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Critical Discourse Analysis of Pakistani Print Media Coverage of the Ahmadi Community

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Abstract

This study examines the representation of the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistani print media through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). By analyzing Urdu and English newspaper articles published between January and June 2024, the research explores how language and discourse construct the Ahmadiyya community. This research also draws inspiration from Aho's model of enemy construction, that explain the construction of enemy by using a 5 stage process explained in this study. Moreover, this study shows how language is used in a derogatory manner to build and perpetuate a sense of otherness and exclusion and demonstrates that terms such as “Qadiani” and “non-Muslim” are employed strategically to delegitimize Ahmadis as they act as mechanisms of exclusion that serve religious and political agendas. This study introduces a theoretical model that aims to elucidate upon how this process of marginalization is fueled and accelerated by economic, religious, and political incentives. It argues that media discourses are not merely reflections of public sentiment but are instrumental in sustaining a two-nation paradigm one that positions Ahmadis and other minorities as perpetual outsiders to mainstream Muslim identity. The findings also suggest that construction of Ahmadis as enemy serves material purposes as well: 1) it facilitates religious mobilization, 2) justifies fundraising for missionary and political causes, 3) and enables ideological control through emotional manipulation of the public. The study contributes to the fields of media studies, minority representation, and critical theory by demonstrating how discourse is weaponized to perpetuate structural exclusion under the guise of religious orthodoxy and national cohesion. Through rigorous analysis and a reflexive research process, including ethical safeguards against bias, the thesis provides an original contribution to the understanding of minority marginalization in contemporary Pakistan.

Introduction

1.1 Statement of Problem

According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2023), the Ahmadiyya are the most marginalized yet significantly substantial minority in Pakistan comprising of only 0.22% of the total population. Ahmadis are subjected to systematic discrimination because they are classified as a non-Muslim minority (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2020). This exclusion directly arises from the Second Amendment (1974) and the constraints set by Ordinance XX (1984). This happens even though Articles 20 and 25 of the Constitution of Pakistan provide religious freedom and equality. The inappropriate enforcement of blasphemy laws, the destruction of their houses of worship, and the obstruction of their participation in civic and political affairs are all examples of how these laws not only validate exclusion but also perpetuate cultural prejudice. The stories in the media worsen the situation by promoting negative attitudes and prejudices in society. There is a difference between constitutional guarantees and actions that marginalize certain communities, and legal battles serve to reveal this disparity (Lashari et al., 2023).

In modern culture, mass media exercises a significant level of influence over the mindset and opinions of the public masses. On many occasions, the media perpetuates prevalent ideas simultaneously while marginalizing dissenting voices that oppose dominant trends of thought. Richardson (2002) observed that the media's rhetoric reflects and reinforces the social power structures. In Pakistan, it is common to depict Ahmadis in a discourse of "othering," which is marked by derogatory language, sensationalism, and selective reporting. This social bias continues in the form of derogatory words such as "Qadiani," which are used quite frequently in the Urdu press (Nagi, 2019). Most English-language press avoid using such terminology but instead demonstrate similar preconceptions by ignoring particular evidence. This further

marginalizes the Ahmadiyya community by ignoring the social, cultural, and economic aspects that the Ahmadiyya community comprises (Mahmud & Halim, 2024).

The study results conclude that major framing biases prevail in the portrayal of minorities in Pakistani media. The study conducted by Mashkura 92023) reports that narratives of the minority focus mostly on violence, conflict, or ethical dilemmas, while the contributions or even neutral reporting of them remain neglected. They also include Ahmadis often within blasphemy allegations or court proceedings, which rather cement their connection with conflict and does not integrate or facilitate the contribution that Ahmadis make to society. The biased reporting continues the proliferation of discriminatory thoughts and brings prejudices into common discourse within society. For example, the Urdu media headlines often sensationalize issues and focus on societal divisions rather than discussing subtle talks on the challenges and successes of the Ahmadi community. These biases not only reflect but also influence the outlook of society, which further cement the dominant narrow narratives.

The application of Critical Discourse Analysis will reveal the connections between language and power that led to the exclusion of Ahmadis through a critical examination of media practices. It is possible to subtly produce oppressive and exclusive narratives through linguistic techniques such as nominalization, passive voice, and discriminating labels. Conversely, perceptive journalism in foreign media, very contrary to the defensive vocabularies applied in Urdu media to evade accountability for violence against Ahmadis, exposes local biases. Though such findings have been unearthed, the CDA study is often hamstrung by small sample sizes and focuses on textual analysis. It is high time that all-inclusive investigations were undertaken (Rizwan, 2019).

There is a direct link between the marginalization of the Ahmadiyya community and the legal and social systems existing in Pakistan. Ordinance XX has made it unlawful for Ahmadis to indulge even in the most fundamental forms of worship and expression, so the groundwork for their marginalization was laid within the legal framework (Tahir & Tahira, 2016). Media, too, lacks accountability, which goes on to push down groups that are not represented within the media framework.

Even though there are no laws prohibiting discriminatory actions in print media, the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016 prohibits hate speech on any electronic platform. Due to this legislative gap, there is no mechanism to counter systemic discrimination, which explains why radical reforms are the need of the hour (Sultan et al., 2024).

Media houses often rationalize their depictions of Ahmadis by using constitutional definitions of Islam rather than combating prejudices against the Ahmadi community. They agree with the social order and do not contradict it. This kind of justification is against the ethical requirement of media to promote inclusion and combat biases in society. Although there is a glimmer of dissent to mainstream discourses that encourage exclusion, subtle counter-narratives advocate for interfaith cooperation and draw attention to the persecution of Ahmadis (Sarwar, 2024). This presents an argument for the potentially transformative capacity of the media to strengthen societal cohesion even in the face of scarce alternative narratives.

Furthermore, there is stark difference in the representation of both Urdu and English news stories. When it comes to English newspapers, the general trend is using a neutral tone, or liberal to appeal to a more intelligent or educated audience whereas Urdu print media tend to target more conservative audiences mirroring the standard that prevail in society. Regrettably, there is a lack of contribution from the Ahmadis, or any positive representation in both cases.

According to Habes et al., 2024, this mismatch between both groups reflects editorial policies, which are influenced by the expectations of the audience, limiting the impartiality and comprehensiveness of the news reporting.

1.2 Aims of the Study

1. Examine how Ahmadis are represented in Urdu and English newspapers
2. Identify linguistic strategies used to represent them
3. Understand how this discourse fits into broader ideological agendas

1.3 Significance of Study

The general findings of the research that I have reviewed so far are needed for reforms in the regulation of the media to ensure balanced representation and to represent a counter narrative. Making journalists and editors follow ethical reporting protocols and ensure responsible reporting by focusing on inclusiveness rather than sensationalism. There is a need to fight hate speech and advance fair media practices (Zaidi et al., 2024). This research will enable me to understand how viewpoints of society are shaped by language and ideology.

Literature Review

The problem of how media portray historically oppressed communities is linked to several aspects. This is a complex issue where the media acts as both copyists and propagators of what society thinks. Although the media can be a force towards social cohesion and empathy, it also has the power to spread stigma, exclusion, and discriminatory policies. To reconcile this paradox, the media should be an important instrument for inclusion and marginalization (Abid, 2023).

Tukachinsky et al. (2015) argues that the continuation of biased narratives in media is a normalizing action for discriminatory attitudes that have deeply been entrenched in the general population's cognition. In the case of Britain, Bleich's 2015 research on media exposes the languages and structures behind the expression of prejudices against Muslims, which results in their marginalization. As a result, these analyses promote a critical look into the center of institutional prejudice and policy concerns that perpetuate those weaker. Within this respect, the narratives of refugee groups present an appropriate example to portray the distinct roles media can play; some incite pity while others foster hatred, a reflection of the role that media assumes for the perceiving public.

In general, a reflection of deeply ingrained prejudices and power dynamics in Pakistani society lies in how the media represents religious minorities in the country. Rubbani et a. (2024), stated that the process of ideological creation of headlines in Pakistani media works like a veiled tool, promoting discrimination. According to Littlemore & Fielden-Burns (2023), using metonymy and metaphor in figurative language makes the public perceive minority groups as "other" or as threats to societal norms. This misconception occurs because of the usage of

figurative language. Even though their research centers on Christian minorities, it is easy to find the same patterns in how the media covers the Ahmadiyya community.

A second factor that adds to the complexity of the discussion is the difference between the Urdu and English media in Pakistan. There is a common notion that Ahmadis are social or religious pariahs, which is a stereotypical image of these people. Most of the Urdu channels have added to this perception. They occasionally maintain a level head and a moderate tone but have not entirely escaped bias (Aslam et al., 2022). In the opinion of Abbas (2022), the involvement of Ahmadis in violent crimes is a factor contributing to the diversion of their adversaries. Among some variables that contribute to this distraction are nominalization and passivation. This reflects societal bias and creates a worse existing bias because it produces an echo chamber that normalizes people's opinions against certain groups.

The historical and legal context in which the Ahmadiyya community is found in Pakistan has played a significant role in marginalizing the community. Ahmadis face prejudice at the system level, which is ratified by laws such as Ordinance XX. In 1974, the constitution was amended to include a provision that classified this form of prejudice as non-Muslim. This legal framework limits their expression of religious beliefs, enables society to continue in its stereotypes, and significantly impacts the way other people depict them in the media. The Ahmadis are often portrayed by the local media as the "pariahs" of religious orthodoxy, in which they are perceived through a legalistic framework (Balzani, 2020).

Langewiesche (2022) believes that local media acts in an intrinsically hostile manner to Ahmadis. This contradicts the representation of Ahmadis in the world media, which sometimes portrays them as a movement engaged with the reformation of Islam. It is primarily because

Ahmadia's marginalizing narratives prevail within the current discourse of media that the Pakistani media seems to have a deficiency of critical opinions.

