to morality, God, or other religious tenets. In both the central and polar conservative news outlets, examples of dehumanization have been identified. The cross-examination of print and social media in projecting the issue in a humanitarian and legal framework showed that the print media published fewer stories to project the issue in the humanitarian and legal frame as compared to the online feeds in the social media. Zhang and Hellmueller demonstrated the visual coverage given to the European refugee crisis by *CNN International* through its humanized storytelling of distant suffering. The study also observed that *CNN International's* coverage integrated a vital building block of global journalism due to the presence of news actors from diverse nationalities (Zhang & Hellmueller, 2017). In the parliament of Pakistan, the lawmakers have debated Pakistan's "Citizenship Act, 1951", which allowed the citizenship of an individual who had been a resident of Pakistan after the promulgation of the respective Citizenship Act. The stipulation of humanitarian aid being provided by Japan to uplift the refugees and provide them legal aid is an important step to cultivate the prospective environment for the repatriation of refugees.

The policy adopted by the state of Pakistan is far different than the hard-liners in the western countries, who espoused the far-right position to dismantle the myth of assimilation and collectivism by projecting the ethnocentric frame of Europe and American-centric nationalism. The citizens believe that the government is

responsible for alleviating and resolving the refugee crisis, which the media describe as a humanitarian crisis (Evers, 2016). The employment of negative frames like economic burden and repatriation of refugees is an important factor in understanding the unfavorable treatment given by the media with respect to Afghan and Bengali refugees. The findings are inconsistent with the study conducted by Vlaicu & Balauta (2017), which argued that, on social media platforms, like Twitter, one cannot overlook the evidential abuse and criticism. The print media published the news stories with more unfavorable frames like an economic burden. The articles are negatively written in which the conflict frames are present (Evers, 2016).

The embracement of humanitarian and legal frames has projected the issue of the award of citizenship to Afghani and Bengali refugees in a favorable manner. The structural changes need to be done in order to assimilate the Afghani and Bengali refugees into the mainstream culture. In New Zealand, the refugees are assisted by volunteers to provide the women and older people with support to learn English (Elliott & Yusuf, 2014). Alencar (2018) also noted that the host government, the individual agency of refugees, and the host society are the three main forces that have an influence on the refugees regarding the integration in Netherland. In order to counter the negative portrayal of refugees in the US, the intergovernmental, governmental and non-profit organizations are tasked with the

integration of refugees and to also motivate the additional resettlement opportunities (Allwright, 2018). Refugees in Pakistan are reluctant to repatriate to Afghanistan due to socio-economic difficulties, such as poor healthcare and lack of excess to education. Another cited reason for the disinclination is the unequal treatment being inflicted on women by the Taliban (Qayyum, 2019).

Conclusion

The study concludes that social media have given favorable coverage to the citizenship issue as compared to the print media and thus suggests that the Pakistani citizens and citizens of other nations appreciated the Pakistani government's initiative of granting citizenship to refugees. It claimed that the pro-citizenship frames were more prevalent in social media. Therefore, the refugees are projected with more humanitarian and legal frames and thus, the process of assimilation has been supported with the help of Pakistan's Citizenship Act, 1951.

However, the case is different in the mainstream Urdu and English newspapers of Pakistan. The English press has employed more pro-citizenship frames as compared to the Urdu press. The print media has adopted more economic burden frames, as compared to social media which employed more frames of "repatriation of refugees." Furthermore, the social media framing is in harmony with the state policy regarding the status of Afghan and Bengali refugees.

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