

RISKS: NEWSPAPERS' REPRESENTATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST MINORITY GROUP IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Ahmadis are a religious minority group whose presence is detested by majority group in Pakistan. In 2014, in result of a mob attack, three Ahmadis had died in Pakistan. The national and international media reported the incident with different risky contexts and perspectives about attackers and people being attacked but these contexts have been given little space in academic discourse. The purpose of the article is to explore the types of risks reported, identified and located in the media text and investigate the extent to which the media crossed the legal and social boundaries of risks in representing groups. In this regard, content analysis was conducted of two widely circulated Pakistani newspapers namely *The News* and *Dawn*, and also of two western newspapers (namely *Daily Mail*, *New York Times*) which provided detailed news reporting of the incident. The article reveals that Pakistani newspapers represented Ahmadis the way as the law dictates, which shows that these did not cross legal boundaries, whereas the international newspapers represented Ahmadis against the law and considered these as a sect of Islam and a reform group within Islam, thus these crossed legal boundaries of risks. In general newspapers identified and located various risks located in Pakistani society, and these alleged social environment which was against any voice raised for legal reforms and freedom of speech. These newspaper suggested to reform the law, in doing so, these crossed dangerous social boundaries of risks. The article brings new insights about a sensitive religious-political conflict between groups which is hardly recognized in academia from cultural risk perspective but deeply enmeshed in the media text.

Keywords: *Content Analysis, Culture, Media, Minority, Representation, Rights, Risk*

RISIKO: REPRESENTASI AKHBAR MENGENAI KEGANASAN TERHADAP KUMPULAN MINORITI PAKISTAN

Abstrak

Ahmadis adalah kumpulan minoriti agama yang keberadaannya di benci oleh kumpulan majoriti Pakistan. Rusuhan yang berlaku pada tahun 2014 telah menyebabkan tiga ahli kumpulan Ahmadis mati. Media dalam dan luar negara telah membuat laporan dari konteks dan perspektif yang berisiko mengenai perusuh dan mangsa perusuh namun konteks ini tidak di timbulkan dalam ruang wacana akademik. Tujuan artikel ini adalah untuk melihat jenis risiko yang di laporkan, di kenalpasti dan di tempatkan dalam teks media dan juga untuk meneliti tahap media melintasi batas risiko undang-undang dan sosial yang mewakili kumpulan tersebut. Analisis kandungan di lakukan terhadap dua akhbar perdana harian di Pakistan, iaitu, The News dan Dawn dan dua akhbar dari barat (Daily Mail dan New York Times) yang melaporkan berita insiden tersebut secara terperinci. Artikel tersebut menunjukkan akhbar Pakistan yang mewakili Ahmadis melaporkan seperti yang di arahkan oleh undang-undang yang membuktikan bahawa peristiwa itu tidak melanggar undang-undang sementara akhbar antarabangsa menganggap Ahmadis dari kumpulan Islam dan pertubuhan kumpulan Islam melanggar undang-undang dan dan melangkai batas undang-undang. Secara umumnya, akhbar mengenalpasti beberapa risiko dalam masyarakat Pakistan dan mendakwa persekitaran sosial menghalang suara-suara yang ingin membuat pembaharuan undang-undang dan kebebasan bersuara. Akhbar-akhbar ini membuat cadangan untuk membentuk undang-undang baru, namun ini dikatakan melangkai batasan sosial yang bahaya. Artikel ini membawa pemerhatian baru mengenai konflik agama-politik yang sensitive antara kumpulan yang sukar untuk dikenalpasti oleh akademia dari konflik agama-politik yang sensitive namun penuh berselirat dalam teks media.

Kata kunci: *Analisis kandungan, budaya, media, minority, representasi, risiko.*

INTRODUCTION

In 2014, the result of a mob attack on Ahmadis houses in Gujranwala city of Pakistan, three Ahmadis had died. This was not the first attack on Ahmadis but for the last four decades, they and their places of worships had remained subject of these attacks in Pakistan. This attack has many perspectives and contexts. Risk is one of those, and risk is not merely enmeshed into the social fabric of Pakistan Society for Ahmadis but it is an integral part of Pakistani formal legislative framework. However, the legal dimension of risk is not as dangerous (and also not old as social and religious dimension of risk is) as the social dimension which leads to mob attacks to avert risks associated with Ahmadis. On the other hand, the legal dimension also contributes in averting the occurrence of risks and dangers stemming from Ahmadis (and other groups) in the society.

Ahmadis are followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908) who was born in a town Qadian in India. He proclaimed that he was the promised Messiah, Mahdi, reformer and prophet. A small number of people accepted his claims but most considered him a swindle. When he died, his community was divided into two groups. One of the groups believes him as a prophet. In 1974 in Pakistan both groups were declared non-Muslims and heretical under the constitution because Sunni Muslims believe that there will be no prophet after Muhammad (PBUH) (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 2013).

