

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The current condition of the vast development of technology in the world makes it easier for people to access information and the media plays an important role in it. Mass media is defined as the official means and channels as a means of communication to spread news and messages to the wider community, which comprises of television, radio, newspaper, as well as internet. Mass media are powerful because they are able to reach a wide range of audiences and the impacts of gradually being exposed to media messages. (Viswanath K., et al, 2007).

Mass media as a means to deliver information provides the latest news to the public in order to fulfil the information needs. Seeing how the role of the media is important, the media can become a tool or a source of power which can hugely influence society (Jastrzębski, 2007, as cited in Gackowski, 2014). Mass media are able to establish social control in society through the impact of the news they present; either by changing the audience's opinion or perspective, building trust, or even influencing an individual's attitudes and behaviors (Arias, 2019).

Since the media institutions are built to reach as many people as possible to convey a message at the same time, the power that the media hold is even stronger than other institutions and organizations. Therefore, the writing style and the way a message is implicitly delivered are crucial to journalists since they can influence people's views in many aspects, ranging from politics to religion.

Religion is seen as a thing that holds a great significance to many people across the globe. It is considered as a guide in living their life as well as a way to put a society together because there are moral principles incorporated in religions to which the believers are expected to conform to (Hoffman, 2021).

However, despite sharing the common idea of peace and performing good deeds in life, there are bound to be differences in the practices and beliefs of one religion to another. This matter can lead to conflict to emerge and clashes between religious groups, commonly known as communal violence, when the adherents of a religion behave in an extreme way and enforce their beliefs and practices on the people from other religions (Li, 2017).

In spite of India being a secular country by law, it has a tendency to be a Hindu country since the Hindu population dominates India because Hinduism is the oldest religion in India. According to data provided in India's latest census of the distribution of population by religions, the Hindu population are the largest in India (Singh, 2019). Muslims are the second largest population because in the seventh century, Islam had just entered India which coincided with the arrival of Arabs traders in the Malabar and Gujarat coast (Manocha, 2019).

In the case of communal violence in India, the conflict that has been happening between Hindus and Muslims there can be traced back before the India 1947 partition, to be specific before India gained independence from the British (Chandran et al., 2013). It was a crucial historical event where India was freed from British rule and was split into two independent states which are now known as India and an Islamic state Pakistan. Millions of people, most of whom are Hindus and

Muslims, were compelled to move between India and Pakistan during the bloodshed. This occurrence played a big part in deteriorating the relations between the two states and its people, especially from the two religions (Ahmed, 2002). Communal violence in India itself, particularly between Hindu and Muslims, is not a new thing. Before the 2020 Delhi violence happened, there were several occurrences of communal violence such as 2002 Gujarat riots and 2014 Assam violence.

The news of the Hindu-Muslim violence in New Delhi became a hot topic in the online newspapers, such as Al Jazeera and the BBC, because the occurrence reverberated Gujarat and Assam riots, previous communal violence that happened a few years back, and it also happened as Donald Trump was paying a visit to Delhi (Yahaya, 2022). The 2020 Delhi violence happened for a week from 23 February - 29 February 2020. The incidents took place in several areas in North East Delhi. The cause of the violent incident evidently is the speech presented by an Indian politician, Kapil Mishra. This incident resulted in 53 victims being killed.

Every news media has its own ideology, values, and beliefs that are reflected on how it constructs reality in a news text, which will result in differences in how each media takes a perspective and puts certain emphasis on the information into a news article (Croteau & Hoynes, 2013). Figenschou (2010, as cited in Usher, 2013) argued that although Al Jazeera's headquarter is based in Doha, Qatar, most of Al Jazeera's journalists are Western-educated, and many come from major Western media. Al Jazeera's mission aims to become the "Voice of the Voiceless," and provide more news about the global South in more thorough and comprehensive formats than reporting of the global North.

Yusoff et al. (2011) stated in news pertaining to Islam or Muslims, the international media especially from the US and UK, such as the BBC, tend to do coverage on issues such as politics, terrorism/violence and conflict. Other topics like economy and education tend to be less common in coverage. The way they are portrayed leans more towards negative than positive and it is especially high when tragic incidents occurred and the blame would be placed on Muslims. It is evident in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attack incident in 2001 and 2005 London bombing. Negative frames are clearly high, and the opposite frames are barely absent. However, during a time when no tragic incidents were reported, coverage shifted to be somewhat positive stories like education, culture, and economic reports.

According to Kleusken (2020), one of the reasons as to why the violence erupted despite the Covid-19 pandemic was spreading in India and globally is because Muslims in India were portrayed to be utilizing the virus in order to contaminate and kill Hindu people in India. At the time of the beginning of the pandemic in the country, there were hate tweets towards Muslims, fake videos such as of Muslims spitting on food to contaminate it with Covid, etc. The emergence of these stories is due to the emotional state of the Indian public was in disarray due to the insecurity caused by the pandemic; thus, it combined with the already existing tension between Hindus and Muslims led to the communal violence.

Considering that one of the functions of the mass media, especially newspapers, is as a means of publishing and distributing news, the frames in the news articles will certainly influence the readers. It is important to examine the frames in Al Jazeera and the BBC's coverage of the Delhi violence 2020 because the meaning and message resulted by the frames will indeed affect the readers' perception and opinion regarding the situation.

