

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF HATE-SPEECH DISCOURSE IN RELIGIOUS PUBLICATIONS IN PUNJAB, PAKISTAN

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Abstract

The study aims to explore the dissemination of hate messages and intolerant discourses in religious publications from religious seminaries originating in three key districts of the Punjab province, namely Lahore, Multan and Bahawalpur. After a thorough examination, twelve publications were selected for study and to see if they incite readers on taking extreme positions against those hailing from other sects and religions. Framing theory was employed to study various types of frames embedded in the form of hate content in religious publications. While using this theory, the study found six different frames: inter-religious hatred, sectarian hatred, criticism of mainstream media, gender bias, criticism of educational institutions, and criticism of civil society. This study confirms that there is a pattern in religious publications to have a significant amount of content, reflecting hate and discrimination based on religion and sect. However, not all religious publications incite hatred; a majority are sources of information, propagating their beliefs based on their own sectarian identity and preferences.

Keywords: *Hate Speech, Religious Publications, Punjab, Content Analysis, Media, Gender Bias, Framing Theory.*

Introduction

There is a great deal of debate on whether everyone should have the right to free speech or should there be a limit to freedom of speech? The rights of others need to be protected from harm that false statements or hate speech may cause. Freedom of speech is a crucial

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human right, which is important for a democratic society. It provides an enabling environment for free exchange of ideas and information. The Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNUDHR) states, “everyone has the right to freedom of opinions and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”¹

Pakistan and a significant number of other countries have recognized freedom of expression in their respective constitutions. Article 1 of the UNUDHR emphasizes that, ‘all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights’.² This implies that freedom of expression of one individual or a group ends at the point where the same freedom of other people starts. Freedom of expression does not allow anyone to defame other people. Similarly, it does not give an absolute right to anyone to discriminate or humiliate fellow human beings coming from other religious groups. Freedom of expression also does not permit forcefully imposing one’s thoughts on others. This freedom is in practice a proposition of tolerance to give everyone the right to express their opinions freely and based on some one’s beliefs or thoughts. One finds that in this world, the level of tolerance to listen to other’s point of view is gradually decreasing and extremist thoughts have replaced reason and the practice of debate.

The above discussion shows that freedom of expression is not absolute, as it can be limited for protection of others’ rights. Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right but there is a need to draw a line between hate speech and free speech. Hate speech can be defined as, “inflammatory language, often insulting and derisive, that targets an individual or group, and that may or may not include a call to violence.”³ Correspondingly, free speech also does not permit anyone to violate the rights of others.

It is well-established that a free and independent media is the lifeline of any society because it informs the society through news segments, talk shows and entertainment sections. Media has the ability to contribute towards peace building through direct or indirect initiatives by providing balanced and accurate information. However, the media is not allowed to promote hate speech because this type of speech serves to

¹ David Van Mill, *Free Speech and the State: An Unprincipled Approach* (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 11.

² Universal Declaration of Human Rights 2015, http://www.un.org/en/udhrbook/pdf/udhr_booklet_en_web.pdf.

³ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, “Hate Speech and Group-targeted Violence - The Role of Speech in Violent Conflict,” http://www.genocidewatch.org/images/OutsideResearch_Hate_Speech_and_Group-Targeted_Violence.pdf (accessed May 27, 2017).

propagate an attitude of violence towards the marginalized segments of a society⁴. However, it has also been observed that sometimes media disseminates hate speech under the guise of freedom of expression.

On the side-lines of mainstream media, there is a phenomenon of religiously angled media in Pakistan which also serves to inform its target audience about religious practices, beliefs and rituals. Religious seminaries belonging to various sects publish their magazines and publications endorsing their own sects. Since the independence of Pakistan in 1947, three hundred religious journals have been published to influence the readers' religious beliefs.⁵ Majority of these religious magazines are published from Lahore and Karachi and some of them from South Punjab such as Multan.

Some religious seminaries bring out publications under pseudonyms or anonymously because of the ban on respective extremist organizations in Pakistan. While promoting religious beliefs, such religious publications carry material that hurts the sentiments of other persons or groups based on their religious beliefs. Religious schools (madrasahs) publish their own weekly, monthly, or bi-annual religious material/magazines to promote their sectarian beliefs. These religious publications tend to promote sectarianism under the guise of educating the target audience. These publications also provide information on other religions as well, but only their interpretation of that religion. The writers of these publications are mainly religious scholars and staunch believers of their respective Fiqah or sect.

Dr. Tariq Rahman, in one of his articles '*Munazara Literature*' observes that literature circulated by religious seminaries (madaris) of various sects project their '*Maslak*' (religious sect) as *Rud* (refutation) of other *Masalik* (sects). They claim that unless they refute other's beliefs or sect and create a distinction, they cannot preach for their *Masalik*.⁶ Dr. Rahman is of the view that various '*Masalik*' have been taught for hundreds of years without sectarian violence, and that is why violent extremism is not a prerequisite for preaching any *Maslak*.