In 1974, a new born Constitution of Pakistan (1973) was amended to declare Ahmadis as non-Muslims. They were considered a self-described Islamic community. The new clause in the Constitution states that a person who does not believe in the absolute finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad [Peace Be Upon Him], or claim to that status, or recognizes such a claimant as a religious reformer is not a Muslim (Syed 2005). In 1985, a sub-section 298 (c) was inserted in the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) 1860 in which Ahmadis was prohibited to call themselves as Muslims, refer to their places of worships as mosques or to propagate their religion as Islam (Qasmi 2014). In 1993, the Supreme Court of Pakistan also disallowed Ahmadis from using Islamic inscriptions, terminologies, customs and rites. It declared that doing so would be a criminal offense and blasphemy (Syed 2005).

Consequently, it is indispensable for all people (Ahmadis, Sunnis, journalists and others) and institutions (the media, judiciary and so on) living or operating in Pakistan have to follow the law- known as the blasphemy law- in a collective manner. In another case, there are risks to the media and reporters, newscasters and journalists (Young 2015). Besides taking risks, the media play an important role in constructing and also communicating risks (Kitzinger 1999). People are living in societies which are dominated by the media culture. They continuously receive information about potential threats, risks and dangers through the media. Risk and threats oriented coverage of the media has made public sensitive to everything, and risk has been understood and perceived by individuals and

groups collectively, (Ewald 1991; and Culpitt 1999).

Anthropological and cultural perspective (Douglas and Wildavsky 1982; Caplan, 2000; Bujra, 2000) suggest that the risks are understood by individuals and groups, and maintained “through particular patterns of social solidarity, world view and cultural values” (Mythen, 2004: 4). Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky wrote book *Risk and Culture* (1982) which implies that people are able to perceive risk because of their ‘social organization’ and ‘culture’. It is the society that “generates the type of accountability and focuses concern on the particular dangers” (quoted by Caplan 2000: 9). Douglas went on to say that the issue of morality comes through cultural use, and ‘common fears’ come from the societal ‘common values’. People have choices of risks and on the way to live with the risks. Living with risk and making choices of risks are interconnected with each other: “Risk taking place and risk aversion, shared confidence and shared fears, are part of a dialogue on how best to organize social relations” (Quoted by Caplan 2000: 9). So in societies, social organization performs an important role in the selection and alteration of risk perceptions. Knowledge is very important in analysing different risks.

Douglas and Wildavsky imply that fear is a vital part of knowledge (Caplan 2000: 8). Lupton and Tulloch (2002) also adhere to the idea that “knowledge about risks - both ‘lay’ and ‘expert’ - inevitably mediated through social and cultural frameworks of understanding and are therefore dynamic and historical” (p. 321). These minority and majority groups may have other sources of knowledge (social and cultural frameworks) about risks and threats to their lives, these other sources can be science and legal systems but the media also plays important role in reporting, identifying and disseminating risks (Cottle 1998; Boholm 2003; Greer 2006; McKay, Thomas and Blood, 2011; Seeck and Rantanen 2015). Boholm (2003) claims that the broadcast media not only disseminate information about risk but it also stress that the world is a dangerous place to live. Cottle (1998, 8) argues that “the media are identified as a key arena in which such social contests over definitions, knowledge and risk consequences are played out.” The news media perform a job in the development of the public perception of risk (Gregory 1991; Jaeger 2001). McKay, Thomas and Blood (2011), while analyzing coverage of the Australian media about a boat of asylum seeker standing by the shore, found that the media created social, anxiety, and moral panic and indicated to various factors that necessarily or unnecessarily were risks to society.

In Pakistan, theoretically (in the law), Pakistani media (journalists, newscasters, reporters, etc.) cannot go against the law and declare Ahmadis as Muslims or a sect of Islam. However, there are possibilities that a journalist living outside of Pakistan can represent the way as he or she likes to represent the two groups (Ahmadis and Sunnis) specially it can represent Ahmadis the way as Ahmadis want to be represented. In light of these legal limitations, this article will explore the extent of theoretical (legal) boundaries and any other boundaries

that the media crosses and take risk in representing the two groups. The second major thrust of the article is to investigate the types of risks, threats and dangers identified and located in the media text and how the media locate and identify risks.

Geographically in Pakistan and theoretically in the field of media, sociology and anthropology, there is lack of researches which have assessed the role of media in representing religious minority groups from risk perspective. There is a lack of evidence which shows that whether the representation is a risk oriented or neutral, and while representing religious minorities what (legal and social factors) limit the media (journalists and reporters). This article will use content analysis to dig deep and invisible risks in the media text. In the following, the article will explore the role of media in representing religious minority and majority groups in general and Ahmadis and Sunnis (in specific) against each other in Pakistani context and relations between the media and risks.

