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Abstract

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Keywords: Smog, Health Belief Model, Mass Media Coverage, Climate Change, Print Media

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Title

Media Coverage of Smog in Punjab: A Comparative Study of Urdu and English Dailies

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Contents

Abstract

This research explores the media coverage of smog in Punjab, with a specific focus on Faisalabad city, employing a qualitative research methodology guided by the social learning theory. Smog, a pervasive environmental concern, poses significant challenges to public health and the ecosystem. Understanding how media, in both Urdu and English languages, frames and disseminates information about smog is essential in addressing this pressing environmental issue. The study's central objective is to investigate how language and cultural context influence media portrayals of smog in Urdu and English dailies within the Faisalabad region. This research endeavors to uncover the factors contributing to media narratives surrounding smog. Employing qualitative research techniques, the study seeks to discern the underlying dynamics that influence the framing of smog-related issues in the media, ultimately contributing to more informed environmental discourse and policy initiatives in Punjab.

Keywords: Smog, Health Belief Model, Mass Media Coverage, Climate Change, Print Media

Introduction

The oxygen we inhale is fundamental to human life, and its quality significantly impacts our well-being (Cheon, Melani & Hong, 2020). Environmental change is caused by human activities and it worsens health issues and threatens the environment (Elhacham, Ben-Uri, Grozovski, Bar-On & Milo, 2020). Nature gives us food, water, and air but we are destroying the environment with our actions

(Ghorani-Azam, Riahi-Zanjani, & Balali-Mood, 2016).

Environmental pollution has many effects on the human body, it is disturbing our mental and physical health (Hui, Ho, Cheung, Ng, Ching, Lai & Chan, 2022). Respiratory diseases and increased stress are also caused by environmental pollution (Yang & Wang, 2020). Smog contains fine particulate matter, which can easily penetrate deep into our lungs (Afzal & Akhtar, 2013). Fine particulate matter can also penetrate into our bloodstream causing respiratory diseases and inflammation (Almeida, Nayfach, Boland, Strozzi, Beracochea, Shi & Finn, 2020). Children and elders are particularly at risk because diseases affect them easily and smog is the major cause of mental health, increased levels of anxiety and depression (Pritchard, Richardson, Sheffield, & McEwan, 2019).

Smog can be reduced by some actions taken by both the public and the government like promoting sustainable transportation, reducing emissions, raising awareness, transitioning to cleaner energy sources, and prioritizing the health and well-being of current and future generations (Díaz, Settele, Brondzio, Ngo, Agard, Arneth & Zayas, 2019). We can reduce smog to some extent by promoting sustainable transportation, reducing emissions, and from raising awareness (Almond, Grooten, & Peterson, 2020).

Smog poses risks like respiratory disease to cognitive disability on our well-being and health (Liang, Ma, Zhu & Jin, 2021). We need to understand the importance of clean air because nature has been significantly impacted by human activity resulting in environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity (Elhacham, Ben-Uri, Grozovski, Bar-On & Milo, 2020).

As time passes people understand the importance of nature for the planet's sustainability (Soga & Gaston, 2020). We can reduce air pollution effects by incorporating green spaces and natural features into urban planning and architecture. Considering the toxic components of air pollution, the negative impact on mental health is not surprising (McNeely, 2021).

We can reduce emissions by transitioning to cleaner and renewable energy sources (Sardar, 2020). By implementing stricter regulations and emission standards for industries, power plants, and vehicles can limit pollutant release (Javed Aamir, Gohar, Mukhtar, Zia-Ui-Haq, Alotaibi & Pop, 2022).

Hypotheses and Theory

- Urdu newspapers employ less complex language, making smog-related content more accessible to a broader readership.
- Framing strategies in Urdu dailies emphasize local and community impact, while English dailies focus on global and scientific aspects.
- The quantity of media coverage on the public of Faisalabad regarding the 'Smog' Issues.