This creates a negative perception toward the Ahmadi community since the media portrays Ahmadis as people who breach the tranquility of society. Mubeen & Qusien (2017) analyze how Urdu media uses derogatory vocabulary and texts, which exclude specific groups in their vocabulary of "othering." In addition to the growth of mistrust, there is dehumanization on the part of the community. On the other hand, the anti-blasphemy law of Pakistan, which restrains free speech and even the use of positive words about Ahmadis, feeds into these stories. According to the conclusions of Aziz (2023) reflect and intensify habits that are systematically discriminatory in the direction of social inclusion.

On the other hand, these negative images are greatly opposed by alternative narratives. Many articles across the English language and international media speak to the tenacity of Ahmadis and their achievements in education, healthcare, and social welfare. Nevertheless, while these stories are narrowly bounded in scope and effect, they do illustrate the media's capacity to create the right kind of atmosphere--that is, an accommodative and understanding one Nonetheless, such positive worthy narratives as this one can only seldom attract much prominence at the expense of a far greater number of negative stories that appear (Kalia, 2011). While the international, more cosmopolitan English media sometimes critiques some widespread stereotypes, the domestic, more nationalist Urdu media supports exclusionary narratives targeting an audience immersed in cultural and religious traditions (Kalia, 2011). The disparity between Urdu and English media represents long-standing linguistic and ideological prejudices (Kalia, 2011). This seeming contradiction shows that, on the one hand, the media is a product of public opinion and, on the other, an influencer in producing that opinion (Kalia, 2011).

Critical discourse analysis has been successfully employed to break the language used in media deconstruction. Evidence exists by Balzani (2020) with proof that there indeed exists an opportunity through which implicit bias, though undetectable otherwise within discourses, may come under the critical analysis discourse for media. The means to this end could involve a focus on the verbal and rhetorical practices that serve to reinforce stereotypes and further marginalize already vulnerable groups. Shah (2023) indicates that the CDA of Urdu media analyzed the language tactics employed in the texts. Among the strategies used were nominalization and passive voice to reduce the criminality of the physical violence committed against Ahmadis. After doing a comparative analysis, Saeed (2012) concluded that the media in other countries has a tendency to be critical, which stands in contrast to the narratives that are sanitized and used by the media in Pakistan.

However, it has its share of disadvantages, the principal among which is excessive overdependence on textual analysis and relatively smaller samples in most cases. For greater coverage and richness of insights to explain how mass media influences public ideas and perceptions, there will likely be a tendency to combine CDA in subsequent studies with other approaches, like audience research and ethnography research. Even though the Ahmadia group has not been addressed specifically, it is in most relevant works that religious intolerance has been the major focus of attention. Therefore, it is important to focus on how public opinion and the direction in which policy takes place influence how the representation of Ahmadis in media influences how issues are portrayed and how the counter-narratives will challenge social preconceptions (Khan, 2021).

This is important not only because of its consequences but also because of the communities of most profound exclusion by this kind of discourse: Ahmadis and what is

portrayed about them in the media would have quite a tremendous influence on public opinion and society's attitudes (Kalin & Siddiqui, 2020). It will then be through gaining a fuller, more critical appreciation of these narratives that we'll find ourselves extending our knowledge in matters such as language influence and the issue of whether or not to continue systematic exclusion or to try and go against it. There is a need for a more accepting and accommodating culture of people from a wide range of origins.

3. Methodology

3.1 Nature of the Study

This research follows a qualitative methodology, grounded in Critical discourse analysis. This study aims to examine and interpret how meaning is created through language in media texts. The focus is specifically on Pakistani print media, examining how it contributes to the rambling construction of the identity of the Ahmadiyya community.

Given the sociopolitical sensitivities and historical marginalization surrounding the Ahmadi group in Pakistan, this study is especially concerned with how language, framing, and narrative structures are employed in media to portray this group. The research investigates not only what is said, but how it is said, what is emphasized or neglected, and what underlying ideologies or power structures may be reflected in or reinforced by these representations.

This utilizes textual analysis techniques to closely read and select news articles, editorials, and opinion pieces published in Pakistani newspapers. The aim is to uncover recurring patterns, rhetorical strategies, and discursive practices that shape public insight and social understanding of the Ahmadi identity and to understand how this discourse fits into the broader ideological agendas.

3.2 Ethical Considerations

Given the sentient nature of the topic specifically, the representation of the Ahmadiyya group within a national context where Ahmadis meet systemic discrimination—ethical considerations were essential to all stages of the research process. The study was conducted with a strong commitment to ethical integrity, with measures taken to reduce harm, respect the dignity of those indirectly implicated, and reflect critically on the researcher's positionality.

3.2.1 Data retrieve from a library

The data used in this research was sourced solely from the community's library, accessible to Ahmadis from an achieve cell. To protect and honor the wishes of the owner, the name and location of the library is protected. The study did not involve any personal interviews or the use of personal detective information. By relying on published materials entirely, this research avoided exposing harmless individuals to potential risks especially considering the legal and social challenges faced by the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan.

3.2.2 Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools were utilized selectively and with honesty across the entire research process, particularly during the initial stages of data handling. Specifically, AI-assisted translation tools were used for the conversion of Urdu-language newspaper texts into English and to assist in the organization and management of large quantities of textual material.

Most importantly, I have not used AI in the analysis phase and critically conducted all the processes manually. Additionally, AI translated transcripts were later manually reviewed, corrected and edited based on the context and meaning and were subjected to multiple revisions throughout the analysis and coding phase. As a researcher, I acknowledge that utilizing AI tools may result in mistranslation, or trivialize emotionally charged or religiously coded language, however, I made sure to avoid such incidents and paid special attention to idiomatic phrases, context-specific meanings, and culturally fixed nuances.

3.2.3 Researcher Positionality and Mitigation of Bias

As a part of Ahmadiyya community, I face unique advantages and some challenges as well. First was easy access to the library achieve cell for data collection and having the insider

status enabled me for an in-depth familiarity with day-to-day struggles, linguistic and socio-political realities enabling a clearer and deeper perspective while reading both English, Urdu and Ahmadiyya media. No doubt, the biggest challenge I faced was my conscious awareness of potential bias in my reading, coding analysis and writing. To avoid this potential concern and to uphold the standards of academic objectivity and methodological rigor, I have employed several strategies, and they are mentioned below:

3.2.4 Peer Consultation and Supervisory Engagement

During my translation and coding process, I had several meetings with my supervisor and friends. I even joined an online community of researchers on reddit and kept seeking their advice and they were very welcoming, sharing their wonderful insights for avoiding this bias and how to manage emotions while writing my results. The advice from my supervisors, my friends and all the people who read and listened to my work helped me to ensure that interpretive decisions were textually grounded rather than personally motivated.

3.2.5 AI as a Preliminary Neutrality Filter

During my writing phase, AI was used as my research assistant, who gave me several insights on how to avoid bias. From reading my texts, and sharing the brainstorming process, it helped me identify potential tonal imbalances and emotionally loaded language in my writing. I would like to emphasize that it was not used to write my analysis, but only as a screening tool for detecting any bias, followed by manual validation and interpretation.

3.2.6 Iterative Cross-Verification of Coding

During my coding process, I cross verified my categories such as (1) Labels, (2) Frames and (3) Facts. Repeatedly revisiting the original new stories, then to my translations and then to all the categories and re-evaluating the earlier coding decisions was the technique I employed throughout, till the end of my coding process. This cyclical process involves personal assumptions or emotional responses and focuses more on the correct interpretation of my data.

3.2.7 Reflexive Memo-Writing

A suggestion by my supervisor, which helped me intensely in my results and theoretical framework. With the help of memo writing, I was able to analytically understand my data, concepts and link several theories to my data. I was able to write thorough reflective notes, which were included in my results section and helped me see the pattern across different categories, with all the evidence. Most importantly, in my memo writing, I was able to write and think with more freedom, documenting my reactions, thoughts and doubts to the subject was a liberating experience which aid me to structure my analysis more objectively and systematically categorized my data in my analysis process.

3.2.8 Ethical Representation of Marginalized Communities

Conducting research on marginalized communities, majorly those to which the I, as a researcher belongs, demands careful ethical opinion in both content analysis and the presentation of findings. This study advisedly refrained from sensationalizing accounts of suffering or uncritically reproducing stigmatizing language. Terms with hostile or derogatory connotations (e.g., “Qadiani,” “fitna”) were included only as direct quotations from the sourced news texts to maintain contextual precision.

Additionally, the analysis aimed to uphold the agency of the Ahmadiyya community in media portrayals. Instances where newspapers merged their perspectives, featured their official statements, or documented their initiatives were deliberately highlighted. This approach challenges the deduction of Ahmadis to mere passive subjects of oppression, instead emphasizing the nuanced and multifaceted nature of their representation in the media.

3.3 Sampling Design and Technique

I have decided on purposive sampling as my study design for the selection of media text, explicitly discussing Ahmadis.

3.3.1 Target Sample

My data set was comprised of about three hundred news articles which was sourced from seventeen different newspapers having 10 Urdu newspapers and 8 English. The inclusion criteria were (1) Articles must be published between January – July 2024 (2) Articles must contain direct references to the Ahmadiyya group. (3) Sourced from both Urdu and English newspapers, (4) Content should involve news stories, editorials, and op-eds.

3.3.2 Data Collection

All the news stories were gathered from a library archive cell which specializes in minority press coverage, especially Ahmadis. It included extensive and reliable collection of both English, Urdu newspapers. All the news stories were carefully organized by year, month and publication dates, making it easier to find the digital copies online in needed for cross verification.