REPRESENTATION OF MINORITIES IN THE MEDIA

The body of literature on ethnic and religious minority rights suggests that in anywhere in the world ethnic and religious minorities are at risk and under threats (HRW 2014; Dilwari 2014; Booth, Leigh and Varganova 2012), therefore, these people are represented innocent because they are “already disadvantaged [therefore, they] will suffer more”, (Douglas 1992, 34). The majority ethnic and religious groups deny them their legitimate rights because they are considered ‘conflict groups’ in cultures: “They are sources of unrest and social dissatisfaction, unless suppressed or discouraged”, (Sigler 1983, 8).

In the field of media and communications, there is an important role of the media in representing minority rights (McGonagle 2011), and also to a significant extent, identities are shaped, citizens are told about moral values and reminded about the limitations and boundaries of citizenship and belonging, (Georgiou 2014; Couldry 2012). On one hand, the media had been playing a role in empowering identities of minorities, as media is negatively portraying ethnic and religious minorities. (Kalehsar et al. 2013; Agirreazkuenaga 2012; Trappel 2011).

In Pakistan, literature offers negative as well as the positive role of the media in presenting religious minorities (Ali and Jalaludin 2010; Humanyun 2010; Dilawari et al., 2014; Ahmad et al., 2014; Ambreen 2014) but it is marred with paucity of context and focused analysis of issues and problems that two groups (Ahmadis and Sunnis) are going through. Ali and Jalaludin (2010) conducted content analysis of 127 news items produced by two prominent English newspapers to investigate the coverage of religious minority groups in Pakistan. They found that out of total 127 news reports, 88 carried positive contents for religious minorities. They established that majority of the news reports were positive for religious minorities but except the Ahmadis. Of the total news reports, there were only two reports about Ahmadis, and both carried negative

coverage. However, Ali and Jalaludin were unable to provide the content of the content analysis and also background of news reports in which Ahmadis' were not given positive space in the news report.

Dilawari et al. (2014) offer a brief analysis of the background and context in which religious minorities including Ahmadis have become victims of attacks, discriminations and violence in Pakistan. They assumed that violent attacks on religious minorities were result of legal and social discrimination which seen in every aspect of life. They also provided about one pager brief on the role of media in representing religious minorities. According to them, social media such as facebook were used to promote inclusion and there were others media outlets responsible for communicating negative representations of minorities. Dilawari et al. (2014) highlighted that for years the media had been portraying Ahmadis as Qadianis- a term used to be insulting- and framing them negatively 'as a national problem', but Dilawari et. al. have remained limited in offering a detailed content analysis of the news reports. They have built results in light of general views of the media. Correspondingly, Humayun (2010) praises Pakistani print and electronic media for its extensive coverage and factual reporting on issues related to Ahmadis. He claimed that the media has matured and, thus, did positive reporting and identified Ahmadis as Muslims and it stopped using derogatory terms, i.e. Qadianis and Mirzais, used for Ahmadis. Humanyun further claimed that few journalists have dared to call the place of worship of Ahmadis as a mosque. Dilawari et al. and Humanyun lack in-depth analysis of the media text and context in which Ahmadis are represented and potential risk associated with discursive practices.

Ahmad et al. (2014) have also attempted to offer the state of minorities' rights in Pakistan and the role of media in representing them. They found that the media channel gave a very little coverage to the issues of minorities in their daily news broadcast and if it gave coverage but the portrayal of the minority rights issues was in a biased (negative) way. Ahmad et al. also did not offer content analysis of the news items related to Ahmadis, and in their article they used Ahmadis or Qadiani terms only once. Likewise, Ambreen (2014) has seen representation of religious minorities in Pakistan's print media and her unit of analysis was news reports, editorials and pictures of Pakistan's leading newspapers, i.e. Dawn, the News and the Nation, from January 2009 to December 2011. Ambreen inferred that these newspapers gave positive coverage to minorities issues.

Ambreen and other writers, however, have not given due consideration to the unique case or status of Ahmadis, whose presence is detested by majority of people in Pakistan (according to the majority, Sunnis- which constituted more than 80 percent Pakistan's total population and Ahmadis were reported just 0.28 percent). The case of Ahmadis is different from all other minority religious groups; therefore, it requires special consideration and thorough scrutiny and interpretations of underlying meaning within the text or in Mary Douglas' (1992: ix) words there is need "to ground meanings in politics and economics".

It is more than legal but political and ideological power, which, the majority group (Sunnis) in Pakistan is fighting or detesting for. The above studies, thus, remained unable to explore the underlying legal, political and ideological rich context embedded into the media texts and mainly the context of risk and danger embedded in the media text and how the media identifies and locates risks and dangers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study uses content analysis approach to focus on interpreting underlying meaning within the text and practice - as Marry Douglas (1992, ix) suggested- "to ground meanings in politics and economics". This approach will be useful to measure "the amount of something (violence, negative portrayals of women, or whatever) in a representative sampling of some mass-mediated popular form of art" (Berger 1991, 25). Through manifest (visible in the text) and latent (hidden in the text) analysis, the article will analyze social, legal, political and religious contexts and meanings embedded in the four newspapers' reports about a mob attack in which three Ahmadis were killed in Gujranwala, Pakistan in 2014.