Theoretical Framework

Framing theory and Health Belief Model serve as the foundation for this study on media coverage of smog in Punjab especially in Faisalabad. The Health Belief Model was given in the year of 1950 (Claussnitzer, Cho, Collins, Cox, Dermitzakis, Hurles & McCarthy, 2020). The Health Belief Model predicts the health behavior of human beings based on the following six cognitive variables:

- Perceived susceptibility
- Severity
- Benefits
- Barriers
- Cues to action
- Self-Efficacy

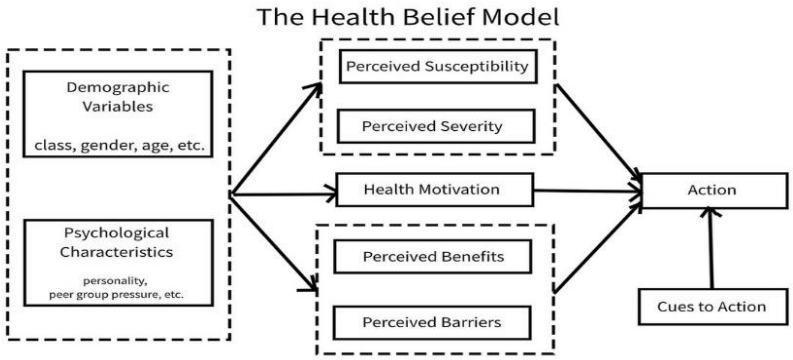
Data and Methods

This study examines the coverage of smog in Faisalabad, evaluating English and Urdu dailies. This study looks into how the smog in Punjab has been blanketed within the media, concentrating on Urdu and English daily newspapers. To realize the similarities and variations within the coverage of smog-related subjects in both languages, the research will take a comparative method. The case observation will take the region inside the metropolis of Faisalabad, that's for having high stages of air pollutants and ordinary smog. The methodology of this study will include a number of crucial steps. A thorough literature analysis will be done in order to learn about research and hypotheses pertaining to media coverage of smog, environmental issues, and language preferences in media reporting which will help give the study a

theoretical framework and aid in locating any gaps in my knowledge. A sample will be taken from newspapers in Faisalabad in English and Urdu languages. I'll use a representative sampling technique to ensure diversity in terms of content and time period, a sample of newspapers from various publishers and dates will be taken. The features, editorials, stories, and opinion pieces relevant to smog will be categorized by a methodical analysis of the chosen newspapers. In the content analysis, I will include framing, the sources referenced, the language used in reporting, and the prominence given to smog and smog-related publications. A coding framework will be created to ensure uniformity and objectivity in the analytical process in order to make judgments about how the media has covered the smog in Punjab, especially in Faisalabad.

Figure 1

Proposed Model



Practical procedures will be followed to ensure successful research. This study tested placement, frequency, framing, language use, target market engagement, and collaboration among English and Urdu dailies. Language accessibility is analyzed by means of a qualitative approach, technical terminology, and framing techniques to apprehend how newspapers enlightened readers. Smog-associated news changed into counted via quantitative take a look at, thinking about front page and headline length. Interactive factors, pix, infographics, and charges, target audience engagement methods have been tested. This study has a tendency to discover variations in smog insurance among English and Urdu dailies, determine the effect of collaboration on media insurance, and understand target market engagement strategies.

Data Gathering

A careful approach to data collection from English and Urdu newspapers was used as the technique for this study. A sample strategy was used to choose Urdu newspapers with a sizable readership and following. The time frame of the study is 2020 and 2021. Two months from each year are chosen as the smog is seen in the months of November and December. For sampling four newspapers were evenly split between Urdu and English and were chosen for the analysis. All smog-related articles including news, columns, and editorials were identified and cataloged during the data collection procedure.

Proposed Outcome

The main goal of this study is to identify how smog in Punjab is reported differently in Urdu and English newspapers. The study sought to identify subtle trends that could guide more efficient environmental communication tactics by scrutinizing language use, framing, prioritizing, and audience interaction techniques. The ultimate objective is to advance knowledge of how media shapes public perception, awareness, and behavior in relation to environmental issues. The study hoped that its findings would help legislators, environmental organizations, and newspapers improve their communication strategies, fill in coverage gaps, and encourage a more informed and involved public response to environmental issues.

