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INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND MEDIA FRAMING

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Abstract: A content analysis of Indian newspapers coverage of the Tibetan issue on autonomy

This study analyzed how the Tibetan issues on autonomy were framed by the Indian newspapers. By using content analysis the study concluded Indian foreign policy was an external factor influencing the Indian newspapers coverage of the autonomy of Tibet. In short, Indian newspapers chose a fact or set a news frame reflecting Indian foreign policy toward Tibetan autonomy.

Keyword: foreign policy , media framing , content analysis , autonomy.

INTRODUCTION:

China is worried about the clout the Tibetan monk enjoys over the Tibetan population. They were waiting only for the chance of passing away of the monk. The two sides held secret talk's way before in 1980s. The two sides also held brief talks in 1982 and 1984. The exiles repeatedly insisted that any solution must entail the governance of Tibet under a totally different political system that's what the rest of china had. This would mean transforming the region into a self governing democratic entity something that was patiently unacceptable to Beijing. Any change in Beijing's position would appear to bowing to foreign pressure and failing to respond firmly to violence.

According to Bennet (1994) news media arbitrarily choose a fact or set of news frame reflecting political, economic relations between one's country and another country .this close relationship between media foreign policy provides foreign policy and media framing opportunity to investigate how Tibetan independence were framed differently in the Indian newspapers.

This study analyses the Hindu and the new Indian express coverage of Tibetan independence (April 2, 2008) and (July 11, 2008) explore how Indian newspapers framed the two events. This study contributes to understanding of Tibetan independence in the context of foreign policy, making research frame work that can be applied to investigate media coverage of other countries autonomy issue in further studies. Also this study can provide media frames for future studies on policy and international issues.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Framing theory has been used as a paradigm for understanding and investigating foreign policy and media framing. Communication and related behavior in a wide range of disciplines. in general many researchers (Ghanem, 1997,iyengar 1991, Reese .2001,Tankard et al 1991) have stated that framing plays a pivotal role in determining how media present an issue.

Ghaneum (1997) identified four major dimensions of frames topic of news item (what is included in the frame), presentation (size and placement) cognitive attributes (details of what is included in the frame) affective attributes (tone of the picture).

Iyengar (1991) used the general categories of thematic and episodic frames to examine news coverage. The episodic frame news frame focuses on specific events or cases whereas the thematic frame places the issue in some general context.

Reese (2001) further developed the definition of framing he considered frames as organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world (p11).

Tankard et al (1991) formulated the empirical list of frames approach to frame analysis. This approach involved identifying a s list of frames for study and defining each frame in terms of specific key words, catch phrases and images. These frames were then used as categories in content analysis.

In short studying mass communication via the concept of framing has become increasingly common in media studies (entman,1991).However the concept of framing itself has diverse theoretical origins (mc combs et al ,1997)

Entman (1993) foreign policy and media framing summarized that framing is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a news test through the main functions of framing ,define problem, diagnose problem, diagnose cause make moral judgment and suggest remedies for the item described.

Foreign policy cannot ignore in media framing analysis because it seems to foreign policy and media framing influence the media adoption of news frames. Most of the studies on the media and foreign policy have traditionally dealt with matters of security, conflict, war and revolution (mowlana 1997).

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RESEARCH QUESTION

As shown in the foregoing review of applicable research the Indian media coverage of international news is largely determined by the country's foreign policy stance. Based upon this understanding of the relationship between media framing and foreign policy in the review of pertinent literature, this study has the following research foreign policy and media framing.

QUESTION AND HYPOTHESES

Research question: What is the difference between the issues related to the Tibetan independence as emphasized by the Indian newspapers?

Hypothesis 1: The coverage by Indian newspapers of the Tibetans autonomy is more favorable or unfavorable

Hypothesis 2: The coverage by Indian newspapers frames of Tibetan sovereignty.

METHOD

Using framing theory this study conducted a quantitative content analysis of the Hindu and the new Indian express coverage of the Tibetans independence from (April 2, 2008) and (July 11, 2008) explore how Indian newspapers framed the two events.

The sample was spread over a period of -13 weeks with a total of 93 of each newspaper totaling to 61 newspaper issues.