Content analysis will be conducted of four newspapers' reporting related to the incident of the mob attack only and also their related editorials and opinion columns on the incident. These newspapers are Dawn and The News from Pakistan and New York Times (hereinafter NYT) and Daily Mail (hereinafter DM) from outside of Pakistan. The two widely circulated newspapers namely The News and Dawn were selected because of their political and economic background in the country (Malik and Iqbal 2009; International Media Support 2009; Shah 2010). And the two westerner newspapers namely New York Times and Daily Mail were purposively selected because these provided detailed analysis of the incident. These two newspapers are taken for the analysis to explore the matter in wider, broader, comparative and transnational perceptible. These will help to investigate the type of reporting of the incident from outside of Pakistan.

All four newspapers have online versions. All the relevant materials had been retrieved from these newspapers' online versions. NYT and DM had only once coverage of the reporting whereas Dawn and The News had published editorials and opinion columns on the incident. The reporter of DM (Rush 2014) was outsider- not living in Pakistan at the time of incident. Reporter of the NYT's news story was a Pakistani (Gillani 2014), he was living in Pakistan at the time of incident. Dawn and The News' editorials did not carry name of the editor. Dawn's news story and opinion column were reported by Mirza (2014) and Iqbal (2014) respectively. The News' news story did not carry name of the reporter, however, the opinion column on the incident was written by a staff member (Salahuddin 2014) of The News.

THE ANALYSIS

The scene

On 28 June 2014, in People's Colony in Gujranwala (a district in Punjab- Pakistan) Ahmadi boy was alleged for uploading an objectionable picture (reported as blasphemous) on social media site- Facebook, which was noticed by his Sunni Muslim friend. In result, there was a fight between both friends. In this fight, a son of a religious clerk was injured. Within hours, the news of blasphemy spread in the area, crowd of people rushed to the vicinity, loudspeakers from mosques were used to mobilize people. People gathered into mob, chanted slogans and burnt five houses of Ahmadis. Part of the mob had gone to police station to lodge complaint against the boy was alleged for blasphemy. Most of Ahmadis had flown with the help of neighbors but some were left behind; of which, a woman and her two granddaughters were found dead because of suffocation and others were injured. There was also a miscarriage to a woman in result of violence.

Ahmadis as religious minority

In the one place, DM considered Ahmadis as a sect means within Islam, and then said that Ahmadis are a 'religious minority group, which means Ahmadis are not part of Islam. It shows a mixed and careful way of representing Ahmadis.

DM used term sect for Ahmadis only once in its heading but in the detailed text, it did not use the same term (sect). It called them '*religious minority group*' and used this phrase four times. DM mentioned victims- a woman and two minor girls- belonged to Ahmadi community.

It used word '*riots*' three times and word '*mob*' eight times. These words connotates that it was a collective behaviour of people, and this collective behaviour refers to behaviour of Sunni group which once had declared Ahmadis non-Muslims and heretics.

NYT had also mixed and careful approach in representing Ahmadis. In the first place, it called them Ahmadi minority sect and then it said that Ahmadis is "a reform sect rooted in Islam" but calling them as a reform sect of Islam is against Pakistan's blasphemy law, but then NYT said "but under Pakistani law they are forbidden to identify themselves as Muslims". NYT news report considered them a reform sect rooted in Islam and not a separate religious group from Islam, whereas Sunnis and Pakistani law suggest that they are not part of Islam.

Dawn's news report did not mention Ahmadis as part of Islam or Muslim community. It has used words like Ahmadi community, Ahmadi youth, Ahmadis and Ahmadi families. In the report, Dawn used word Ahmadis 13 times, but not a single time it used word 'sect'. Dawn's editorial has used terms like Ahmadis, a community, a minority community, Ahmadi doctor, Ahmadi man, and temples (for their place of worship); it did not call them a sect of Islam. Dawn's opinion column used terms like Ahmadi, Ahmadis, persecuted community, community, Ahmadi man, the Ahmadiya Muslim Community, victim of the tragedy, residents and the community non-Muslims. It shows that Dawn in its news report, editorial

and column has represented Ahmadis according to the law.

On the first day of incident, The News published a four liner news story; which did not give a complete insight of the issue. However, it said that three people died of suffocation belonged to Ahamdi community. It did not mention who had caused suffocations and who had clashed with each other, but to its reader it must be clear that it is an issue of blasphemy, since victims belonged to Ahmadi community. On the next day of the incident, The News provided a bit detailed news report, in which it used words for the attacked people: 'a non-Muslim minority community, two groups and innocents. The News' editorial offered a few lines on the incident. It used words for Ahmadis as, 'a woman and two children belonging to Ahamdi faith, helpless children, Ahmadis and minorities. The News' opinion column had taken two issues together: one, death of an artist who had been a good friend to the columnist; and, two, the mob attack. It referred them as Ahmadis women and children, persecution of minorities and Ahamdis community.