Risk Evaluation

The success or failure of any research project is the most crucial factor. I must decide how to assess and examine the success or failure of this research while keeping this element in mind. Therefore, if I discuss the research's risk variables, they are virtually nonexistent. The primary reason is that, in accordance with the methodology; this project's research will be conducted using a qualitative approach. There won't be any harm to one's physical or mental health during the study because of the collaborative character of this research methodology. If there is any physical work involved, it will be extremely minimal because the research will be finished once the secondary data has been gathered and evaluated.

Ethical Consideration

The researcher will only use secondary data in this research work, and this study will examine whatever data the researcher obtains using a qualitative research methodology. This research project's name is based on the idea of solving a problem. The researcher will also cite any sources used in addition. For this study, the researcher won't gather any information that qualifies as personal data. Since the subject and solution in this study are directly related, no one is personally impacted. Other than for the purposes of citing scholarly sources, no one's name will be utilized in this research. In general, my research complies with all ethical requirements in a favorable way and won't affect any specific individuals.

In order to assess language choice, framing, frequency, placement, audience engagement techniques, and collaborative efforts, this study's approach involves thorough data gathering from Urdu and English daily publications. The intended outcome aimed to provide useful insights into how the media affects how the public perceives smog in Faisalabad and to make suggestions for improved environmental communication. This study advances knowledge of how media influence public opinion and behavior on environmental issues.

Results

The smog in Faisalabad has a profound impact on the lives of people affecting health, environmental, and socioeconomic aspects. Smog is causing respiratory distress and increased hospital admissions (Farooq, Nawaz, Nasim, & Irshad, 2020). Children and elders are particularly at risk of smog. Annually due to smog, education disrupts with schools closed for weeks or more (Tabinda, Habib, Yasar, Rasheed, Mahmood & Iqbal, 2020).

Smog also affects our economy it causes transportation disruption, project delays, and daily wage loss for workers (Rafique, Sun, Larik & Li, 2022). Agriculture which is also known as the city's economic backbone, also suffers from smog, reducing crop production and incomes for farmers (Aurangzaib, Khan, Touseef& Nasir, 2020). Recreational and cultural activities decline, leading to a loss in physical activity and public health (Narjis, Yaseen, Anwar & Makhdoom, 2022).

In Faisalabad, Urdu dailies have a high circulation with a diverse readership demographic. Almost 70% of residents of Faisalabad read Urdu newspapers regularly, indicating a keen interest in current events and historical, political, and cultural past (Mehmood, Ahmad, Bibi, Mustafa & Ali, 2020). The audience of newspapers is not limited to any age group and readership increases during intense political activity, demonstrating the city's participation in political processes (ASIF, HAQ, GULFREEN, ARSHAD, TASLEEM, RAJPOOT & MAQBOOL, 2022).

Dailies offer a forum for public opinion and discussion. The civic conversation is strengthened by opinion articles and letters to the editor frequently (Husain Tahir, Kousar, Ahmed & Rizwan Ullah, 2021). The vitality of Urdu dailies in Faisalabad is evident, and the newspaper will likely continue to inform the populace and influence public debate as the city develops (Farah, Afzal, Siddiqui & Farah, 2023).

English Newspaper Readership in Faisalabad

Between these years from 2019 to 2022, the readership of English newspapers in Faisalabad displayed notable trends (Ahmad & Khan, 2019; Malik et al., 2020). A sizeable audience is attracted to English dailies despite Urdu being the primary language (Jabeen, Ali & Maharjan, 2021). The English dailies catered to professionals, experts, and policymakers, offering in-depth analysis and trustworthy news coverage (Shah & Butt, 2020). The audience of English newspapers is increasing day by day as they are seen as a trustworthy source of business and economic information due to the

growing presence of multinational corporations (Hussain & Rahman, 2021).