There are several studies that have been conducted related to framing analysis. The first one is a study titled “Media Narratives from the Margins: A Framing Analysis of Press Coverage of Conflict-Induced Violence in Indian State Assam” conducted by Hussain in 2018. The study discussed how major English newspapers in India, namely The Telegraph, The Assam Tribune, The Hindu, and The Times of India adopt frames to construct their own narrative in reporting multiple conflict-induced violent incidents in Assam. The researcher used three different framing techniques. The three framing techniques are the news frame classification by Shanto Iyengar which divide news frame into thematic and episodic, the five general news frame classification by Holli Semetko and Patti Valkenburg, as well as James William Tankard Jr.’s list of frames which was used to investigate the frames’ use news framing of conflict context. The data of this study are the coverage of the Dhemaji school bombing in 2004, the Beltola violence in 2007, and the 2008 Assam bombings in the span of one month since each incident happened. The result shows that The Telegraph and The Assam Tribune, which belong to the regional press category, frequently used the human-interest frame, whereas The Hindu and The Times of India which are the national press mostly used conflict frame and attribution of responsibility frame.

In the study titled “From Fractures to Frames: Conflict Reporting In Newspapers Of Assam” (2015), Chakraborty, Borah, Hazarika analyzed and compared the report on the 2012 Bodo-Muslim riot from two prominent newspapers, particularly the English and the local language ones, in two months span. The researcher applied content analysis method as well as a modified deductive framing technique by Yang & Ishak (2012) and Conaway (1999). The researcher used two newspapers from Assam region, namely Asomia Protidin and The Assam Tribune, dated from 21 July 2012 to 21 September 2012 as the data of

the study. Approximately 400 newspaper items taken from the two newspapers were analyzed and coded. The findings showed there were four main frames applied in both newspapers; specifically, the conflict frame, the human-interest frame, the consequence frame, and the responsibility frame. Between the two newspapers, it appeared that Asomiya Pratidin utilized the frames more than The Assam Tribune which leaned to be more objective in reporting the violent incident.

There is also a study conducted in 2020 by Brandon Storlie entitled “‘We’ll Burn the Whole Stinking Town Down’: Newspaper Coverage of Detroit’s Twelfth Street Riot”. The researcher analyzed the thematic and rhetorical elements of the news articles about the Detroit’s Twelfth Street Riot in 1967 by three major newspapers namely the Detroit Free Press, the New York Times, and the Los Angeles Times. The study used an adapted framing analysis method by Zhongdang Pan and Gerald Kosicki. The data of this study are a total of 57 articles from all three newspapers which covered the riot; 38 articles from Detroit Free Press, 10 articles from the New York Times, and 9 articles from the Los Angeles Times. From the result it is found that the warfare frame is used many times by all three newspapers while painting the African-Americans in Detroit in a bad light and that the journalists who were present at the time of the riot played a big part in shaping the way news about riots are written.

Another study titled “Online news media framing of the 2021 Israeli-Palestinian conflict by Al Jazeera, BBC and CNN” by Panayotova and Rizova (2021) investigated the frames used by the three media in their online coverages in portraying the conflict between Israel and Palestine by analyzing the language and images usage. The data used in this research are 270 online news headlines and featured lead images, published between 10 May until 31 May 2021 on the news websites of Al Jazeera, BBC, and CNN. The researchers used a qualitative

approach in order to analyze the data, specifically the framing analysis models by Pan and Kosicki, and the visual semiotics theory by Roland Barthes. From the discussion, it is revealed that there are two frames mainly used in reporting the conflict, namely the war frame and peace frame. It is also found that the frame of war is used more than the frame of peace in representing the conflict in the news articles with a difference in point of views of each online media. Al Jazeera employed an approach which showed perspective from the victims' side, in this case Palestinians.

There is also a study titled "Media and The Religious Intolerance: A Framing Analysis of the Religious Intolerance in the Special Region of Yogyakarta Province, Indonesia" by Hapsari and Eriyanto (2019). The study used media framing perspective and Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki framing analysis model as an approach. The data of this study is 21 publications about religious intolerance in the Yogyakarta province from two newspapers namely *Kedaulatan Rakyat* and *Harian Jogja*, 11 articles and 6 articles respectively, which were published from January 1 2014 until December 31 2014. Aside from the articles, the researchers also carried out a thorough interview with the Chief Editors of *Kedaulatan Rakyat* dan *Harian Jogja* as well as Indonesia Journalists Association (AJI) representatives. From the study, the researchers found that the newspaper showed a tendency to frame the incidents related to religious intolerance by reducing them to incidents of criminal and law and putting an emphasis on violence and retracting the crucial part of information. Thus, the identity of both the perpetrators and victims as well as the core of the issue remained obscure in order to maintain peace in the region. This resulted in the information regarding the religious intolerance situation to appear blurry to the community.

Following the studies mentioned above, this study focuses on how communal violence is portrayed in the Delhi violence 2020 articles, mainly through the use of frames in the selected articles related to the Delhi violence 2020 by the Al Jazeera and the BBC. Al Jazeera is one of the prominent online news sites from Asia and the BBC is the leading online newspaper from United Kingdom that has a high readership are the reason why Al Jazeera and the BBC are chosen for this study.

The writer chose this topic because the Delhi violence 2020 happened not too long ago, thus there are not many studies that discuss about the topic which focuses on the framing analysis yet, especially using the model of Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki. Pan and Kosicki's framing theory allows the analysis in this study to be more comprehensive and adequate because it covers various aspects of a news text such as words, sentences, expressions, structure of the text, as well as the relationship between sentences.

1.2 Research Question

How is communal violence framed by Al Jazeera and BBC in the Delhi violence 2020 articles?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to find out how communal violence is framed by Al Jazeera and BBC in the Delhi violence 2020 articles.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study is focused on the frames in two news articles published in March and February 2020 by Aljazeera and BBC and how they portray communal violence in articles about the Delhi violence 2020.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to be useful for the next researchers who will conduct research related to framing theory and the Delhi violence 2020 as well as helpful for the readers, especially the students of English literature of UNJ, regarding framing and how it is applied especially in news articles which could influence readers' thoughts and consideration regarding an issue.