The News' reportage of the incident, its editorial and opinion column had used the same words that a law abiding citizen in Pakistan has to use for Ahmadis. As Dawn has not represented them as Muslims, or a sect of Islam, in a similar way, The News has not used any of the words that were against the law.

Attackers as Sunni Muslims or terrorists

NYT used words like *an angry mob*, *the mob*, *the larger mob* and *the violent mob*. Then referred to overall treatment of these mob people to religious minorities: "They are killing innocent people over fabricated issues...Attack on religious minorities have become norm in Pakistan, where Islamic extremist groups have been operating more openly than ever". This is representation of the mob as extremist Islamic groups which are killing innocent Ahmadis and other religious minorities. However the pictures provided in NYT's news report did not show that all the attackers were religious fundamentalists since majority had no beard on their faces- for fundamentalists, the beard is basic identity of a Muslim (Culcasi and Gokmen 2011). It implies that religious sentiments of people with beard or without beard are equally threatened or exposed to risk because they understand risks collected manner through social and cultural frameworks which are pinned in the history.

DM did not directly indicate who the attackers were but it used the word 'mob' eight times. Mob is a collective behaviour of people. It is mob behaviour, in which people loss "their ability to reason and became temporarily insane" (Locher 2002, 2). This mob has been referred to that group of people who had once declared Ahamdis non-Muslims and heretics. There is no mention of the religion of attackers in DM but it is obvious that mob belonged to Sunnis who believe in the finality of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). DM also gave somehow indication about the religion of the attackers or the mob. It said "The Ahmadi differ from mainstream Islam in that they do not believe Muhammad [PBUH] is the final prophet. There are several Muslim clerics who preach that a man who

kills an Ahmadi earns a place in heaven.” Through the message of a religious clerk, DM provided a justification to its readers on behalf of the killers about killings, and at the same time, it indicated how it is risky to be Ahmadi since there is a big incentive of easily getting heaven for killing Ahmadi.

NYT has directly mentioned the religion of the attackers. In the first place, NYT called the attackers as ‘angry mob’, it justified that mob was angry and charged. Then it named the religion of the boy who had a fight with an Ahmadi boy. It said a Muslim (Sadam Hussain) friend of Ahmadi (Saleem) had alerted other Muslims about the act of putting a semi-nude picture of a woman on holy Ka’aba. NYT also added that after the incident Muslim clerks reached police stations to lodge complaint with the police. Then NYT oriented its readers about the problems being faced by Ahmadi and other religious minorities. It indicated that attacks on minorities were a routine matter because Islamic extremist groups were working freely and openly to kill minorities without any punishment.

While giving reference of another attack on Ahmadi place of worship some years ago, NYT indicated about the religion of attackers: “at least 86 Ahmadi were killed in coordinated attacks in Lahore when armed gunmen belonging to banned Islamist groups assaulted Ahmadi places of worship.” It referred that the killers of woman and two children were followers of the same Islamic community.

Dawn’ news did not mention if the attackers were Sunnis, however, it indicated that the attackers include ‘son of Imam’ (means son of a person who leads prayers in congregation). However, Dawn’ news did mention about the relationship between the incident and its reasons rooted in the law and social discourse, which was framed against Ahmadi in result of struggle by Sunnis religious group in Pakistan (Sunnis constituted about 80 percent of the total population in Pakistan). In Dawn’s editorial, there was no direct or indirect mention of Sunnis and Muslims responsible for this attack and many other attacks. It put onus on the police, bureaucracy and the government as whole, and also on the blasphemy law. When it indicated towards the blasphemy law, it means it is referred to a law that was framed by Sunnis. Dawn’s editorial lamented the government agencies which waited and watched until houses were burnt to ashes, and women and children were killed. Dawn’s opinion column also did not say that attackers were Sunnis or Muslims but it mentioned about the law and fanatic social and religious (Islamic) environment in which Ahmadi (because of their different faith from majority, and anyone who speak against the law or support to blasphemers) are killed.

As for as representation of attackers is concerned, Dawn’s opinion column has not directly indicated about their religion, however, it has used following words for those who attacked Ahmadi: terrorists, murderer, business competitors, mob, the rioters, rioting mob, angry mob and residents of the area. Dawn’s editorial also did not mention identity of those who killed three Ahmadi. For attackers, it used words like ‘a group of people angered by an alleged act of blasphemy’,

'religion based mob', 'perpetrators', 'faith based mob' and 'zealots'.

In the first day's news coverage, The News did not mention if the attackers were Sunnis or Muslims but on the next day, it did mention that attackers belonged to Islam. In this regard, it quoted a collective voice of religious scholars, who advised to its followers that "Islam teaches tolerance and forbids the killing of innocent people in the name of religion." On the next day of the incident, The News used following terms for the identity of the attackers: Maulivi Hakim, murderer, two groups and infuriated people. It also mentioned about religious identity of the attacked.