These religious publications also cover topics related to politics, women, civil society organizations, mainstream media (especially TV) and educational institutions (schools, colleges and universities) and aim to portray each of these such that readers and the society at large views them as having a negative role. These negative constructs create further hatred

⁴ Katharine Gelber, *The Free Speech Versus Hate Speech Debate* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2002), 1.

⁵ Fouzia Naz, "The role of religious journals before and after inception of Pakistan," *The Government: Research Journal of Political Science Supplementary*, III, (2015): 97–106.

⁶ Tariq Rahman, *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 210.

and the students of these seminaries and other believers end up having extremist tendencies towards other segments of the society. This could be one of the significant reasons for growing violent extremism in the country. The extremist tendencies have given rise to an intolerant mind-set, which has harmed the country and the nation in terms of material and human losses in acts of terrorism over the years.

One of the most brutal terrorist attacks which the nation witnessed, was the killing of innocent children of the Army Public School, Peshawar in December 2014. Over the past decade, a climate of fear has emerged after the establishment of 'terror networks of militant groups in Pakistan'.⁷ At the same time, South Punjab has also witnessed a growing network for jihadist recruitment. According to a Dawn report, this network has significantly exploited worsening poverty in South Punjab by recruiting children from Deobandi and Ahl-e-Hadith seminaries where they were "taught 'jihadi philosophy', deployed to regional training/indoctrination centres, and ultimately sent to terrorist training camps in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)."⁸ As compared to other parts of Pakistan, South Punjab has poor human security conditions that force people to opt for extremist activities – this being one reason for having a sample from Punjab province.

As per Islamic injunctions, Muslim religious publications are supposed to take a stance based on the commonly acceptable Islamic vision of universality and humanity without discriminating or ridiculing beliefs of people hailing from other religions and sects. Religious publications do not subscribe to the principles of journalism and ethical standards of mainstream media. The mainstream media tends to give space to a certain biasness in connection to their story or article, whereas religious publications' discourse contains hate content against other sects and religions. The frames used in this study also found that religious publications are critical of formal education and civil society. The articles analyzed from selected religious publications reveal that there is thoughtless promotion of intolerance and extremism in the society which is against the spirit of Pakistan's National Action Plan 2015-a commitment against extremism and terrorism, as well as against 'Paigham-e-Pakistan 2018'-a national narrative for peace.

The study suggests that while publishing funding/charity appeals, religious publications and mainstream media need to focus on 'safe charity', asking their readers/viewers that they must double check to whom they are giving money in the name of charity, in order to discourage charity sums going to extremist groups who are creating a unpleasant

⁷ Musa Khan Jalazai, *The Prospect of Nuclear Jihad in South Asia: Pakistan's Army, Extra Judicial* (Algora Publisher, 2015), 67.

⁸ "2008: Extremist Recruitment on the Rise in South Punjab Madrassahs," *Dawn*, May 21, 2011, <https://www.dawn.com/news/630656>.

image of Muslims. Every citizen needs to realize that the country and the nation is built upon ideals that do not allow violence in the name of religion or sect. Pakistan has already lost thousands of civilians, children and soldiers. The editors and publishers need to promote this message to build a narrative of peace and peaceful co-existence.

Methodology

The study employs purposive sampling method to analyze religious publications from Punjab, Pakistan. Given the large number of the publications, it is virtually impossible to examine and analyse all the religious publications such as magazines with weekly, monthly or bi-monthly editions and volumes. To access the relevant material, a mapping exercise of existing magazines and publications originating from Lahore, Multan and Bahawalpur was done, since the majority of religious publications disseminated across South Punjab are published from these cities. In this mapping exercise, various sources (e.g. editors of newspapers) were used to access religious publications that cover topics related to all schools of thoughts of dominant Muslim sects and other religious communities.

Moreover, residents of Multan and Bahawalpur were approached to access the required material. In this mapping exercise, three issues each of forty-one religious publications/magazines (monthly or quarterly) - 123 in total - were collected. A total of 429 articles, published in 123 issues of religious magazines on various topics, were scanned and reviewed in the mapping exercise that focused on the following points:

- Identify the content that contains hateful or discriminatory material.
- The contents in the selected publications may reflect all key religious schools of thought/sects of Pakistan.

In doing so, a total of 12 religious magazines (both monthly and quarterly based on their circulation period) were selected on the basis of the above criteria.

Limitations

The contribution of the present study is limited by certain factors. A significant limitation of the study was access to religious publications, as these were not easily available in the market. Content analysis has been used in this study; it is a descriptive method that describes what frames are available in the published material and is a powerful tool for analyzing patterns in the material. However, this type of research method cannot reveal in detail underlying motives of the authors.

Analysis Technique(s)

This study conducted content analysis of the existing religious magazines and publications, either published from or circulated in Lahore, Multan and Bahawalpur. The analysis is quantitative and qualitative and examines potential dissemination of hate messages and intolerance discourses. The main focus of this study is to conduct a qualitative analysis. Qualitative content analysis technique is useful “for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns.”⁹

Content analysis was helpful in answering the main research question: “Who says what, to whom, why, and how?”¹⁰ For this purpose, qualitative content analysis via inductive category development has been applied, whereas the coding categories have been derived directly from the data comprising published material.

