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Reporting Ethnic Conflict in Karachi: Analysis through the Perspective of War and Peace Journalism

ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of national media of Pakistan in terms of escalation/ de-escalation of the ethno-political conflict in Karachi. The researchers analyzed both print media and electronic media (television) for this purpose. Two leading television channels (Geo TV and Dunya TV), two English dailies (Dawn and The Nation) and two Urdu dailies (daily Jang and daily Express) were selected. Only the front and back pages of the four newspapers and 9 o'clock newscasts of the two TV channels were analyzed for a period of one year ((November 01, 2012- 31st October 2012)). The data were collected through the operationalization of dichotomous variables of an original contextual model developed by the researchers. This model was developed in line with the Galtung typology of war and peace journalism. The contextual model contains dichotomous categories of politicization/de-politicization, securitization/humanization and

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sensationalism/ responsible. The researchers also conducted semi-structured interviews with journalists. They found that the Pakistan news media was escalatory and sensationalizing the conflict. The conflict was mainly reported through political perspective where the political victims are considered as worthy; the non-political victims are ignored and treated as less-worthy victims. The researchers advocate a more humanitarian perspective for news media in this conflict to reduce ethno-political tension in Karachi in particular and elsewhere in general.

Keywords: *Ethnic conflict; peace media; politicization; unworthy victims, jingoism, violence.*