The News' opinion column had not indicated or mentioned about the religion of the attackers, however; it had used words like, society members infected with extremism and intolerance, the mob, people with conventional thinking and religious biases, religious militants, members of fanatical society, in-humans and religious militants. The News' opinion column also did not mention religion of the attackers but it directly indicated about a society which is Pakistani Muslim society, infected with religious intolerance, which followed values of death and destruction, known as fanatical society, work on conventional thinking, act as religious biased society, killer of innocent children and women, misused on religious sentiments, full of brutalism, barbarism, intolerance and bigotry, and it was a society which did not respect values of life, liberty, reason, beauty, order and reason. The News' editorial did not directly blame to Islam and Muslims as community but it indicated that faith based murder of a woman and two helpless children is by society that spiritually broken and a society where exploitation of religion is norm of the day, all Muslims and non-Muslims feel insecure in their faiths, and they feel insecure in Islamic society. It suggested threat is collective and all are exposed to risk and whosoever, either directly or indirectly is part of the risky affair will be killed in fanatic society.

Types of dangers and risks identified and located

DM indicates that not only the blasphemer but relatives and minor children (who had not committed the blasphemy) of the blasphemer were killed. In these types of blasphemy cases, police remain helpless to protect victims or alleged blasphemers. DM also provided some bigger picture of the blasphemy's terrors which had resulted murders of many Ahmadis in the past. It also indicated about the danger of misuse of blasphemy law which had increasingly been used to "settle personal vendettas or to grab the property of the accused." DM identified risk and danger for Ahmadis in following words, "A law passed in 1984 in Pakistan declared Ahmadis non-Muslims and they are considered by many in Pakistan to be heretics. There are several Muslim clerics who preach that a man who kills an Ahmadi earns a place in heaven." Then it offered the number of Ahmadis being killed in different years, which implies that equal to these numbers of killed, the numbers of killers have earned heaven in their life time. It is an interesting risk projection against Ahmadis.

NYT blamed the blasphemy law that had brought these kinds of attacks on

Ahmadis. This reference is indication towards a danger in following words: "They come under frequent attack and have often been targeted under Pakistan's harsh blasphemy laws". NYT also indicated different types of risks and dangers associated with all groups in Pakistani Muslim society but the most affected were Ahmadis. It shows that risks and dangers were in Pakistani or "Pakistan's harsh blasphemy laws". NYT indicated about the vulnerability of religious minorities and free hand to Islamic extremists "to harass and kill minorities with near-total impunity." It also suggest that majority including state apparatuses which implement the law were also part of the risk prevention social and religious activities.

Dawn's opinion column had also identified risks and threats stemming from the blasphemy. Dawn said that the controversial law blasphemy is not clearly defined in the statute book but the blasphemers are hanged. It also spotted on the misuse of the law and said that "Anyone can file a blasphemy case claiming their religious feelings are injured for any reason." It indicated a dangerous situation in which accused are often lynched and no one is saved from it. Even defending lawyers and acquitting judges had have been attacked.

NYT informed to its readers that two politicians including a sitting governor of a province- were killed who had suggested reforming the law, one of them was killed by his bodyguard. In 2014, 68 lawyers were charged for blasphemy because they used the name 'Ummar' in the protest slogans against a police official of the same name. Ummar (RA) is one of religious and respectable figure in Sunni Islam. In the same year, a prominent human rights lawyer who was defending a Pakistani university professor accused of blasphemy was killed in his office.

Dawn editorial identifies similar kind of dangers and risks associated with blasphemy and stated that "Those who do speak out expose themselves to serious consequences" and even judiciary which was considered champion in taking up human rights cases had avoided to address the issue of persecution of minorities in the name of blasphemy.

Dawn's opinion column has signified various dangerous and risk oriented aspects related to the legal, political, economic and ideological niche of the blasphemy. It indicated that it is not merely that preventing the blasphemous incident but people are terrified to talk with journalists on the persecution of Ahmadis and if they speak they request anonymity. Mainly people in the vicinity were terrified and waiting to get out of the miserable phase to which they had still not passed through. They were "afraid to be named for fear of being persecuted further. Only the dead are identified, because they no longer have to live in fear." It reported that even after the passing of a weak, Ahmadis were not willing to come to their burnt houses because they were afraid of fanatics living in the area.

Dawn's column provided scary insight and account of the use of blasphemy. In 1994, a man Hafiz (a term used by Muslims for a person who completely memorize the Holy Quran) Farooq Sajjad was stoned to death by an angry

mob over an allegation of burning a copy of the Holy Quran. In 2007, a former Social Welfare Minister in Punjab was killed by a man because she was on her way to address an open court over her un-Islamic dress code. Dawn's column also signified about economic and political aspect to the blasphemy. Ahmadis were considered economic and political competitors; therefore, successful Ahmadi businessmen were threatened and pursued by religious clerks with false blasphemy allegations.