In addition to qualitative content analysis, descriptive analysis is employed to summarize the data in numerical form. Use of this method of analysis is useful to describe and explain the data by division in various categories.

Key Research Questions

- Do religious publications employ hate speech?
- What are different themes/frames/dimensions of hate content in the published material?
- Does the published material use conflict-oriented or favorable comments for various sects and religious communities in Pakistan?

To address the above questions, a three-step procedure was followed. First, the religious magazines were thoroughly examined to select the content that falls under the ambit of hate speech. In this process of review, the researcher found that only twelve publications¹¹ were relevant to the study as they were representative of major Muslim sects and various religious beliefs and they had relevant material to examine. With this view, twelve magazines were selected out of dozens for the review process. After this selection process, the material was reviewed and coded in the pre-designed coding sheet. In the next stage, the extraneous data was discarded and a small coding list was created. The coding form was built in a way to find out a pattern in the religious texts.

⁹ Natalie Sappleton, *Advancing Research Methods with New Technologies* (Manchester: Metropolitan University-Idea Group Inc., 2013), 232.

¹⁰ Babbie, *Social Research Counts* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 2012), 168.

¹¹ *Ahl-e- Hadees, Nida -e- Khilafat , Al-Aitisam, Mahasin-e-Islam, Tanzeel , Naqeeb, The War Cry, Khawajagan, Al-Muntazir, Al-Makhzan, Al-Khair, and Mashreb-e-naab* are the selected publications for this study.

The last step was to merge small categories into each other to create broader categories.

Theoretical Framework

Framing theory has been used as a theoretical framework in the current study. Different researchers and scholars agree that the framing theory aptly explains how mass media highlights any issue by being selective about the content, i.e. what to include or not in the story. The media also plays a role in framing a story in particular¹² by the way it limits or defines the meaning of any event, which consequently also shapes people's interpretation of that event.¹³ Chong and Druckman refer to framing as a "process by which the people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue."¹⁴ In other words, use of framing theory is significant to "select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation."¹⁵

While using framing theory, a deductive approach is used to study various types of hate content frames in religious publications. As a result, following six frames related to hate speech were generated which were found permeating the stated media/publications discourse:

- **Inter religious Hate Speech Frame:** There is no uniform definition of inter-religious hate speech. However, this study conceptualizes inter-religious hate speech as any form of communication that is intended to promote hate or violence between Muslims and other religious communities in Pakistan. This frame includes any medium of communication/speech/text through which a writer/author of religious publications expresses his/her personal bias against people of other religions or sects. The writer may be explicit or implicit in expressing his/her prejudiced views against other religious groups in the write-ups.
- **Sectarian Hate Speech Frame:** This frame deals with such discourses that deem to attack any other sect within Muslims, on

¹² Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki, "Framing Analysis: An Approach to News Discourse, Political Communication," *Journal of Political Communication*, 10:1 (1993) 55-75. DOI: 10.1080/10584609.1993.9962963.

¹³ Kark Hallahan, "Seven Model osf Frame: Implications for Public Relations," *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 11 (1999) 205-242.

¹⁴ Beatrice De Graaf, Goerge Dimitriu, and Jens Ringsmose, *Strategic Narratives, Public Opinion and War: Winning Domestic Support for the Afghan War* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 84.

¹⁵ Karen S. Johnson-Cartee, *News Narratives and News Framing: Constructing Political Reality* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), 162.

the basis of its attributes. While doing so, the study will report any prejudiced views based on sectarian differences.

- **Opposing Mainstream Media Frame:** This frame focuses on the content that pertains to extreme views about mainstream media. In this frame, the study looks at such material wherein the authors intended to highlight the role of mainstream media in a negative tone, such as mainstream media is spreading vulgarity among youth and promoting alien cultures and traditions.
- **Gender Bias Speech Frame:** This frame highlights such discourses which intend to discriminate against females as compared to males while describing their social roles.
- **Opposing Educational Institutions Frame:** This frame covers all such aspects of the education system that have been painted as negative and full of controversy by the religious publications e.g. co-education promotes feelings of romanticism, immoral relationships etc., and such other negative perceptions.
- **Opposing Civil Society Frame:** Any text in the religious publications that is biased towards activities of civil society is included in this frame.