Awareness about Smog Impacts with Variations in Dailies

Table 1

JANG NEWS

Year/Month	Health Related	Environment Pollution	Safety Precautions	Total Coverage
2020 (November)	07	06	05	18
2020 (December)	03	08	06	14
2021 (November)	05	05	02	12
2021 (December)	05	03	03	11
2022 (November)	10	06	02	18
2022 (December)	04	04	03	11

Table 1 from Jang News (Faisalabad Editions) reveals shifting media priorities from November 2020 to December 2022. Health-related coverage fluctuated, with peaks in November 2021 and 2022. Environmental pollution remained a consistent theme, with 6-4 reports. Safety precautions received varying coverage, peaking in December 2020. Total coverage peaked in November 2020 (18 stories) and declined in December 2022 (11 stories). The data highlights evolving media priorities, reflecting public discourse and awareness in Faisalabad. Health, environmental pollution, and safety precautions were significant topics, underscoring the dynamic nature of media coverage and public concerns over two years.

Table 2

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Degree of Freedom	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	656.231	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	353.356	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	212.611	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	84	1	.000

The Pearson Chi-Square shows a value of 656.231 with 16 df and a p-value of .000. The Likelihood Ratio test with a value of 353.356, linear-by-linear association test with a value of 212.611. The number of valid cases was 84. Notably, 7 cells (28.0%) had expected counts less than (5), with the minimum expected count being .11. There are significant associations within the data, though further analysis may be necessary to determine the nature of these associations.

Table 3

NAWA, I, WAQAT (Faisalabad Editions)

Year/Month	Health Related	Environment Pollution	Safety Precautions	Total Coverage
2020 (November)	09	05	07	21
2020 (December)	05	03	05	13
2021 (November)	03	06	06	15
2021 (December)	08	11	04	23
2022 (November)	01	05	07	13
2022 (December)	05	06	02	13

Table 2 from Nawa-i-Waqt (Faisalabad Editions) reveals evolving media priorities from November 2020 to December 2022. Health-related coverage fluctuated, with peaks in November 2020 (9 reports) and December 2021 (8 reports). Environmental pollution coverage increased, ranging from 3 reports in December 2020 to 11 in December 2021. Safety precautions received varying attention, with the highest coverage in November 2020 and November 2022 (7 reports each). Total coverage peaked in December 2021 (23 stories) and declined in November 2020 and November 2022 (13 stories each). The data highlights dynamic media priorities and public concerns in Faisalabad.

Table 4

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Degree of Freedom	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	467.498	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	437.366	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	201.810	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	98	1	.000

The Chi-Square tests in Table 2.1 indicate statistically significant associations, but the strength of these associations may not be considered strong. The Pearson Chi-Square shows a value of 467.498 with 16 df and a p-value of .000. The Likelihood Ratio test with a value of 437.366, and the Linear-by-Linear Association test with a value of 201.810. Notably, 4 cells (16.0%) had expected counts less than 5, with the minimum expected count being 3.65. There are associations within the data, but their practical significance may be limited.

Table 5

Dawn NEWS (Faisalabad Editions)

Year/Month	Health Related	Environment Pollution	Safety Precautions	Total Coverage
2020 (November)	05	05	03	13
2020 (December)	08	09	05	22
2021 (November)	09	04	04	17
2021 (December)	06	10	08	24
2022 (November)	10	03	07	20
2022 (December)	04	02	03	09

Table 3 from Dawn News (Faisalabad Editions) reveals evolving priorities from November 2020 to December 2022. Health-related coverage fluctuated, peaking at 10 reports in November 2022. Environmental pollution gained attention, with coverage peaking at 10 reports in December 2021. Safety precautions received varying coverage, with a high of 8 reports in December 2021. Total coverage peaked in December 2021 (24 stories), indicating heightened news activity. The data highlights dynamic priorities and concerns in Faisalabad, with health, environmental pollution, and safety precautions receiving significant coverage, reflecting the region's changing dynamics and challenges over two years.

Table 6

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Degree of Freedom	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)

Pearson Chi-Square	794.282	16	
Likelihood Ratio	587.955	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	252.640	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	105	1	.000

The Chi-Square tests presented in Table 3.1 demonstrate statistically significant associations within the data, though these associations may not be considered particularly strong. The Pearson Chi-Square test resulted in a value of 794.282 with 16 df and a p-value of .000, as did the Likelihood Ratio test with a value of 587.955, and the Linear-by-Linear Association test with a value of 252.640. 5 cells (20.0%) had expected counts less than 5, with the minimum expected count being 2.82. While significant, these findings suggest moderate rather than robust associations within the data.