Table 1:
Monthly coverage of Ahmadiyya-Related News by Newspaper (January-June 2024)

Newspaper	January	February	March	April	May	June	Total
Nawa-e-Waqt	12	1	10	7	18	20	68
Dawn	3	5	6	3	4	12	33
Daily Ausaf	7	5	12	10	20	22	76
Daily Mashriq Lahore	15	5	12	7	18	14	71
Daily Duniya Faisalabad	4	1	3	4	3	1	16
Jinnah News	6	3	7	5	8	5	34
Daily Abtak	7	2	14	3	17	7	50
The News International	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Daily Khabrain Lahore	1	1	2	3	6	3	16
92 News Faisalabad	0	0	3	0	2	1	6
Daily Express	1	0	3	4	0	4	12
Daily Jhang	2	3	5	8	5	4	27
Daily Pakistan	1	0	3	5	10	8	27
TheNews.pk	0	0	1	3	1	0	5
Tribune.pk	0	0	5	3	2	0	10
The Friday Times	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
The Nation	0	0	1	4	2	5	11
Persecution Of Ahmadiyya	4	3	5	3	2	4	21

Total news: 485

3.3.3 Data Collection Process

The process of data collection for this thesis began with the selection of relevant textual material, which was then coded through an action of close reading. Initially, I found key themes within the data, and as new themes appeared during the analysis, they were continuously added to the coding framework. Each piece of data was placed under the most relevant theme to maintain a structured organization of content.

Following the thematic coding, I began identifying vertical and horizontal patterns across the dataset, especially across different newspapers. This practice helped me identify specific narrative developing within and across various sources.

During my analysis, I also wrote memos which include descriptions and reflective notes of each category. These memos were linked to each other to identify common themes and patterns, and aided me in understanding the interplay of facts, labels, and narratives. This method

was beneficial for both inductive and deductive analysis, resulting in nuanced understanding of the data.

3.3.4 Data Analysis

Table 2:
Brief data of the Newspapers used in the study

Newspaper	Total	Media House
Nawa-i-Waqt	68	Nawa-i-Waqt Group
Dawn	33	Pakistan Herald Publications (Private) Limited,
Daily Ausaf	76	Daily Ausaf Group
Daily Mashriq Lahore	71	Mashriq Group
Daily Duniya Faisalabad	16	Dunya Media Group
Jinnah News	34	Daily Jinnah Group
Daily Abtak	50	Daily Abtak Group
The News International	1	Jang Media Group
Daily Khabrain Lahore	16	Khabrain Group of Newspapers
92 News Faisalabad	6	92 News HD Plus
Daily Express	12	Express Media Group
Daily Jhang	27	Jang Media Group
Daily Pakistan	27	Daily Pakistan Group
TheNews.pk	5	Jang Media Group
Tribune.pk	10	Express Media Group
The Friday Times	1	Independent publication
The Nation	11	Nawa-i-Waqt Group
Persecution Of Ahmadiyya	21	Independent website

This study applied Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), assisted Aho's (1994) theory of enemy construction, to study how language constructs power, ideology, and identity in discourse about the Ahmadiyya community. In this study, I have used a closed, line-byline coding technique, which enabled me to detect patterns and themes across my categories namely (1) Labels, (2) Facts, (3) Narratives, (4) Frames, (5) Threat construction (6) Speaker/Author Opinions and lastly (7) Call to action.

The use of derogatory labels such as "Qadiani" and "non-Muslim" is linked with Aho's "naming" and "legitimization" stages as it aided in delegitimizing Ahmadis. Narrative frames

often depicted Ahmadis as religious or national threats, aligning with “mythmaking” and reinforcing sole ideologies. Fact presentation polarized verified facts legitimized discrimination, while unverified claims (e.g., conspiracies) incited fear and hostility. Speaker positioning further revealed power imbalances, with state and religious actors framed as protectors, while Ahmadi voices were marginalized or disgraced.

Many texts included calls to action, legal, political, or social that externalized Aho’s “ritual” stage, where exclusion becomes normalized through repeated public discourse. For instance, repeated demands to remove Ahmadis from voter rolls or boycott their businesses functioned as service acts of exclusion. Across the dataset, inter-category linkages were evident, such as how labeling reinforced hostile frames and justified action. Overall, the discourse consistently portrayed Ahmadis as ideological outsiders, using language to sustain their marginalization in both formal and informal settings.

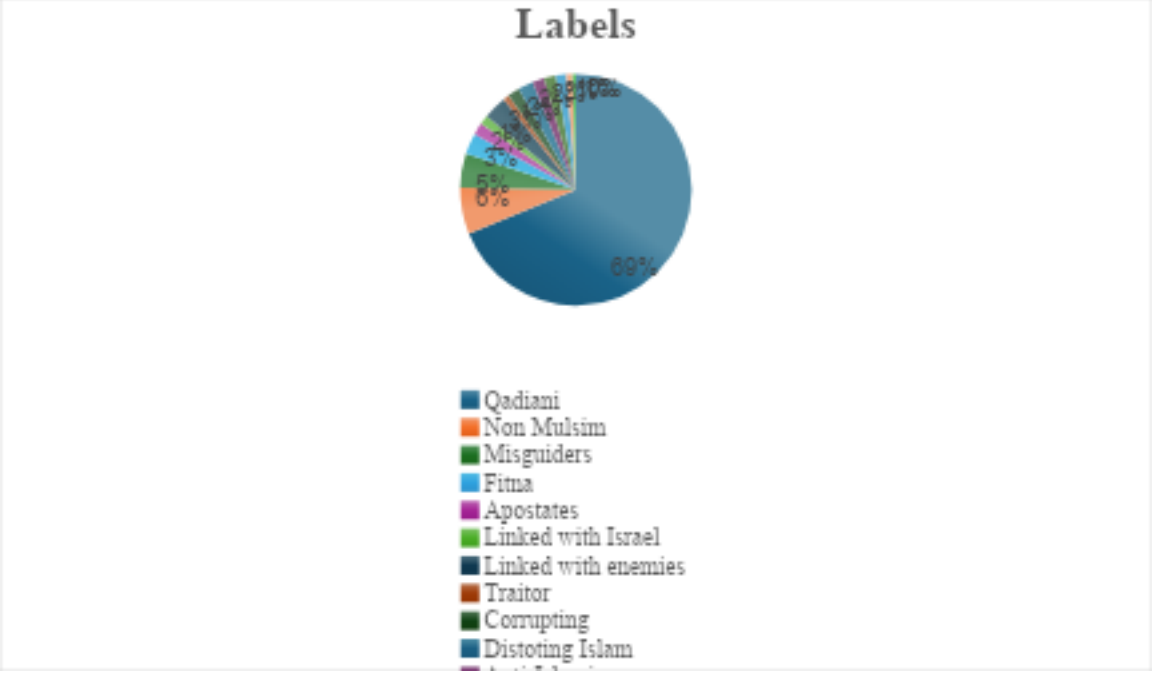
The coding and explanation process was iterative. The researcher maintained a robust system of memo-writing for each category, capturing descriptive, interpretive, and reflexive insights. These memos were systematically cross compared to identify inter-category relationships, for example, how specific labels enhanced antagonistic frames, or how certain speaker identities were always aligned with calls to action. This reflective and cyclical approach ensured that the analysis remained grounded in the data while maintaining a critical awareness of the broader sociopolitical framework.

4. Results

4.1 Theme 1: Labels (1a Religious, 1b Social, 1c National)

4.1.1 *Description*:

The analysis begins with the category of Labels, which I have subdivided into three distinct forms: Religious Labels, Nation/Political Labels, and Cultural & Social Labels. These classifications were introduced to capture how language is used to mark Ahmadis as outsiders not only to Islam but also to the nation and society. Religious labels expose the theological alienation; political and national labels reflect demands to disown or lessen the representation of Ahmadis; and social labels capture how Ahmadis are culturally vilified and ostracized within everyday discourses.



The most frequently occurring label across the Urdu print media is “Qadiani,” a pejorative term deliberately used to deny Ahmadis their chosen identity. The term is rooted in

colonial-era sectarian polemics and is widely considered derogatory by the Ahmadi community. Its prevalence signals an institutionalized effort to otherize Ahmadis and erase their self-identification. The Urdu press, particularly newspapers like *Daily Ausaf* (76 reports), *Daily Mashriq* (71), *Nawa-i-Waqt* (68), and *Jinnah* (50), have the highest number of reports using this label. In contrast, the English-language press, including *Dawn*, *The News International*, and *Express Tribune*, mostly refers to the community respectfully as "Ahmadis" and almost never uses the label "Qadiani", highlighting a more neutral or rights-based approach.

Across Urdu media, the use of labels intensifies as they are paired with extreme characterizations. “Qadiani” is frequently coupled with accusations of treachery, unbelief, and subversion. For example, the label “enemies of Islam” appears at least 10 times in conjunction with “Qadiani,” transforming a religious label into a national security threat. Other frequently used terms include “fitna” (18 times), “non-Muslim” (39), “misleaders” or “misguiders” (29), and “apostates” (10). These terms go beyond theological disagreement, they represent active delegitimization of Ahmadis in every possible ideological sphere: religion, society, and national belonging.

The community is frequently labeled as the global conspirers and agents of Westren powers like Israel. According to my data set, the label “spies of Britain, India and Isreal” was repeated (5) times, established linkages with Israel (8) times, and mentioned ties with Pakistani enemies (20) times. This type of rhetoric uses colonial stereotypes and taps into the post 9/11 nationalist fears. Moreover, the narrative of Ahmadi as internal saboteurs is further pushed when labels like traitors (5) corruptors (10), distorting Islamic teaching (13) and anti-Islamic and anti-constitutional (10) are repeatedly used in different newspapers.