In addition to the explicit expression of hatred for some groups, this content analysis study also investigates the underlying meanings and motivations of hatred embedded in the alternative media discourses.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The analysis of quantitative data is presented as answers to the questions posed. First question posed is: ***Do religious publications (various Muslim Sects, Christian and Hindu) employ hate speech?***

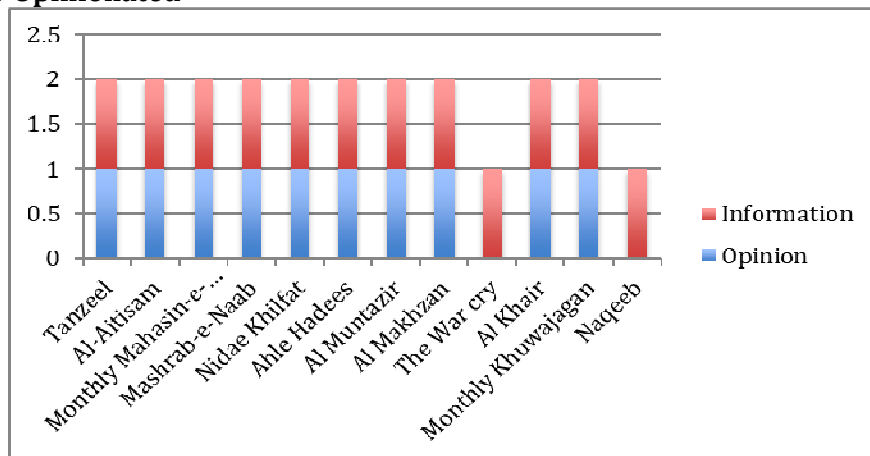
The content analysis found that the majority of the Christian community publications such as '*Naqeeb*' and '*The War Cry*' do not employ any hate speech in their published material against any other religion. These two Christian publications contain material regarding their community's activities, seminars, religious ceremonies, training workshops, social work and community self-help programmes. The analysis shows that in some of the articles in these Christian publications, lessons regarding interfaith harmony have been incorporated. The Catholic magazine '*Naqeeb*', published fortnightly from Lahore, dwells on the Christian messages of peace and harmony. In an article, the magazine on the eve of '*Deewali*' called upon building close relations between families of Hindus and Christians.¹⁶ '*The War Cry*', an organ of the Christian

¹⁶ Bishop Sebastian Francis Shaw (Arch Bishop of Lahore), "Translation of Diwali Message by Papal Council," *Catholic Naqeeb*, November 2016, 3.

Salvation Army, promotes service to humanity on voluntary basis. There are only traces of Hindus in the areas focused on by this research, so no publication from Hindus was found in the project areas.

The content analysis revealed that the religious publications belonging to various sects of the Muslims focused on circulation of information related to their activities, and opinion pieces on their preaching wherein they invariably discriminated or rejected the point of view of their rival sects.

Graph 1: The Nature of Content from Selected Material: Informative or Opinionated



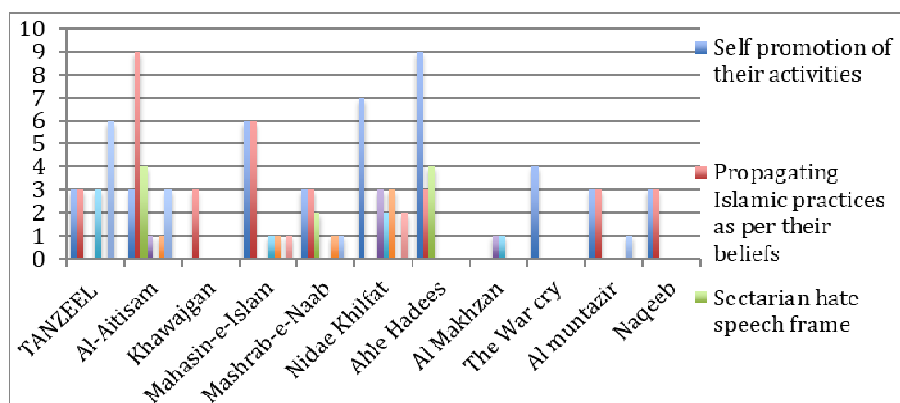
Source: Compiled by the authors.

Findings in Graph 1 show that all Muslim religious publications/magazines have opinion pieces of the writers that contain some hate or discriminatory material against their rival sects, while two Christian publications 'Naqeeb' and 'The War Cry' only published information and updates for Christian community as described above.

Graph 2 shows the nature of the information circulated through the selected samples of religious material.

Graph 2

Analysis of Publications as per Six Main Frames



Source: Compiled by authors.

The data shows that the religious magazines covered a wide range of topics, including propagation of their respective belief systems, material on sectarian and inter-religious hate speech, self-promotion of their own activities etc. The subjects covered in the self-promotion category include demands for charity, invitation to join their processions or opening ceremonies of Islamic centres, and/or advertisement of video '*Khuda Gawa Haa*' (God is a witness) prepared by *Tanzeem e Islami*. It is found that a weekly religious magazine *Ahl-e- Hadees* has a significant number of articles (9) containing self-promotion of their own activities followed by a monthly magazine '*Nida -e- Khilafat*' (7).

A comparison between the selected religious magazines indicates that the monthly '*Al-Aitizam*' published a large number of articles (9) for propagation of Islamic practices as per their respective belief system whereas '*Mahasin-e-Islam*' magazine has six articles on the same subject in its three issues. The analysis shows that '*Ahle Hadees*' and '*Al-Aitizam*' have a tendency of publishing material denoting loyalty towards their own belief system but unwillingness to accept others' thoughts. This tendency of publishing such material reflects sectarianism from the members of a particular religious sect/group inciting hatred against their rival sects.