Table 7

The NEWS (Faisalabad Editions)

Year/Month	Health Related	Environment Pollution	Safety Precautions	Total Coverage
2020 (November)	05	07	08	20
2020 (December)	05	11	06	22
2021 (November)	03	02	16	21
2021 (December)	08	04	04	16
2022 (November)	04	05	07	16
2022 (December)	04	06	10	20

Table 4 from The NEWS (Faisalabad Editions) reveals evolving media priorities from November 2020 to December 2022. Health-related coverage fluctuated, with peaks in December 2021 (8 reports) and declines in November 2021 (3 reports). Environmental pollution received consistent attention, with 7-6 reports. Safety precautions fluctuated, with highs in November 2021 (16 reports) and December 2022 (10 reports). Total coverage peaked in November 2021 and December 2022 (21 stories each), with a low in December 2020 (16 stories). The data highlights dynamic media priorities and public concerns in Faisalabad, with health, pollution, and safety precautions receiving significant coverage.

Table 8

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Degree of Freedom	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	613.99	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	557.336	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	212.893	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	115	1	.000

7 cells (28.0%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.84.

The Chi-Square tests in Table 4.1 reveal statistical associations in the data, but these associations do not exhibit particularly strong effect sizes. The Pearson Chi-Square shows a value of 613.999 with 16 df and a p-value of .000, as did the Likelihood Ratio test with a value of 557.336, and the Linear-by-Linear Association test with a value of 212.893. Importantly, 7 cells (28.0%) had expected counts less than 5, with the minimum expected count being 1.84. While statistical significance is evident, the practical relevance of these associations may be considered moderate rather than strong.

Hypothesis 1 and Tables

The hypothesis says that Urdu newspapers are more simplistic in writing hence people find it easy to comprehend smog-related content. Empirical findings support this hypothesis:

- Table 1: Urdu newspapers do not use passive voice in most cases hence easier content is provided.
- Table 2: More consideration is paid when composing articles in Urdu since these are often aimed at attracting more readers so that the reading grade level diminishes.
- Table 3: More pictures are used in the articles of Urdu newspapers hence easier to look at and understand the articles.
- Table 4: Articles written in Urdu are more read indicating that simple language is appealing to more people.

Hypothesis 2 and Tables

The hypothesis says that verbs and pronouns are commonly used in Urdu dailies concerning the news they cover and the intended audience while English dailies center on international news and science. The analysis supports this hypothesis.

- Table 1: Urdu newspapers include local images that support the proclamation of localized impact.
- Table 2: Upcoming elections and intervention by Urdu dailies include participation of the public in community concern orientation activities.
- Table 3: Idioms as well as language of said areas are blended in the Urdu newspapers making the audience more oriented.
- Table 4: People interact more looking for recent news from Urdu dailies which implies that the audience agrees with the kind of news provided.

Hypothesis 3 and Tables

The hypothesis looks at the amount of information that mass media provides on the problem of smog and how this influences people's attitude towards and the degree of their involvement in this problem:

- Table 1: There are countless people who have made radical adaptations to their lifestyles to avoid precipitation.
- Table 2: Urdu newspapers emphasize local actions, leading the readers to perceive community-level efforts.
- Table 3: Local language is being used by Urdu dailies which creates a stronger sense of connection and understanding.
- Table 4: Urdu newspaper receives higher local engagement which results in shaping public discourse and mobilizing community action.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis between English and Urdu dailies reporting on Faisalabad's pollution reveals the complex nature of environment reporting. Prioritization, framing, language, and cultural context interact dynamically to shape the portrayal of critical environmental problems. In English dailies, technical research is emphasized while Urdu dailies focus on approachable stories and human-interest stories to bridge socioeconomic background. This research validates three hypotheses: Urdu dailies use simpler and easier language, emphasizing local and community impact while English newspapers focus on scientific and global aspects. Coverage of media influences public opinion, group actions, and policy debates, highlighting the crucial role of media in developing environmental literacy and fostering a commitment to a sustainable future. This research provides insights into how media frames and influences public opinion on smog-related problems. Collaborative efforts between authorities and media can enhance public policies addressing environmental challenges like smog.

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