The harsh labels such as deceivers, sinners, cowards, liars and lanati (accursed), does not imply just disagreement but incite hatred and portray Ahmadis as morally bad and a threat to society. The frequency of such terms, including “disbeliever” (9), “heresy” (5), and even “associated with Dajjal” (3), shows that Urdu media employs a deeply affective and theologically loaded lexicon. The Ahmadi identity is not only framed as false but framed as satanic.

In stark contrast, English-language newspapers maintain a far more professional and factual tone. They predominantly use the term “Ahmadi,” avoid emotionally charged language, and often report events directly from institutional or human rights sources. Headlines like “*Mob-led attacks on Ahmadis growing, says HRC*” indicate reliance on credible organizations and use the term “mob” to describe the perpetrators, not the victims. The tone is neutral but firm, grounded in facts rather than religious rhetoric. There is little to no evidence of opinionated or vilifying language.

The Ahmadi media itself uses a different vocabulary altogether, often describing their persecution through terms like “angry mob,” “violent extremists,” and attributing the rising hate to speeches made by religious clerics inciting violence. This reinforces their position as victims seeking protection and redress. Unlike Urdu or even English mainstream media, Ahmadi sources often include details about the events, the perpetrators, the lack of police action, and the role of extremist groups like TLP.

4.1.2 ***Analysis****:*

A vivid example of how events are framed differently across media types can be seen in the coverage of the Ahmadi community's boycott of the general elections. English newspapers framed it as a protest:

"The Ahmadi community has announced dissociation from the general elections" (TNI122024).

Dawn further elaborated,

"WHENEVER elections take place, the Ahmadi community is reminded of their 'otherness' through the existence of a separate voters' list for the group. Because of this unfortunate reality, the community has boycotted elections for decades and will also stay away from next week's exercise. It is sad that the state has created such conditions that a large number of its minority citizens will not be able to exercise their right to franchise. As a spokesman for the community told this paper, such behavior "contravenes both the Constitution and the joint electorate system". The issue is, of course, part of the larger pattern of discrimination the community faces in both the public and private spheres." (D322024).

However, in Urdu newspaper Ausaf, the same event was reported as:

"The False and Cowardly Qadiani Community Announces Election Boycott" (DAF222024).

Instantly delegitimizing the political protest and characterizing the community as deceitful and weak. Another Urdu piece by Daily Mashriq presented a counter-narrative defending the state's discriminatory practice, stating,

"Separate Voter List for Qadianis Is Not Against Human Rights" (MA822024).

Similarly, the killing of an Ahmadi man in Sydney was generally reported neutrally in English media:

"One Pakistani killed, another injured in Sydney attack" (*Dawn*, *Tribune*).

However, most Urdu outlets either misidentified his city or completely erased his Ahmadi identity. For example, *Daily Awaz* referred to him only as *"Chiniot's young man"* (DAW1642024), while *Mashriq* wrote *"Young resident of Chenab Nagar also killed,"* (MA1722024) failing to mention his faith identity, hometown (Rabwah), or his connection to the Ahmadi community.

The Mubarik Sami case provides another crucial example of how Urdu media go beyond labeling into narrative-building and frame construction. Religious leaders like Mufti Sher Muhammad and Dr. Abu al-Hasan used newspaper columns and speeches to frame Ahmadis not merely as non-Muslims but as illegitimate claimants to rights. In an address to media after hearing of Mubarik Sami case, 92 News recorded the statement of Mufti Sher Muhammad who stated, "*Ahmadis cannot be granted the same rights as Christians, Jews, or other minorities under the category of "Dhimmi" (non-Muslims under Islamic governance)".*(92N2932024)

In other statement, Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Chinioti stated:

"The Qadiani movement is a more significant threat to Islam and Pakistan than Hindus and Jews. As part of a conspiracy, they aim to abolish the 1973 Constitution to gain recognition as Muslims". (DAF1132024)

The use of the rhetoric frames Ahmadi as inherently evil, law breaker and dangerous which excludes them from the mainstream society and construct them enemies of both Pakistan and Islam, which in turn, tacitly legitimizing violence against them.

A critical dynamic has been revealed by these patterns, between the interplay of labels, frames, and narratives. Labels have repeatedly been found to have been embedded within the frames that define Ahmadis as a threat: a threat to religion, social cohesion, and/or a threat to the state itself. These narratives are then contextualized within the existing frames that necessitate the call for actions like exclusion, legal punishment, social boycott, or something even worse than that. In the Urdu media, the public sentiment has been observed to have been mobilized towards hostility by such rhetorical escalation, manifested by these narratives. Now while such escalations are not observed within the English media, it still lacks the deeper contextualization of the discrimination, potentially contributing to narrative silence.

The Ahmadi Media, however, adopts a relatively confrontational approach by highlighting the religious incitement that fuels the violence against Ahmadi community, and naming the threats directly.

Lastly, the influence of Authors and speakers is of paramount importance. Some of the harshest religious labels and narrative building can be observed in the speeches and articles by the likes of Maulana Zahid ur Rashidi and Naveed Masood Hashmi. Their speeches have a far-reaching effect across the headlines of the major newspapers, forming a coherent storyline over the course of time that Ahmadis are undoubtedly anti Islam and anti-Pakistan. Thus, any direct or indirect support to them, be it from journalists, judges, politicians, or anyone else—amounts to nothing but betrayal

In contrast, the constitutional aspects and minority rights are emphasized on, and more institutional languages are employed especially when legal experts are being quoted in Dawn newspaper, or The News.

A critical dynamic has been revealed by these patterns, between the interplay of labels, frames, and narratives. Labels have repeatedly been found to have been embedded within the frames that define Ahmadis as a threat: a threat to religion, social cohesion, and/or a threat to the state itself. These narratives reinforce the labels and also link facts to the labels in ways that justify actions such as exclusion, legal punishment, or social boycott, often normalizing or excusing these practices within a broader ideological context. In the Urdu media, the public sentiment has been observed to have been mobilized towards hostility by such strong rhetoric, manifested by these narratives. Now while such narratives are not observed within the English media, it still lacks the deeper contextualization of the discrimination, potentially contributing to narrative silence.

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and mobilization. threat building/construction and mobilization. it underscores how label embedded in frame are enlivened through narratives, further bolstering the immediacy of the threat they present, which have real-life social, economic, political and security related consequences for the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan.

4.2 Theme 2: Facts (2a Verified 2b Unverified)

4:2:1 *Description*:

In the media ecosystem analyzed across 18 newspapers, 10 Urdu and 8 English, facts play a central but greatly fragment role in shaping the public perception of the Ahmadiyya Community. The "facts" have been further categorized into two sub categories i.e., verified facts and unverified/implied facts as this helps in divulging the procedure via which the persecution is either documented, or erased, and how this erasure The classification of "facts" into two subcategories, verified facts and unverified/implied facts, helps lay bare the mechanisms through which persecution is either documented or deliberately erased, and how this erasure further contributes to a larger narrative framework that harbors exclusion and hostility. Verified facts, theoretically speaking, offer a gateway to objective reality. Events like violence against Ahmadis, state sponsored discrimination, and the Ahmadi Community's own dissociative decision from the elections are documented by media sources, are reported and coded as facts. But within Urdu media, such events are almost entirely absent. Despite a staggering volume of incidents in 2024 alone, 22 anti-Ahmadi conferences, 308 desecrated graves, 117 homes vandalized, multiple mosque attacks and desecrations, expulsions from schools, employment terminations, arrests including of a 13-year-old on Eid, not a single Urdu newspaper gave space to these verified instances of violence. These were instead meticulously recorded in the Ahmadi community's

own annual reports, an archive of trauma that remains institutionally invisible within the Urdu press.

What Urdu newspapers do cover instead are religious mobilization events, particularly those centered around the protection of the Finality of Prophethood (Khatm-e-Nabuwwat). These events and conferences were indeed held, and speeches were delivered—but the content within these events largely transitions into the realms of negative and accusatory claims against Ahmadis. Speakers at these conferences often make claims about Ahmadis being agents of Zionism, collaborators with India and Israel, or traitors to Pakistan. These statements are repeated across publications like *Daily Ausaf*, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, and *Mashriq* and are never questioned, sourced, or contextualized. They are presented as self-evident truths.

4:2:2 *Analysis*:

Thus, in Urdu media, a unique inversion occurs, actual acts of persecution become invisible, while speculative allegations and ideological claims are amplified and repeated as facts. These unverified claims are deeply ideological, rooted in historical myths and political suspicion, and they often blame Ahmadis for the country's crisis from moral decay to political instability. The unchecked repetition of these statements transforms them into accepted public "truths," solidifying frames and narratives of threat and betrayal.

Some examples:

Daily Nawaye Wqt (DNW112024):

"*A flag-hoisting ceremony was held at the district office of Majlis Ahrar-e-Islam in connection with its foundation day. The speakers claimed that Qadianis are enemies of Islam and Muslims, and accused them of misleading the younger generation and innocent children in an alleged*

conspiracy to distance them from the faith of Islam"

Daily Duniya Faisalabad (DN1312024)

"*They asserted that the Qadianis are spies for Britain, America, and Israel. The suffering of the Palestinians is a collective concern for the Muslim Ummah. The ties between the Qadianis and Israel are well-known. India and Israel have united against Muslims. The time is not far when Al-Aqsa Mosque will be freed, and Israeli control over the land of saints will end. The rulers of Islamic countries must break their silence on Gaza and take practical measures against Zionist aggression."*

Daily Abtek (DA2212024)

"*Qadianis are misleading simple-minded Muslims and distorting Islamic teachings.The Qadiani ideology is heretical, and our elders have successfully confronted this apostasy through unity, with court decisions both domestically and internationally now available.Today, we gather here to uphold the traditions of our elders, as the Qadiani group continues to misuse the title of Islam to promote their false beliefs. Despite differing opinions and policies, the Islamic community of Pakistan is united under the leadership of the International Council for the Protection of the Finality of Prophethood to combat the Qadiani fitna and false forces. This struggle must continue."*

English newspapers, in contrast, operate in a vastly different discursive mode. Outlets like *Dawn*, *The News*, and *The Express Tribune* maintain a clearer boundary between fact and opinion.