But as far as the law of blasphemy is concerned, Dawn, The News, NYT and DM directly hit it and criticized it. By directly hitting the law, these have crossed the socially constructed boundaries of blasphemy because anyone and everyone who speaks to criticise or advocate for amending the blasphemy law (so that no one can exploit it), he or she is murdered or killed such as mentioned above in 2011 the sitting governor was killed by his bodyguard in broad day light in Pakistan's capital Islamabad because the governor spoke to amend the blasphemy law. Besides, the Minister for Minorities Shahbaz Bhatti was also killed for the same reason. Also one of the Ministers who had tabled a bill in the National Assembly of Pakistan to amend the law had withdrawn the bill after receiving threats of being killed (Alvi 2015).

Dawn's opinion column represented Ahmadis as vulnerable and under different kinds of risks. It also pointed towards an interesting threat that is associated with Pakistan because of the blasphemy law. An Ahmadi respondent, who gave interview for this column, said that he remembered the day when blasphemy laws were introduced: "I'll never forget the look on my late father's face the day [the blasphemy laws were enacted]. He said, you will see this will start with us [Ahmadis] but will end with the country's end." It clearly indicates that the law is so dangerous that it will result harms to the existence of the country, and ultimately in this scenario, Sunni group which is in majority in Pakistan will suffer.

The News in its news coverage had offered little indicators of risks and threats that Ahmadis were facing, however there is noticed one interesting point. In the subheading, it said "Ulema [religious scholars] say Islam forbids killing of innocent in the name of religion". This is an interesting subheading because it indirectly suggests killing those in the name of Islam who are not innocent. The News' editorial also provided a scary scene in which there were dangers and risks for all (Muslims and non-Muslims, Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis) to be victims in the hands of those who know to exploit religion, and therefore, killing of children in the context of blasphemy is justified.

The News' opinion column declared that Pakistani society is infected and dominated with extremism and intolerance, which is full of deadly and destructive forces that have ravaged higher values of life. It threatened its readers, "The mobs are out there, going after any defiance of conventional thinking and religious biases" and then the column surrendered before these mobs in following words which he took from social media site (twitter): "you

can fight a fanatical government but you cannot fight a fanatical society.” It also showed that in fanatical society, government’s relevant agencies were helpless to protect woman and children from mob and the media did not take up the issue because of the risk of blasphemy attached with the incident.

It was the only *The News* which indicated about collective mobilization on religious sentiments and grounds to deal with the blasphemer. From mosques announcements were made and people’s religious sentiments were put to use. All newspapers portrayed that killing of women and children and burning of Ahmadi houses were violation of human rights of religious minorities. These did not directly linked the incident from international terrorism perspective, however, these highlighted insecurity and sheer vulnerability of Ahmadi, other religious minorities and any person who raise voice, defend in the courts, acquitted alleged blasphemer in the court.

Crossing boundaries

Dawn and *The News* have not crossed legal boundary and these represented Ahmadi the way as law provided them to represent. These have represented them in the way as the law has set visible boundaries, but these have crossed social boundaries of risk associated the voice for reforming the law, and also in light of invisible boundaries of risks and dangers which are created by the niche of blasphemy, which sees no religious faith. Blasphemy has resulted killings of many including very notable people even they were not blamed as blasphemer but they were talking about changing blasphemy law and defending the blasphemer (irrespective of his or her faith) in the court of law. In other case, if *Dawn* and *The News* had reported the incident against the law and whims of Sunnis or had hurt religious sentiments of Sunnis, the risk and danger was not only the legal repercussions but also mob attack on the reporter and the office of the newspaper agency. For the media in Pakistan, legal boundaries were more risky and dangerous than crossing social boundaries. If broken the law, it will difficult for the media agency to work, but if crossed social boundaries of risks, in the first place, there is no fear of the legal implications.

NYT has also played with words because the reporter is Pakistani and while reporting the news he was living in Pakistan and he was well aware of the dangers and risks (which are clearly given in the news article) which could harm him and his family. *The News*, *Dawn*, *DM* and *NYT* categorically considered the incident a part of persecution of minorities and human rights violation. These blamed different risks and dangerous factors involved in political, economic, social and legal aspects of blasphemy. It was extremely careful representative coverage. They (except the case of NYT) gave bad titles and names to killers but did not represented Ahmadi as Ahmadi as always wanted to be represented, which Pakistan’s law prohibit them from. NYT played with words, however, it represented them a sect of Islam.

DISCUSSION

Generally, by all newspapers Ahmadis were represented as victims, innocent and persecuted community, and attackers were represented as mob- a part of the whole Muslim community, which collectively have become barbaric and lost ability to reason (Locher, 2002). In specific terms, Dawn, The News (except the first day news coverage) have represented Ahmadis greatly in the way as the law directs to represent Ahmadis. It implies that Dawn and The News can also not represent Ahmadis in the same way as Ahmadis wanted to be represented or these newspapers wanted to represent them in light of ideology and political interests they were adhering to. In other words, Dawn and The News (Pakistani newspapers) did not cross legal boundaries (the blasphemy law). Since NYT and DM were outsider newspapers, therefore, they represented Ahmadis in a mixed way in which these largely crossed legal boundaries by stating that Ahmadis were Muslims and a sect within Islam, but then again these newspapers referred them as a religious minority and separated them from Muslims in Pakistan. DM and NYT represented the attackers as terrorists, Islamists and Muslims, Muslim community and Muslim society, fanatics and extremists.