Importantly this study did not focus on the comparative analysis of the coverage of the new Indian express and the Hindu. This is because this study was more concerned about investigating whether and how Indian newspapers differently covered and framed overall the Tibetan autonomy and suzerainty of the Chinese. Number of stories including news articles, interviews, photographs, letters to the editor

A number of news stories relating to Tibetan autonomy in the Indian express was 43 and the Hindu 18, 8 photographs in the new Indian express and 3 photographs in the Hindu, photographs in the new Indian express 1, and the Hindu no such photographs, the interviews 1 in the Hindu and no interviews in the new Indian express, letters to the editor 2 in the new Indian express and no letters to the editor in the hindu,

An entire article was a unit of analysis. To examine how Indian newspapers covered and framed Tibetans issue this study analyzed the articles by the following coding scheme. First the issues emphasized in the coverage were categorized into 12 items, "How other countries perceive china", "tibetians govt versus Chinese govt"" protest on torch relay "perceptual biases of the media" "leaders Chinese and Tibet"" human rights situation "protests, human right photographs"," interviews"" foreign media banned in tibet"" media is critical of Tibet" "India intervention in Tibet"" conflict resolution sought by Indian media"

Each story was categorized according to the issue emphasized in the article. In other words even though the article covered more than one issue, if the article were more focused on a certain issue they were classified into one pertinent category.

Second the tone of the article was into "favorable" unfavorable' and 'neutral'. A favorable tone was indicated when the stories implied or stated that Tibetan autonomy was helpful. An unfavorable tone was indicated by a story that autonomy was uspered . In these stories the reader perceives a message of caution or disdain toward autonomy. A neutral tone was indicated when a story did not show any clear judgment on the events or people it describes and did not use words with either negative or positive connotations. Stories that were well balanced in presenting or alternating opinions are also included in this category.

Third based on the Entman framing device this study analyzed each of the articles to classifying into five frames that appeared in the Indian newspapers to help the problem of Tibetan autonomy. In short to classify that articles into frames this study analyzed words, phrases, and descriptions defining and describing Tibetan autonomy and Chinese suzerainty. The five frames are threat indicated that Tibetan autonomy threatens Chinese territory. Protest indicated that pro Tibet perceptual bias indicate that media demonized china.

Foreign policy and media framing indicated that India asks dalai lama to refrain from political activities.

Conflict resolution indicated how to find a way forward in Tibet.

Violation indicated that communist party boss Hu enforced a harsh crack down against the last major anti government protest there in 1989 and has tightened Chinese rule over the Himalayan region since taking over as the president in 2003.

RESULTS

Comparison between issues of The Hindu and the new Indian express on Tibetan sovereignty

ROW * Paper Crosstabulation

ROW			Paper		Total
			The Hindu	The New Indian Express	
1How other countries perceive china	Count	3	4	7	
	% within ROW	42.9%	57.1%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	21.4%	13.3%	15.9%	
2tibetian govt vs Chinese govt	Count	3	6	9	
	% within ROW	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	21.4%	20.0%	20.5%	
3protest on torch relay	Count	3	13	16	
	% within ROW	18.8%	81.3%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	21.4%	43.3%	36.4%	
4percepti onal biases of the media	Count	0	1	1	
	% within ROW	.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	.0%	3.3%	2.3%	
5leaders Chinese and tibet	Count	1	0	1	
	% within ROW	100.0%	.0%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	7.1%	.0%	2.3%	

6human rights situation	Count	0	1	1
	% within ROW	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
7foreign media banned in tibet	Count	1	1	2
	% within ROW	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
8media is critical of tibet	Count	1	0	1
	% within ROW	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
9india interventio n in tibet	Count	0	1	1
	% within ROW	.0%	100.0%	100.0%
10conflict resolution sought by Indian media	Count	2	3	5
	% within ROW	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	14	30	44
	% within ROW	31.8%	68.2%	100.0%
	% within Paper	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.807(a)	9	.554
Likelihood Ratio	9.080	9	.430
Linear-by-Linear Association	.225	1	.635
N of Valid Cases	44		

a 17 cells (85.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .32.