Reports on actual events including, but not limited to attacks, killings, desecration of graves, or resolutions that negatively impact the Ahmadi community are documented by them. For instance, from the perspective of Ahmadiyya media and Pakistani platform voice.pk, the

killing of Tahir Iqbal Cheema in Bahawalpur was initially being wrongfully framed by the police as an act of Honor killing, Dawn's report on the case presented a different perspective.

"*Bahawalpur DPO Syed Abbas Shah told Dawn that initial investigation suggested that the victim was shot dead for an honour-related matter. He said the deceased was a landlord, having an 'affair' with a woman of his locality. The heirs of the woman, he claimed, had hurled threats of dire consequences several times in the past*." Dawn (D352024).

Yet even within English media, the reporting is often cautious. While it does not make sweeping statements or present the opinions linked to facts or incidents, it also doesn't always investigate beyond surface-level incidents. In contrast, Ahmadi community and Pakistani platforms like Voice.pk directly challenged the police narrative in the Cheema case, alleging involvement of religious militants from Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and pointing to manipulation of the investigation.

Presecution of Ahamdis (POA432024)

"*The police initially tried to give the incident a different touch. Speaking to Dawn.com, Bahawalpur District Police Officer (DPO) Syed Abbas Shah claimed that the initial investigation suggested that the motive behind the murder was not a religious one but was related to 'honor'. The tragic murder of Mr. Cheema was also mentioned by the media. A number of media platforms featured the attack and its aftermath. Voice.pk wrote that DPO Abbas denied having made this statement (about honor) while talking to the said media outlet. Furthermore, Voice.net1 claimed a link to Lashkar-e-Jhangvi for this murder, asserting that the two accomplices arrested were associated with a local Muslim cemetery and had studied in the cemetery of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi*"

What emerges is a discursive imbalance: Urdu media often constructs a perspective where anti-Ahmadi sentiment is normalized or left unchallenged, while English media tends to report incidents of violence in more restrained, depoliticized terms. In the Urdu press, exclusionary narratives may be reinforced through repetition and selective coverage, whereas English-language outlets, though more likely to acknowledge incidents, often avoid engaging with the deeper political and systemic roots of the issue.

Even at the same event, Ahmadis' decision to boycott the elections, is framed radically differently. English media treats it as a legal and political response to their disenfranchisement, while Urdu newspapers portray it as an act of deception to hide "their actual numbers" or to "conceal their lies." Daily Ausaf (DAF222024)

"*Leaders of the Ahmadiyya Movement and Majlis-e-Ahrar Islam, including Maulana Tariq Shabeer Usmani and Maulana Muhammad Maghira, said that the Qadianis' announcement of detachment from the elections is essentially a cover-up for the lies told by their leaders regarding their actual numbers. They fear that if they participate in the elections, the truth about their actual numbers in Pakistan will be revealed."*

The result of this fragmented media landscape is not just confusion, it is the construction of a public enemy. Repeated conferences, fueled by religious speakers and echoed uncritically by Urdu newspapers, help sediment the narrative that Ahmadis are foreign agents, apostates, and threats to Islam and Pakistan. By contrast, verified facts especially those that document the suffering of Ahmadis remain almost entirely absent from the Urdu press. the omittion seems volitional and strategic as Urdu newspapers actively frame facts and report labels that construct Ahmadi community as a threat to Pakistan and the Muslim. It enables the state and society to ignore violence while actively producing hatred.

This asymmetry between reporting of events and the content being shared in those events, or opinions in particular incidents serve a critical function in the broader machinery of marginalization. It silences victims, elevates ideological actors, and gives the illusion of national and religious consensus against a fabricated threat. In the absence of facts, fear thrives. And in the presence of constant unverified accusations delivered in the name of religion, patriotism, or divine duty violence becomes not only imaginable, but justifiable.

4:3 Theme 3: Narratives (Hero protective, Victimization, Enemy, Religious tolerance Right vs Wrong)

4:3:1 *Description*:

In the context of Pakistani print media coverage on the Ahmadiyya community, narratives serve as the connective tissue that binds various discursive strategies labels, frames, and even the selective presentation of facts into coherent ideological stories. each narrative analyzed here (hero/protector, victimization, right vs wrong, enemy, religious tolerance/protection) plays a distinct role in this discursive process. they are also unevenly distributed across Urdu and English-language print media, reflecting not just different editorial philosophies but the influence of deeper political, religious, and ideological forces.

4:3:2 *Analysis*:

The analysis uncovers the polarized discourse, where Ahmadiyya Community is either demonized, portrayed as victims or entirely ignored based on the ideological position and the circumstances. During coding, the most prominent and frequently used narrative was the enemy narratives, especially in Urdu-language newspapers (daily Ausaf, Mahsriq, Jhang and Abtek).

This narrative is associated with phrases like “cultivators of mischief”, “agents of British” and “evil of the time” frame the community insidious and devilish. It outcast them and present them as existential threats to Islam and the Pakistani nation

In a news script, this statement was reported in Ausaf:

“Qadiani are working against the country, and are aligned with US, Isreal and India. Their objective is to destabilize Pakistan. They stated that Qadianis are receiving funding from India and Israel to weaken Pakistan. In Chenab Nagar, Qadianis are openly defying the Constitution and laws of Pakistan. They are not a religious sect but a creation of British imperialism, planted to weaken Islam and Muslims. To this day, Qadianis have not accepted Pakistan’s Constitution. They continue to conspire against the security of Pakistan, posing a serious threat to the nation. He urged religious scholars to step forward and actively oppose the Qadiani conspiracies” (DAF1132024)

Such discursive strategies do more than stigmatize; they dehumanize and render Ahmadis as legitimate targets of collective hostility. The language used is often inflammatory, invoking notions of religious duty and national honor, thus creating a fertile ground for public acceptance of violence and legal marginalization. In this frame, eliminating or opposing Ahmadis is not seen as extremism but as a righteous defense of the nation and faith a classic hallmark of enemy construction.

Closely tied to the Enemy Narrative is the **Hero/Protector Narrative**, wherein Muslim clerics, political leaders, and even the lay public are elevated as defenders of Islam against the “fitna” posed by Ahmadis.

Jinnah News (JN2912024)

"*In various addresses, they stated that they would take to the field against this fitna (trial) and fulfill their duty to protect the faith of Muslims regarding the finality of Prophethood, which is the great edifice of Islam."*

This narrative often glorifies historical events like the 1974 constitutional amendment declaring Ahmadis non-Muslim, attributing heroic status to those involved in its passage.

Daily Ausaf (DAF812024)

"*Maulana Aziz-ur-Rahman Sani praised the efforts of Maulana Mufti Mahmood and the Parliament members who, in 1974, constitutionally declared Qadianis as a non-Muslim minority. He acknowledged Mufti Mahmood's lifelong dedication to safeguarding the doctrines of the Finality of Prophethood and the honor of the Prophet. He also noted the recent increase in activities associated with Qadianism, emphasizing that countering these efforts is a religious duty for every Muslim. Maulana Ghulam Rasool stated that the Qadiani movement is nearing its logical conclusion, adding that honorable Muslims spare no effort and are willing to make the greatest of sacrifices to eliminate the enemies of the honor and Prophethood of our beloved Prophet*."

It constructs the idea of a perpetual struggle between truth and falsehood, often presenting this binary through emotive religious symbolism and historical analogies, for instance, comparing the battle against Ahamdis to the military campaign of Hazrat Abu Bakr against false prophets.

Daily Mashriq (MA1512024)

"Abu Bakr Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) set an example of being the true protector of the Finality of Prophethood by sending an army against the false prophet Musailamah.

Regarding the matter of the Finality of Prophethood, Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq made no compromises and declared direct jihad. He emphasized that if anyone asks us to compromise with Qadianis on this issue, it is clear that such a person is a traitor to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the protector of the Finality of Prophethood, Abu Bakr Siddiq. We should keep away from such individuals because, in Allah's eyes, there may be forgiveness for a sinner, but there is no forgiveness for a traitor. Therefore, associating oneself with those who claim to be friends of the Qadianis or hold a soft corner for them is tantamount to standing among them."

These narratives are deeply moralistic and rooted in a vision of Islam as constantly under siege, requiring continuous sacrifice and vigilance. In this context, any critique of persecution becomes a betrayal, and resistance to violence is framed as spiritual apathy. The Urdu media's persistent emphasis on such narratives creates a potent fusion of nationalism and religiosity, in which political identity and religious identity are inseparable.

The Victimization Narrative operates in a more complex and double-sided manner. Within Urdu media, victimhood is largely claimed by the majority Muslims are portrayed as the ones under attack by deceptive Ahmadi strategies, such as "sneaking into educational institutions," "misleading innocent Muslims," and "hiding behind Islamic titles." This portrayal flips the power dynamic, representing the religious majority as under threat from a numerically small and legally suppressed minority.

Daily Ausaf (DAF2252024)

"Tauseef Ahmad said that Qadianis mislead innocent Muslims with their actions. By sneaking into educational institutions, they mislead and deceive people. The belief in the Finality of

Prophethood is a word that symbolizes a Muslim's faith. He further said, Qadianis spread their false beliefs in different ways, using tricks and misleading innocent people. They violate laws and deceive Muslims in various places, including educational institutions."