The analysis also unearthed a frame of inter-religious hate speech, wherein writers implied hatred and hostility towards other religions. The data shows that the monthly magazine '*Tanzeel*' published inter-religious hate content in six articles whereas '*Al-Aitizam*' and '*Al-Muntazir*' had three articles in each issue containing hate speech. Three articles in '*Nida-e-Khilafat*' magazine explicitly criticized mainstream media. The frames on 'Opposing educational system' and 'gender bias' had also been used by the authors of these religious publications. The magazine '*Tanzeel*' published content on some gender biased issues and '*Nida-e-Khilafat*' had two articles wherein the writers opposed the education system in Pakistan.

The second question is: ***Does the published material make conflict-oriented or favourable comments regarding various sects and religious communities of Pakistan?***

While analyzing the religious publications, the published material was found to employ conflict-oriented framing while representing other religious communities or various sects. For instance, writers exhibited strong bias against Hindus; an author of the monthly '*Tanzeel*' hypothesized that, had Pakistan not been an independent country, there would be conflicting discourses and if he were to continue praying at mosque, the Hindu extremists would lock or destroy the mosque [as they had done in the case of *Babri* mosque (a mosque in India)].¹⁷ This particular piece presents grounds for dispute between two divergent religious groups. By doing so, these narratives construct an imaginary conflicting situation between Hindus and Muslims, wherein people may take some particular violent actions.¹⁸

Qualitative Data Analysis

The following research question are answered by the qualitative part of this analysis

The first one is: ***What are different frames of hate content in the published material?***

The analysis found six main frames, which will be treated as theme of content, embedded in the published material. Following are some samples from selective religious magazines/publications decided in themes:

Inter-religious Hate Speech

Inter-religious hate speech is a framing theme that has been identified from the content analysis. As noted above, inter-religious hate speech refers to any communication that reflects hurtful remarks towards any religious community. Analysis of discourses appearing in religious magazines indicated that inter-religious hate speech is commonly employed. The analysis shows that this material is intended to promote hatred among religious groups. Some writers not only express hate speech explicitly in their writings but they also use implicit hate speech. For example, a writer of *Al-Aitisaam*, a pro- *Ahl-e-Hadees* weekly magazine, utilizes an implied critical commentary on Christians and their holy

¹⁷ Maulana Qari Abdul Hafeez (Ed), "If Pakistan had not been an independent country then what was my future," *Tanzeel*, November 2016, 49.

¹⁸ Ibid.

scriptures.¹⁹ Additionally, the writer also expresses his explicit bias against non-Muslims as he believes that the people whose own Holy books accuse them of heinous sins cannot preach about how to give respect and love to our prophets. He further criticizes Christians by pointing out 104 versions of the Bible which are in circulation worldwide (as of 2015) whereas God had revealed only one Bible to prophet Jesus. The writer also claims that Jews are conspirators and saboteurs as well as cowards, which he demonstrates by pointing out the excessive number of surveillance cameras present outside the London Synagogue as compared to other buildings.²⁰

The analysis shows that the framing in the articles published in religious magazines construct a hostile image of other religions. The frame maintains a conflict between Islam and other religions. In doing so, this frame projects the 'Islamic society' vs. 'Western society'. For instance, a writer in a religious publication titled '*Mashir-e-Naab*' (June 2012) explicitly proclaims Jews as enemies of Muslims and Islam. The author warns Muslims against adopting the Jewish lifestyle, mind-set or act according to their school of thought or they would end up exiting the ambit of Islamic faith. He further elaborates his point that our outward appearance along with our customs, traditions, and even our food should be distinct from them lest we become like them. A contributor for the publication titled '*Ahl-e-Hadees*' expressed similar views that a Muslim should not imitate the hairstyle of *Kuffar* (non-Muslims).²¹

In this inter-religious framing, the analysis indicates that the contributors of these religious magazines construct an implied dichotomy of 'us' vs. 'them' by promoting a clash between Islam and other religions. In this sense, these findings confirm Tajfel's study (1979) proposing that people evaluate others by putting them into categories and tend to exaggerate about out-group differences and are less attentive to similarities.²² These notions of religious categorization may promote prejudiced attitudes towards other religions. The writers perceive Islam as superior to the other religions so they tend to highlight differences between religions.

The tone of the articles published in these religious publications is critical towards other religious communities. For instance, a writer of '*Al-Aitisaam*', belonging to the *Ahl-e Hadees* sect, condemned the statement of a

¹⁹ Hafiz Muhammad Zubair, "Hajeet-e-Hadees Aur Inkaar-E-Hadees," *Al-Aitisaam*, December 2016, 7.

²⁰ Mian Anwaarullah, "Qurani Peshgoiyaan," *Al-Aitisaam*, December 2016, 31.

²¹ Ghulam Mustafa Zaheer, "Masla Sar ke Baloon ka," *Ahle Hadees*, November 2016, 12.