Research question 1 inquired as to the difference between the issues concerning the Tibetan sovereignty as emphasized by the new Indian express. The difference between treatment of Tibetan sovereignty and was not significant. (p>0.05). as shown in the table 1 the most dominant issue is the Tibetan torch relay.(43.3%) The stories related to conflict resolution was highest with Hindu.(14.3%).perceptonal biases of the media found prominence with Indian express (3.3%) but the Hindu did not report any such stories. Human rights situation found prominence in the new Indian express nothing was expressed by the Hindu.

Comparison between the frames of The Hindu and the new Indian express on Tibetan sovereignty

ROW * Paper Crosstabulation

ROW		Count	Paper		Total
			The Hindu	The New Indian Express	
1threat	Count	1	5	6	
	% within ROW	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	7.1%	16.7%	13.6%	
2protest	Count	3	13	16	
	% within ROW	18.8%	81.3%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	21.4%	43.3%	36.4%	
3perceptonal bias	Count	3	5	8	
	% within ROW	37.5%	62.5%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	21.4%	16.7%	18.2%	
4foreign policy and media framing	Count	1	3	4	
	% within ROW	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	7.1%	10.0%	9.1%	
5conflict resolution	Count	2	3	5	
	% within ROW	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	14.3%	10.0%	11.4%	
6other	Count	4	1	5	
	% within ROW	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	28.6%	3.3%	11.4%	
Total	Count	14	30	44	
	% within ROW	31.8%	68.2%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.604(a)	5	.179
Likelihood Ratio	7.376	5	.194
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.641	1	.018
N of Valid Cases	44		

a 9 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.27.

Research question 2: inquired between the differences the frames of the new Indian express and the hindu since the p value is greater than 0.05 there is no association between the variables This study classified the articles into five frames by analyzing the specific words, phrases and descriptions that were used to describe or define Tibetan sovereignty.. threat frame ,16.7%, protest (43.3%), foreign policy and media framing,(10%) were highly predominant in the new Indian express. Perceptonal bias (21.4%) and conflict resolution (14.3%) were found high in the Hindu.

Comparison between the tone of Chinese sovereignty and Tibetan independence

ROW * Paper Crosstabulation

			Paper		Total
			The Hindu	The New Indian Express	
ROW	1 unfavorable	Count	3	1	4
		% within ROW	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
		% within Paper	21.4%	3.3%	9.1%
	2 neutral	Count	1	5	6
		% within ROW	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%
		% within Paper	7.1%	16.7%	13.6%
	3 favorable	Count	8	8	16
		% within ROW	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Paper	57.1%	26.7%	36.4%
	4 other	Count	2	16	18
		% within ROW	11.1%	88.9%	100.0%
		% within Paper	14.3%	53.3%	40.9%
Total	Count	14	30	44	
	% within ROW	31.8%	68.2%	100.0%	
	% within Paper	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.069(a)	3	.018
Likelihood Ratio	10.399	3	.015
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.472	1	.034
N of Valid Cases	44		

a 4 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.27.

Research question inquired on the tone of reporting between the new Indian express and the Hindu. P value is less than 0.05 there is association between variables. Unfavorable stories in the Hindu and express were very few. Favorable to conflict resolution in the new Indian express (26.7%) and the Hindu (57.1%).

The news papers found favorable stories towards Tibetan sovereignty.

Overall this study contributes to not only strengthen the fact that media coverage of international news is largely determined by a country's foreign policy stance but also provide frame work for analyzing media coverage of the issue of Tibetan sovereignty with framing analysis perspectives.

However this study has limitation and needs to provide a suggestion for future study. the limitation of the study is that the new Indian express and the Hindu selected for this study tend to be treated as representative papers of Indian newspapers..however these two newspapers are not

totally representative because there are other newspapers that have different perspectives about international issues from the two newspapers that this study examined. In other words the findings of the Hindu and the new Indian express coverage of Tibetan sovereignty cannot be generalized as the only contributors to the framing of the issues in all of the Indian newspapers. Therefore future research needs to consider a research design which includes other Indian newspapers that might have different perspectives about Tibetan sovereignty.

CONCLUSION

The Indian media reports, editorials, features have shown enough interest in bringing about the settlement of the issue. Especially the national dailies have shown enough interest in these areas.

It is widely understood that Tibet can remain as an autonomous region within China and not independence as claimed by the Tibetan community.

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