In contrast**,** English-language newspapers like *Dawn*, *The Nation*, and *The Express Tribune*, along with Ahmadi-run publications, mobilize the Victimization Narrative in its more logical form — depicting Ahmadis as victims of state-backed discrimination, social marginalization, and extremist violence. Reports of desecrated graves, blasphemy accusations, disenfranchisement, and schoolteacher transfers form the foundation of these narratives. They center on lived experiences of systemic injustice, institutional exclusion, and targeted attacks.

Dawn (D322024)

"*It raises serious questions about an entire community's disenfranchisement. What is equally troubling is that a separate voters' list — containing sensitive personal information — exposes the group to grave danger, as extremists can easily identify members of the community from this document. Over the past many decades, the group's places of worship have been attacked, while its members have been murdered. There exist outfits in this country that dedicate all their time and energies to persecuting this particular community. In such a perilous environment, if the state cannot guarantee the community's right to participate in the polls, the least it can do is to not expose them to further danger through the separate voters' list."*

Persecution of Ahmadiyya (POA2512024)

"*To deprive a non-Muslim (minority) of the country from holding his religious beliefs, to obstruct him from professing and practicing his religion within the four walls of his place of worship is against the grain of the democratic Constitution and repugnant to the spirit and character of the*

Islamic Republic. It also deeply bruises and disfigures human dignity and the right to privacy of a non-Muslim minority, who like all other citizens of this country enjoy the same rights and protections under the Constitution"

This split in how victimhood is claimed across media outlets reveals the ideological fault lines within Pakistani journalism — where Urdu outlets serve a more populist, religiously orthodox readership, and English outlets and Ahmadi Media tend to engage with human rights discourses and international norms.

Amid these conflicting narratives, the Religious Tolerance and Protection Narrative stands out for its rarity and specificity. Found almost exclusively in English-language newspapers, this narrative emphasizes constitutional rights, the principle of religious freedom, and the moral imperative of inclusion. It is cautious yet firm, often voicing concern over the state's role in maintaining or enabling discrimination. This narrative not only recognizes the vulnerability of the Ahmadiyya community but also critiques the broader culture of silence that surrounds their persecution. By highlighting electoral exclusion, data misuse, and the broader climate of fear, these narrative attempts to recast Ahmadis as **citizens deserving of rights** rather than as a theological problem to be solved.

4.4 Theme 4: Frames (Religious, Social, National Frame)

4:4:1 *Description*:

Framing reveals how events, groups, and actions are selectively constructed to guide interpretation, provoke emotion, and justify responses. In a context of political hostility and social exclusion like that surrounding the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan understanding

frames helps explain *how violence is legitimized, how fear is manufactured, and how silence is sustained*.

This category is vital to the core objective of the paper: to analyze how the enemy is socially constructed through discourse. By dividing frames into religious, nationalist, and social/cultural, the coding captures the specific discursive strategies different actors (media, religious leaders, political speakers) use to justify persecution or resist it.

In this dataset, religious framing dominates and plays a foundational role in constructing the Ahmadiyya community as enemies of both faith and nation. It mobilizes action, incites fear, and legitimizes hate.

Nationalist and cultural/social frames support this by broadening the terrain of hostility—bringing in patriotism, public morality, and generational anxiety.

Meanwhile, Ahmadi sources and a few English-language writers try to reclaim framing as a space of resistance, using legal, moral, and human rights discourses to critique the state and challenge silence. But these counter-frames remain marginalized, often suppressed or attacked, especially in Urdu media spaces.

In this way, the Frames category reveals the discursive battleground on which the Ahmadi identity is contested—between heresy and citizenship, between betrayal and rights, between silence and speech.

4.4.2 *Analysis*

Religious framing is one of the most prominent and frequently used frames across Urdu Newspapers. It is used not only to discredit Ahmadis but also to produce a moral panic, justify

exclusionary politics, and frame Muslims as religious warriors or protectors of faith. This frame is mostly used to incite fear in Muslims as a result of inaction against Ahmadis, to present Ahmadis as religious traitors, disloyal which leads to call for vigilance, reinforcing the sacred duty to protect the country and religions from the enemy. It portrays the conflict as spiritual warfare, rather than just a political or legal issue. Daily Mashriq group reported a statement by Abu Hanzala Qari Hamza Mustafa Mazhari, who stated that

"There is no forgivene`ss for a traitor, but a sinner might be forgiven, in Allah's eyes, Therefore, associating oneself with those who claim to be friends of the Qadianis or hold a soft corner for them is tantamount to standing among them." This construction not only frames Ahmadis as traitors but also labels anyone sympathetic to them as religiously deviant. Another statement from the same paper escalates this fear: *"Qadianis' anti-Islam and anti-constitutional activities have reached a dangerous level, causing severe unrest and anxiety among non-Muslims in Pakistan, which could take the form of a significant religious movement."* Interestingly, the unrest is framed not only as a Muslim concern but something so severe that even non-Muslims are allegedly anxious a tactic to widen consensus and heighten alarm.

Another aspect of religious framing is the invocation of spiritual duty and religious struggle. Ahmadis are repeatedly depicted as corrupting the meaning of Islam. For instance, *"The Qadiani group is using the title of Islam to present their heresy as part of Islam,"* or *"The Qadianis are distorting Islamic beliefs and trying to blind innocent Muslims with their deceptions."* These lines construct Ahmadis as enemies operating under disguise, and Muslims are morally obliged to resist them. The idea of a continuous religious battle is emphasized: *"The Islamic community of Pakistan should continue their peaceful struggle against the Qadiani fitna and false forces."* The language of "fitna," "heresy," and "false forces" sanctifies the conflict,

framing anti-Ahmadi activism as a pious mission. Similarly, *Daily Abtak* notes, *"The scholars emphasized that those defending the belief in the finality of prophethood are always engaged in the best form of worship on the platform of prophethood,"* reinforcing the idea that the battle is not just political but a form of divine service. In *Daily Nawa-i-Waqt*, the religious obligation is made even more direct: *"Protection of the Belief in the Finality of Prophethood is a Part of Every Muslim's Faith."* Furthermore, the naming of courses such as *"Countering Qadianism,"* offered as religious education, institutionalizes the religious framing, creating an epistemic system where theological rejection becomes a curriculum.

The nationalist frame overlaps with the religious one but shifts the focus toward sovereignty, security, and geopolitics. It presents Ahmadis as foreign agents spies or tools of Zionist and Western powers whose presence undermines the nation. This frame often draws on conspiracy narratives to construct Ahmadis as part of an international network destabilizing Pakistan. For instance, a piece in *Daily Ausaf* claims, *"They emphasized that we are establishing Allah's system on Allah's land, while the Qadianis aim to weaken the country economically."* The dichotomy set up here is stark: Muslims are building divine order; Ahmadis are working to dismantle it. In the same breath, they're linked to Zionist conspiracies: *"They affirmed that they will continue to expose Qadianis and their Zionist leaders, who are infiltrating Islam in various countries, including Europe, while providing complete support to the youth against the Qadiani fitna."* Similarly, *Daily Mashriq* presents religious figures stating, *"Qadianis are a serious threat to the nation's security and stability: Maulana Shabeer,"* and further asserts, *"Qadianis are spies for Britain, America, and Israel."* The phrase, *"The ties between the Qadianis and Israel are well-known,"* seeks to render the accusation a given truth, not something requiring proof. These

formulations intensify the perception of Ahmadis as an existential national threat and normalize state and societal surveillance, hostility, and exclusion.

The social/cultural frame constructs Ahmadis as disruptors of traditional moral order, particularly through the alleged corruption of youth. Here, the emphasis is not on theology or geopolitics, but on the moral and social fabric. Again, *Daily Mashriq* claims: *"The Qadianis are distorting Islamic beliefs and trying to blind innocent Muslims with their deceptions. Western countries should refrain from considering Qadianis as part of the Muslim society, as they are robbing the faith and beliefs of the younger generation through social media and welfare activities."* This presents Ahmadis not only as doctrinally dangerous but as a cultural threat targeting youth, deceiving innocents, and using modern tools like social media to spread "fitna." This frame naturalizes censorship, ostracization, and even digital regulation in the name of protecting vulnerable groups.

In contrast to all of this, Ahmadi media and English-language outlets, particularly opinion writers, mobilize counter-frames. These emphasize oppression, constitutional violations, and human rights abuses. In Ahmadi publications, the state is framed as the oppressor that denies even private religious expression. One text argues: *"To deprive a non-Muslim (minority) of the country from holding his religious beliefs, to obstruct him from professing and practicing his religion within the four walls of his place of worship is against the grain of the democratic Constitution and repugnant to the spirit and character of the Islamic Republic. It also deeply bruises and disfigures human dignity and the right to privacy of a non-Muslim minority, who like all other citizens of this country enjoy the same rights and protections under the Constitution."* This type of framing counters the religious and nationalist narratives by positioning the Pakistani state and society as violators of both religious values and democratic principles.

Ahmadi publications also expose the double standards of religious freedom and call out the state's failure to protect citizens. *"The Mulla and the miscreants seemed to enjoy their freedom to make mindless mischief. On social media, sensible people could express only in their dismay and sorrow over the decline of social norms brought about by the TLP's activists and spineless administration and politicos."* The terms "miscreants," "spineless," and "mindless mischief" reflect a counter-discourse that repositions the "protectors of Islam" as agents of chaos.