²² James. E. Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 175.

minister in the Punjab government that said that calling non-Muslim Pakistanis a 'minority' discriminates against them as citizens of the country.²³ The writer keeps on saying that while making this statement, the minister only cared for the sentiments of the non-Muslims at the cost of the sentiments of the Muslims. He writes that Islam has provided the word 'Zimmi' for non-Muslims living in a Muslim society. So, instead of bridging differences between Muslims and non-Muslim under the secular and democratic agenda, the government should call non-Muslims as 'Zimmis'.

In the Islamic society, some people consider celebrating birthday parties as an un-Islamic practice. Some believe that this trend is derived from Western traditions. One of the articles from the selected religious magazine '*Tanzeel*' confirms this notion by writing that celebrating birthdays is not allowed in Islamic Shariah.²⁴ In that article the writer cites a number of religious scholars/followers of his own sect to make the article more 'authentic' according to his perspective and belief system.

While quoting a book '*al-Fatawa*', the writer recommends not attending birthdays because these are un-Islamic practices. However, the writer also proposes a number of rules in case it is inevitable to attend such celebrations. One of the rules he suggested is that people should refuse to eat cake at birthdays if they have to attend. A writer of *Nida-e-Khilafat* also gave a similar opinion about birthdays as she thinks that these customs are borrowed from the West.

Sectarian Hate Speech

The religious discourse contains a frame of inter-sectarian hate speech/content. Sectarian hate content refers to any expression of hate towards another sect. The analysis indicates that the writers of religious material in these magazines tend to show enmity to each other. One of the writers of the magazine '*Al Aitisam*' reported a conference held in the Chechen Republic supposed to counter extremism but which ended up being a platform for the participants to declare themselves '*Ahl-e- Sunnah*' and extradited and exiled others from the Sunni faith.²⁵ The writer elaborates that a person holding highly prejudiced views towards Arabs was made to chair the conference and he expressed his bias against the Wahabi sect. The chair was quoted in a video as saying, "if I see any Wahabi in my country, I will kill him."²⁶ The extremist inclinations of the Chair contributed to extreme outcomes.

²³ Hammad ul haq Naeem, "Bou Al Ajbi," *Al-Aitisam*, January 2017, 4.

²⁴ Maulana Qari Abdul Hafeez, "Aurat mein dou fitnay aur Aulad mein aik fitna hae," *Tanzeel*, November 2016, 60.

²⁵ Abu Muhammad Mohib ur Rehman, "Ahl al Nisa wal Jamaát kon?" ki haqeeqat," *Al-Aitisam*, October 2016, 19-20.

²⁶ Ibid.

A monthly magazine, '*Al Muntazir*', also provides an example of a sectarian frame. In an opinion piece, a writer criticizes a leader of the Deobandi sect for wearing a '*Burqa*' (veil) while attempting to escape the government crackdown at Lal Mosque in the heart of Islamabad on charges of 'sedition'.²⁷ He implicitly directs most of his criticism towards the Deobandi sect by stating that even though their mosques are dens of ammunition and explosives, the 'Deobandis' believe that they are superior while they attack mosques of other sects, describing them as inferior and worthy of contempt.

Gender Biased Speech

Gender bias framing is also prevalent in religious magazines. A magazine called '*Tanzeel*' is one of the religious publications, which promotes gender discrimination in its contents. One writer quotes from an Islamic text as, "I (P.B.U.H) have not left behind me any *fitnah* [temptation/problematic element] other than *women*." The writer believes that women represent two types of 'fitna': one is social and the other financial. He argues that women generate social 'fitna' as they tend to break ties with relatives. He gives examples of wives wishing to live in a separate house, so they provoke a man against his parents and family. The writer projects women as a money related 'fitna' as husbands have to do everything for fulfilling the desires of their wives whether they are just or unjust. Though the writer declares women as 'fitna', he quotes only examples of wives as women and does not talk about mothers, sisters, daughters as women. Unfortunately, he builds the narrative quoting religion out of context, to express his own bias against women.²⁸

Similarly, another contributor in an article published in '*Mahasin-e-Islam*' criticizes those women who put on makeup when going outside as he thinks that Islam does not allow such practices so, in his opinion such women should be berated.²⁹ He suggests if they do not apply makeup, thousands of families could be saved from destruction, which is a vast generalisation. Here the writer also expresses his bias against women while disregarding the need for a balanced thought process, not mentioning religious commandments for men e.g., men should not consider women as an object as Islamic teachings also urge men to keep their gaze averted to protect their own intentions when outside. This is a distorted perspective discriminating women based on their gender.

'*Al-Aitisaam*', a weekly magazine also adopted a gender biased framing under which one of its writers criticizes the women protection bill

²⁷ Malik Muhammad Baqir, "Editorial," *Al-Muntazir*, September 2016, 4.

²⁸ Abdul Hafeez, "Aurat mein dou fitnay aur Aulad mein aik fitna hae" *Tanzeel*, November 2016, 60.