Generally, these newspapers located sensitivities and dangers attached with the issue of collective social and cultural practices around the blasphemy. It revealed that not only being an Ahmadi was blasphemy (or blasphemous) but everyone belonging to any belief either to Sunnis or Ahmadi could become the victim of the social and cultural practices of the blasphemy- linked with personal feelings of individuals. Therefore, it was a sheer risk for everyone to live in Pakistan under the shade of the law because it was easy for anyone to misuse it for their vested interested and personal vendetta. Thus, these identified dangers and risks in whole Pakistani society, which had total potential to become victims of misusers of the law. It was a social environment of danger in which every person in Pakistan was living. In this kind of representation by the media, an important aspect is ignored, which is Pakistani law does not allow anyone to kill anyone for whatever the reason, no killing is justified, and killers are punished with death sentence but the killers in Pakistan either of Ahmadi or other individual go free because of weaknesses and problems in the implementation.

However, in this case, the killing of Ahmadi person is taken from a different angle. Given the fact that no one can kill Ahmadi (whatever the crime Ahmadi has committed) because the law does not allow for killing Ahmadis (or blasphemous) but it is cultural, social and religious collective perspective that is hindrance in the implementation of law in the context of Ahmadis. A killer of Ahmadis (alleged blasphemous) will have sympathetic corner at majority of Sunnis. It is interesting to note that to date not a single minority person (Ahmadi and others) has been hanged (or executed) under the charges of blasphemy but yet the law is equally blamed as a threat to minorities. However, the law has not been seen as a force that serves to avert risks emanate from collective social and cultural premises and it also averts minorities to enter into dangerous boundaries.

All these newspapers not only identified that being Ahmadi means risk because being Ahmadi means blasphemy or blasphemers (who deserves death, and, therefore, the killer will earn heaven before their deaths), but these also indirectly indicated that Ahmadis were danger to Islam and Muslim community who were against the basic principles of Islam, that is why, the killers in Muslim Pakistani society were eager to earn heaven before their deaths. The analysis indicates that it is not only risky to be a religious minority in Pakistan, but to raise voice for reforming the blasphemy law and to advocate for the rights of blasphemers are also deadly risks; which would ultimately meet death as other politicians, academicians, and human rights activists have met. Likewise, they identified that extremists were risks and threat to Pakistani society, in it, especially to those who crossed legal and socially constructed boundaries (around blasphemy) of risks which were set to protect the blasphemy law and social practices of killings the blasphemers. Thus, these newspapers identified risky blasphemous issues which had resulted various deaths such as un-Islamic dress code, slogan against a person whose name is similar to a religious personality, talking to reform the blasphemy law, defending or advocating the blasphemers, acquitting the blasphemers, putting a semi nude picture of a woman on holy place and everything that hurts religious sentiments of a person.

The analysis also showed that in representing Ahmadis and the blasphemy law, these crossed invisible social boundaries constructed around the blasphemy and constructed on the premise of religious sentiments of individuals. In the eyes of law, it is not illegal or criminal act to suggest reform in the blasphemy law but in the eyes of community (majority Sunni group), reforming blasphemy law was a punishable crime with death, or the community decided the way to give death either in the form of mob or shoot in broad day light- from cultural perspective, risks are averted (Holden, 2003).

This analysis shows that blasphemy in Pakistan has no visible boundaries but it has socially constructed invisible boundaries of risks, which are only seen or sensed by those people who have constructed it and risk aversion measures are taken accordingly. It reveals that everything which hurt religious sentiments of an individual in Pakistan was blasphemy, but what were the religious sentiments it was not clearly mentioned in the media text. It signifies that social boundaries of risks created around blasphemy were meant to prevent everyone to enter in it; in other words, to speak about its reforms or go against it.

CONCLUSION

The analysis has many interesting dimensions, as it examines four newspapers' coverage of a violent religious-political incident in Pakistan. Interestingly to note that all the newspapers (NYT, DM, Dawn and The News) crossed socially constructed dangerous boundaries of risks but as far as legal boundaries are concerned, only Pakistani newspapers did not cross these. Pakistani media represented Ahmadis as the law dictated, but outsider newspapers (NYT and

DM), did not care about the law. The important dimension in four newspapers reporting (representing) was, these showed that attacks on minorities were collective cultural approach to avert risks that were perceived individually and collectively in the same manner, therefore, risks were prevented through practices of mob, so that these may not cause danger (impurity) to Islamic way of life and values which is being practiced by the majority in Pakistan.

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