English newspaper opinion columns especially in *Dawn* frame the persecution of Ahmadis as part of Pakistan's broader failure on minority rights and democratic values. For example: *"WHENEVER elections take place, the Ahmadi community is reminded of their 'otherness' through the existence of a separate voters' list for the group… a separate voters' list containing sensitive personal information exposes the group to grave danger, as extremists can easily identify members of the community from this document."* The framing highlights structural discrimination and the complicity of state institutions like the Election Commission. Another article laments: *"The entire system is cheering for the oppressors while the innocent citizens are left crushed… who will stop the ones playing with blood and fire on the streets? Are we also the kind of people who present corpses as gifts in the name of Islam, celebrating and congratulating each other afterward?"* This opinion piece, published in *Daily Express*, expresses horror at how normalized mob violence has become, framing it as a national moral failure.

Arifa Noor in *Dawn* takes the framing further by exposing silence in the media: *"In the case of the Ahmadi community, which has been coming under attack increasingly, even press coverage is missing… Other than an English newspaper or human rights activists, few report on such horrifying incidents… this was simply a lament a collection of random thoughts which began*

with an election result and ended with multiple questions about a region that continues to grapple with the question of minority rights decades after gaining independence." Her final note reveals how even speaking about Ahmadis can invite backlash, and how fear itself becomes a framing force in journalism.

Meanwhile, counter-counter frames in Urdu press reject any defense of Ahmadis by equating it with treason. As *Naveed Masood Hashmi* puts it: *"Supporting them is a sin and whoever sides with them is a traitor."* This reasserts the dominant religious and nationalist frames while delegitimizing alternative voices whether from local journalists, activists, or foreign organizations.

In conclusion, Pakistani print media, especially Urdu newspapers functions as a central mechanism for framing Ahmadis as dangerous enemies. The not only dehumanizes the community through moral, national and cultural claims but also protect the mainstreams Muslims from accusations of intolerance. Interesting find is the contrast with Ahmadi and English-Language media unveiling the polarized discourses, and the silencing of dissent. This shows the power of frames and narratives in establishing what is thinkable and sayable about religious minorities in Pakistan.

5. How Ahmadis Are Framed as Enemies

In this section, I will be drawing links with different categories use the findings to illustrate how the Pakistani print media frame Ahmadiyya Community as enemy. The process of enemy construction, as explained by William Aho (1994), outlines five stages that function as a cycle constantly reinforcing exclusionary and hostile attitudes through repetition.

5:1 Stage 1: Naming (The Foundation of Othering)

The enemy construction process begins with naming, an act that is far from neutral. In the dataset, Ahmadis are rarely referred to by their self-identification. Instead, derogatory labels such as “Qadiani,” “Cowards,” “Fitna” “Evil” and “enemy of Islam” dominate across most Urdu newspapers, while English newspapers use “Ahmadi”. This deliberate act of naming marks Ahmadis as “other,” delegitimizing their identity and reinforcing their outsider status. The label “non-Muslim” functions as both a legal category and a theological judgment, embedded within a broader narrative of exclusion.

This stage corresponds with Aho’s first principle: by naming, society marks its enemy. It is the first boundary-drawing act that makes future moral, legal, and political action against the community possible and seemingly justified.

5:2 Stage 2: Legitimization (Justifying Exclusion)

Once the community is labeled, the discourse moves to justify this categorization. The media often provides religious, legal, and nationalist rationales to legitimize the marginalization of the Ahmadis. For instance, articles frequently cite the 1974 constitutional amendment that declared Ahmadis non-Muslim, and the 1984 Ordinance XX that restricts their religious practices. These laws are not just referenced, they are framed as rational responses to a perceived theological threat.

The narrative that “Ahmadis deceive others by posing as Muslims” or that they are “a threat to the unity of the Muslim ummah” serves to portray exclusion as morally and legally necessary. Religious scholars and political leaders are quoted extensively to reinforce this position. Such representations are consistent with Aho’s second stage, where the state or

dominant institutions provide a “just cause” for identifying the enemy, transforming labeling into a sanctioned truth.

5:3 Stage 3: Mythmaking (Constructing the Threat)

This stage involves the fabrication or amplification of stories to reinforce the image of the enemy. During the memo writing process, I came across several news stories where Ahmadis were accused of blasphemy, linked with foreign powers and agendas to weaken the nation, and involved in corrupting the youth. These news stories were coded in unverified statements due to lack of evidence. However, due to repeated circulation over the 6 months period, they took a prominent space in Urdu media.

Phrases like “Qadianis are infiltrating Muslim society” , “running global agendas against Pakistan” and spies/prawn of Britain, India and Israel taps into mythic fears and of conspiracies and infiltration. These myths function as discursive weapons rather just an innocent misunderstanding, aligning with Aho’s mythmaking stage where the enemy is a evil power, endowed with insidious intent, further enabling and justifying their exclusion and persecution.

5:4 Stage 4: Sedimentation (Making Prejudice Common Sense)

When these phrases are repeated frequently over the period of 6 months or more, they become sedimented, a part of routine journaling, never questions rather accepted as a norm. For a daily reader, statements like “the accused Qadiani or the controversial Qadiani” are rarely problematized. This normalization of unverified facts or functions as a key feature for sedimentation.

Aho identifies this stage as a point where this hostile perception of enemy becomes naturalized, becoming same worldview for media, public and state institutions.

5:5 Stage 5: Ritual (Reinforcing Boundaries Through Performance)

Lastly, the ritualistic coverage of blasphemy allegations, commemorating anti-Ahmadi legal victories or the lack of Ahmads voices, especially in political speeches, court verdicts, and during religious events like Eid continuously renew the exclusionary boundary.

Rituals also appear in the way Ahmadis are structurally excluded from news coverage unless portrayed as a threat. There is little representation of their own voice, achievements, or suffering unless framed within a problem-solution binary, where the "solution" often involves silencing, legal action, or violence.

Across Labels, Frames, Narratives, and Facts, a coherent picture emerges: the Ahmadiyya community is not merely *mentioned* in the media, it is discursively *constructed* as a religious, social, and national enemy. The process of enemy construction reveals how language can be a enabling tool for marginalization aligns well with Aho's enemy-making framework. The use of labels, mythmaking, sedimentation and ritualizing the perception of Ahmadis as enemy resulted in their exclusion and persecution, and media plays a central role in this whole process.

6. Theoretical Framework

This chapter outlines the lens through which this research is carried out. Rooted in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Aho's (1994) framework of enemy construction, the study looks at how the Ahmadiyya community is portrayed in Pakistani media—not just as a religious "other," but as a perceived threat to national identity. But this portrayal isn't neutral. It reflects deeper interests connected to power, legitimacy, and economic gain. It's not simply about theology; it's about who gets to shape the nation and benefit from doing so.

At the heart of this framework is CDA, particularly as developed by Norman Fairclough. CDA helps to break down language in media texts to show how discourse works to keep certain power structures in place. In this case, the coverage of Ahmadis doesn't just describe reality, it constructs it. When media repeatedly uses labels like "Qadiani," "non-Muslim," or "enemy of Islam," it does more than name a group. It draws a boundary. These words shape perceptions of who belongs to the imagined community of Pakistan, and who doesn't. This kind of labeling isn't accidental, it's a discursive strategy that reinforces social exclusion.

To understand how a minority becomes an enemy, the study turns to James Aho's five-stage model of enemy construction: naming, legitimization, mythmaking, sedimentation, and ritualization. In the Pakistani context, it starts with naming. Words like "Qadiani" or "non-Muslim" carry heavy historical and political meanings. They are not just descriptions, they strip Ahmadis of religious identity and social acceptance. Then comes legitimization, where clerics, journalists, and state institutions justify these labels by invoking religious purity or national unity. Mythmaking follows, stories and rumors, often exaggerated or baseless, circulate widely. These include claims that Ahmadis are part of global conspiracies, secretly control major

institutions, or deceive others by posing as Muslims. Over time, as these narratives are repeated, they become sedimented. People accept them as truth without questioning their origins. Finally, ritualization locks these ideas into place through events, school syllabi, speeches, and charity drive that paint Ahmadis as a threat to Islam.

But this process is not only ideological. It has political and financial benefits. This study extends Aho's framework to consider why this enemy construction persists. Excluding Ahmadis is not simply emotional or sectarian, it's a profitable and strategic act. Clerical leaders and religious parties use anti-Ahmadi rhetoric to build their authority and gain public support. They present it as defending the faith, but it also brings in donations. The idea of *mali jihad*, giving money to protect Islam, transforms hate into funding. These donations support rallies, schools, and campaigns that reinforce the same exclusionary narratives. In this way, the enemy is not just feared, it is financially useful.

This framework also looks at how Pakistan's foundational ideology plays a role. The Two-Nation Theory, once used to justify separation from Hindu-majority India, has taken on new life. It now separates Muslims from other Muslims. The division is no longer between Muslims and Hindus but between "true" and "false" Muslims. The Ahmadis are placed firmly on the outside. Even after independence, the need for an internal enemy has remained. The state's image as a defender of Islam relies on this division. Without an enemy, the narrative of purity and unity begins to unravel. Exclusion becomes a tool, not just for faith, but for controlling dissent, maintaining order, and justifying state and religious power.

To understand the media's role in this, the study draws from Chomsky and Herman's propaganda model. This model explains how media content is shaped by filters like ownership, funding sources, and audience expectations. In Pakistan, these filters work differently for Urdu

and English media. Urdu-language outlets often take a harsh stance toward Ahmadis. This isn't just a random reflection of the priorities of their audience, which is often conservative, religious, and middle class. Content that attacks Ahmadis sells. It brings viewers, increases engagement, and secures donations. In contrast, English-language newspapers like *Dawn* or *The Express Tribune* usually avoid overt hostility. Their readers are more urban, educated, and liberal. These papers are more likely to highlight human rights issues and report on Ahmadi persecution in a less emotional tone. But even these outlets have limits. There are moments when they go silent, choosing not to cover sensitive stories, or doing so in vague terms. This silence shows that even liberal media operates within constraints. They, too, must protect themselves from backlash or state pressure. So, while English-language media may appear neutral, they are also careful not to cross lines that could threaten their standing.