²⁹ Muhammad Ishaq, "Janati Aurtain Khawand ka dil muthi mein rakhein gi," *Mahasin-e-Islam*, July 2016.

introduced in Pakistan to give protection to women.³⁰ He proclaims that there is a group of Pakistani females whose sole purpose is to unveil the Muslim woman and shroud her in garb of shamelessness, and to get her to stand shoulder to shoulder with men, which he fears would lead to abandonment of all Islamic values.

A contributor to '*Nida-e-Khilafat*' also uses a similar lens to examine the role of woman in a society.³¹ He believes that men and women should set their boundaries for if they cross their boundaries, then that is a sign of decline in any society. He proposes that the role of a female is that of a creator and sustainer of her child. He criticizes the role of professional women who choose to go outside and compete with men in public and professional life, without any valid logical argument.

Opposing Educational Institutions

The religious magazines are supposed to educate people but the analysis has found that they end up opposing educational institutions, be they schools, colleges or universities. In '*Mahasin-e-Islam*,' the writer blames universities and colleges for teaching students boldness to defy values, and claims that their graduates challenge Shariah Laws in front of religious scholars even though they do not have in-depth knowledge about Shariah Law.³²

Likewise, a writer in '*Nida-e-Khilafat*' opposes co-education system because she thinks it generates romanticism among young students. She further proclaims that people send their children to evening academies for seeking a sound education whereas the co-education destroys their ethical and social values.³³

To conclude this section, it is noted that the selected religious magazines and publications consider only the education given at the seminaries as pure - which prepares students for the life hereafter. They consider that the '*dunyawi* taleem' (worldly education) is useless and only produces those following western lifestyle and work ethic. The publications, while condemning the modern scientific education, do injustice by not recognizing the inventions of great Muslim scholars, scientists, medical specialists, chemists, biologists and mathematicians.

³⁰ Hammad ul haq Naeem, "Bou Al Ajbi," *Al-Aitisam*, December 2016 – January 2017.

³¹ Zameer Akhter Khan, "Khuwateen ka दौरہ-kaar Insan sazi ya ke Hawa bazi?" *Nida-e-Khilafat*, September–October 2016, 14.

³² Khalid Iqbal Taib, "USB," *Mahasin-e-Islam*, July 2016, 12.

³³ Amira Ahsan, "Taer-e-Din kar gya parwaz," *Nida-e-Khilafat*, November 2016, 12.

Opposing Civil Society

Jean-Louis et.al write that civil society is generally considered the third pillar of any society³⁴ followed by the state and the public sector. The civil society advocates people's rights relating to politics, economics, gender, health and the environment. However, the analysis found that religious publications present some biased ideas against the civil society. An author of '*Mashrab Nab*' opposes the prevailing system of philanthropy and charitable work carried out by the civil society.³⁵ He emphasizes that NGOs take up insignificant causes and propagate them to make a mountain out of a molehill. He further elaborates that distributing small quantities of rations, grains, or sweets is not something worthy of a media circus. The writer intends to make the Islamic concept of Jihad as a key pillar of Islam as opines that the actual meaning of philanthropy in Islam is to sacrifice your life for your faith. By expressing these views, he hints towards extremism in his interpretation of Islam. The analysis suggests that his views are more action-oriented as he seems to provoke/incite Muslims to take some extremist steps in the name of Islam instead of performing charitable deeds, which he considers insignificant sentiments.

On the topic of civil society, two authors from '*Al Makhzan*'³⁶ and '*Al-Aitisam*'³⁷ denounce the role of civil society NGOs in campaigning for social liberties, especially women rights similar to those prevailing in Western society. They posit that though civil society champions social freedom and equality, there is a clear distinction between Western and Eastern societies because of their values and customs. The writers argue that the NGOs' campaign for equal rights for men and women in all aspects ultimately promote extra-marital relations and licentiousness in society.

Opposing Mainstream Media/FM Channels

Criticism of mainstream media is also an embedded theme in selected religious publications. For instance, in one article from *Mahasin-e-Islam*, the writer declares FM radio channels as a source of evil.³⁸ He proclaims that FM Radio is an epidemic infiltrating all segments of modern life due to availability of FM receiver in every mobile device. The writer indicates that wide usage of mobile devices has become a curse, twisting

³⁴ Jean-Louis Laville, Dennis R. Young and Philippe Eynaud, *Civil Society, the Third Sector and Social Enterprise: Governance and Democracy*, (City : Routledge, 2015).

³⁵ Syed Jawad Naqvi, "Ummat Sazi," *Mashrib-e-Naab*, November 2012, 13.

³⁶ Mian Saeed, "Aurat and Azadi," *Al-Makhzan*, November 2016, 24.

³⁷ Muhammad Bashir, "Taraki me civil society ka kirdar," *Al-Aitisam*, May 2016, 16.

³⁸ Muhammad Ishaq, "Hum Kidhar Ja Rahay hain," *Mahasin-e-Islam*, September 2012, 38.

the minds of youth and filling their heads with misguided notions of liberalism - commonly considered the roots of all evils in Pakistani society.

The writer believes that people who have access to the mainstream media lack proper knowledge about Islamic teachings. He declares it the responsibility of every practicing Muslim to protect their homes and families from its influence by educating themselves about the adverse effects of mainstream media.

In another article written in '*Mashrib Naab*,' the author has critically examined the role of media.³⁹ He believes that the people who preach on media and proclaim Islam as a religion of peace have surely not studied or understood the teachings of Islam. He claims that Islam is a religion of hatred as much as it is a religion of peace. He also stresses that adherents of Islam are obligated to express hatred towards enemies of Islam and Allah; and if people do not show such hate, they do not show their love for God.

While criticizing the mainstream media, another writer of '*Mashrib Naab*' says that mainstream media analysts, instead of coming up with a concrete analysis, choose and pick conflicting ideas that create confusion while presenting their thoughts over the radio and television⁴⁰. Analysis reveals that the writer considers media analysts as hollow intellectuals having no vision and perspective, and] ignorant of prominent religious publications and intellectuals. Again, this is an example of the underlying theme of 'opposing mainstream media' while claiming to be an authority on Islamic knowledge and wisdom.

Discussion

While using framing analysis, this study examined six different frames of hate content depicted in media discourses published by religious seminaries. These frames analyzed the ideas expressed by various authors of the religious publications within the frames of inter-religious hate, sectarian hate and violence, opposing mainstream media, gender bias, opposing educational institutions as well as civil society.

A change has been observed in contents of these publications in the wake of military action against anti-state extremists and after Punjab government's crackdown on such disruptive elements. In general, some of the religious publications have toned down their expression of hate by using moderate discourses and publishing more on Islamic practices. Therefore, the previously prevalent hate against Shias is not that visible in the selected publications. However, the content still expresses author's biases against rival religious communities and sects. Although in the

³⁹ Syed Jawad Naqvi, "Watan ki fiqr karr nadaan," *Mashrib-e-Naab*, November 2012, 66.

⁴⁰ Syed Jawad Naqvi, "Ummat Sazi," *Mashrib-e-Naab*, November 2012, 13,

mapping exercise, dozens of publications originating from the Shia sect were found, but no significant hate content was found against any other religions or sects during the review. However, one of the selected and noted religious publications, '*Mashrib Naab*', from the Shia sect did oppose civil society/NGOs and mainstream media, but they did not explicitly criticize other sects.

All Muslim religious publications targeted media, civil society and the contemporary education system, scientific knowledge, and women's public and professional role in life. The content in religious publications rigorously criticizes the mainstream educational institutions and private academies for having co-education system - considered the mother of all social ills. They have criticized contemporary education system for imparting a sub-standard education and promoting boldness and openness among youth, making them fashionable and open in relationships. The impact of NGOs/civil society is vital in contributing to the development and promotion of human rights, but the religious publications still construct a controversial image of these. In this way, the discourses from religious publications undermine the role of civil society, which may raise several questions in the minds of ordinary people. There is a need to bridge the gap between religious publications and mainstream media so that the nation gets authentic information and intolerant attitudes are eliminated from the discourse as desired by the National Action Plan, 2015. These religious publications construct untrue images of professional women. This is done to indirectly glorify the role of man as a key pillar of society.

The Christian publications mapped out for this review largely focused only on providing information and updates for their community. They also promoted public service activities of various organizations for the benefit of the community. No hate material against any other religion was found. The Muslim writers used hate, both explicitly and implicitly to persuade/incite people to act against other belief systems or their followers, such as Christians, Jews, Hindus, Deobandis, Salafis, Sunnis and Wahabis.

With regard to negative constructs about various religious groups, hate and discrimination can generate 'us' versus 'them' categorization. The analysis predicts that hateful speech can escalate during poor economic conditions and political strife in the country. Instead of creating propaganda, the editors and publishers of these religious publications need to help the nation by contributing articles on Pakistani citizenship, humanity and universality, in line with the spirit of '*Misaq-e-Madina*' wherein all citizens of the city state of Madina were given the right to live in a peaceful and dignified manner without discrimination and hate.

Policy Recommendations

In the light of the above findings, a few policy recommendations are given. Since Muslim religious publications are supposed to interpret development from a common Islamic viewpoint for the wider humanity, they need to do it using Islamic vision of universality and humanity established in Shariah Law, i.e. without discriminating or ridiculing against people hailing from other religions and sects.

The government of Punjab has banned some of the publications misusing Islam to project their extremist agenda. However, an organized system is needed to monitor that the content published in religious publications is in line with press, publication and defamation laws, just as the mainstream media does to check the dissemination of discriminatory or hate content from its platforms.

It is also significant to bridge the gap between religious publications and mainstream media so that the nation gets true information to establish a tolerant discourse as desired by the National Action Plan, 2015; a code of conduct needs to be developed in this regard, so to curb the publication and broadcast of hate content against other religions or sects.

The Government of Pakistan may introduce courses for religious and mainstream media outlets, especially in Urdu, focused on 'Media for Peace and Development'. This will help training the media outlets on how to promote development, peace, and inter-faith harmony in the best interests of Pakistan by minimizing hate and discrimination. These courses may build their skills in critical thinking, objective reporting, and reducing biases in writing.