Taken together, this shows how media is not just a passive channel for information. It is an active site of struggle, where inclusion and exclusion, belonging and otherness are defined. CDA, Aho's model, and the propaganda model all show that the portrayal of Ahmadis as enemies is a calculated, layered process. It is reinforced through language, justified by institutions, and kept alive through repetition and ritual. It serves ideological, political, and financial goals. In this system, the enemy becomes necessary, not only to protect religious identity, but to fund it, defend it, and use it to maintain control. The construction of the Ahmadi enemy is not just about belief, it's about power, structure, and survival.

7. Discussion

This study set out to examine how the Ahmadiyya community is represented in Pakistani print media, using a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework grounded in Aho's five-stage theory of enemy construction. My findings strongly align with existing literature, particularly in how language is weaponized to otherize and marginalize religious minorities. Scholars such as Rubina Saigol (2016), Nadeem Paracha (2013), and Ali Usman Qasmi (2014) have previously argued that Ahmadis have been historically positioned outside the imagined Muslim nation through constitutional exclusion and social ostracism. My analysis affirms these observations but adds empirical weight to them by showing how specific lexical choices, like "Qadiani," "enemy of Islam," "non-Muslim," or "fitna", are repeated in news coverage to reinforce this exclusion. This confirms that the media do not merely report societal bias; they actively reproduce it through naming, legitimization, and mythmaking, as Aho describes.

However, my study also complicates and extends the existing body of work in several important ways. Much of the previous literature tends to focus on legal frameworks, state legislation, or historical developments, treating media as a secondary site of representation. In contrast, my analysis places media discourse at the center, arguing that newspapers, especially in Urdu serve as an ideological battlefield where religious legitimacy and national belonging are actively negotiated. Unlike prior studies that often overlook the micro-level mechanisms of discursive construction, I conducted a line-by-line, code-based analysis using my own system of categories: labels, frames, narratives, facts, and representations of the Ahmadi perspective. This allowed me to uncover how even basic reporting on events like public speeches, or protest rallies is deeply saturated with ideological messaging that perpetuates the marginalization of the Ahmadis.

In addition, my findings introduce new dimensions that are largely absent from previous academic discussions. One of the most striking revelations was the economic logic of hate, a layer often ignored in more conventional studies of sectarianism. I found that hate speech against Ahmadis is often monetized. Clerics and religious organizations use dehumanizing rhetoric and enemy narratives to solicit financial donations from followers, fund conferences, sponsor educational programs, and justify the collection of "financial jihad." This instrumentalization of hatred transforms ideological bigotry into a revenue-generating strategy, turning enemy construction into an economically sustaining practice. Thus, the process is not only political or theological, but also material.

Moreover, my study uncovers how ritualistic discursive practices such as the repetition of dehumanizing phrases, symbolic calls to action, or vilification in news headlines contribute to what Aho describes as "sedimentation" and "ritual." The repetition of these discourses over time embeds them in the national psyche, until they become common sense. For instance, the labeling of Ahmadis as "traitors," "anti-Islam elements," or even "agents of foreign powers" shows how mythmaking merges with political paranoia. These symbolic codes are not randomly chosen; they are carefully selected to position Ahmadis as both a spiritual and national threat, thereby justifying continued surveillance, exclusion, and persecution.

My findings also point to the afterlife of the Two-Nation Theory in contemporary Pakistani media discourse. While the theory was initially formulated to differentiate Hindus from Muslims during the Partition, it now appears to have been reoriented inward. Today, it manifests in a binary of "true Muslims" versus "false Muslims," with Ahmadis and other minority sects cast as the internal 'Other.' This reactivation of foundational ideology serves a critical hegemonic function. It allows the dominant religious elite to maintain control by constantly

identifying and vilifying enemies within. The implication is clear: the post-colonial state continues to rely on the logic of exclusion to consolidate religious-political authority.

Although a relatively small detail, analyzing Ahmadiyya discourses both in Pakistani print media and in the community's own media reveals that exclusion is not only something imposed from the outside by mainstream Muslims, but it can also emerge from within the community itself. One striking example occurred during the election boycott, when Ahmadiyya media and community spokespeople explicitly stated that any Ahmadi who participated in voting would no longer be considered part of the community. The exact statement from the Ahmadiyya news report is:

"*The Ahmadiyya Spokesperson Amir Mahmood has stated that in view of the prevailing circumstances, it is not possible for Ahmadiyya Community to participate in the Elections therefore, the Ahmadiyya Community has decided to disassociate itself from the upcoming General Elections 2024 and separates itself from anyone claiming to represent the Community in these General Elections*" (POA3112024)

This response shows that mechanisms of control and boundary-making are not exclusive to the dominant majority. Even within a marginalized group, there are established rules and expectations, and those who challenge them may face internal othering. This internal policing of identity is a rarely discussed aspect of the Ahmadiyya experience, yet it reflects a broader dynamic where maintaining group cohesion sometimes comes at the cost of silencing or excluding dissenting voices.

Lastly, my study also offers original contributions to the academic field. For instance, my comprehensive coding scheme enabled me to draw a structured and nuance analysis of English and Urdu newspapers. Furthermore, my results shed lights on the interconnectedness of

discourses and its link to economics and ideology in constructing and maintaining the image of the Ahmadi as an enemy of the state and Islam.

In conclusion, my results sustain earlier arguments about marginalization but moves beyond them to reveal a intricate, multifaced process. The representation of Ahmadis is not a spontaneous outcome of sectarian bias, it is a deliberate, strategic, and profitable project sustained by hegemonic actors. Through discursive repetition, economic exploitation, and ideological framing, the media help sustain a system where hate is not only normalized but also incentivized. My research exposes how this enemy construction operates on linguistic, political, and material levels, ensuring that the exclusion of Ahmadis remains not just symbolically powerful, but socially and economically functional for those in power.

8. Conclusion

This study critically examined the representation of the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistani print media, focusing on the first half of 2024. Drawing on Critical Discourse Analysis and Aho's framework of enemy construction, I analyzed how labels, frames, narratives, and selective reporting of facts work together to construct Ahmadis as the internal 'Other'—a constructed enemy whose exclusion reinforces the ideological, political, and economic agendas of the hegemonic majority. By analyzing content from both Urdu and English newspapers, I was able to identify patterns of dehumanization, religious delegitimization, and symbolic violence. These patterns were not isolated incidents, but part of a broader discursive system designed to maintain dominance through religious gatekeeping and the reinforcement of national identity boundaries.

The findings reveal that the enemy construction of Ahmadis follows Aho's five-stage model with remarkable precision: the community is named using derogatory terms, legitimized as a threat through religious decrees and historical distortion, mythologized via unverified accusations, sedimented through constant repetition in media discourse, and ritualized through annual conferences, symbolic protests, and calls for legal action. Crucially, this system is not only ideological but also economic. Hate becomes a profitable enterprise fueling religious fundraising, recruitment, and institutional expansion within clerical circles. Thus, the representation of Ahmadis in media is not simply a byproduct of societal prejudice; it is a strategic mechanism of power consolidation.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that while the Two-Nation Theory historically targeted Hindus, it continues to shape the postcolonial imagination by constructing new internal threats. This ideological heritage has not faded with time, it has adapted. Today, it is Ahmadis who symbolizes the necessary 'other' against which religious unity and political legitimacy are defined and maintained. Media discourses thus become both a mirror and a tool of hegemonic power.

9. Limitations of the Study

While this study offers significant insights, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the analysis is limited to a six-month period (January–June 2024), which may not capture long-term discursive trends or exceptional events outside this timeframe. Extending the analysis across multiple years would offer a deeper understanding of how media narratives evolve over time.

Second, although both Urdu and English newspapers were included to allow for comparative insights, the majority of hate-laden rhetoric was found in Urdu media, limiting the scope of linguistic and narrative variation in English discourse. Future research could incorporate digital and broadcast media (such as television or social media), which may follow different rhetorical strategies or reach different audiences.

Third, my positionality as a member of the Ahmadiyya community, while acknowledged and ethically managed throughout, inevitably shapes my reading of the data. Despite taking active steps, such as peer consultation, academic review, and AI-assisted bias checks, subjectivity remains inherent in qualitative analysis. This limitation, however, is also a strength, as it allowed deeper cultural and contextual interpretation, which may have been inaccessible to an outsider.

Finally, the study focused only on media discourse, without integrating interviews or audience responses. The impact of this discourse on public perception, policymaking, or institutional behavior remains an important avenue for further inquiry.

10. Policy Implications

My finding concludes implication for minority rights, regulation of media and regulation of conferences and events. The result implies the urgent need for independent media regulations to prevent hate speech under any circumstances, either for religious purposes or for newsworthy purposes. Furthermore, there is a need for religious councils and press clubs to acknowledge their ethical responsibility of language, specifically for marginalized communities. There is urgent need for uncompromising enforcement of laws pertaining to hate speech and minority

rights must be enforced consistently and transparently. Additionally, the use of derogatory labels like “Qadiani” “Fitna” Dajjali” and “Cowards” should be condemned in official publications, backend by state government media houses, as it not only violates human rights, but also disrespects minorities and put their safety at risk.

Reforms in educational institutes and curriculum are also an urgent need, fostering critical thinking and tolerance should be given priority and encourage them to respect different views. The primary objective of educational institutions should be to combat false narratives and myths about minorities, which can prevent youth from being targeted by media later.

After my analysis of both English, Urdu and Ahmadiyya media, representation of minority perspectives in print media is needed and it should also give them security and needed protection to voice their opinions and perspectives without fear of consequences or hatred. During my research, I had to use VPN software to merely access the Ahmadiyya media sites to take news stories. Therefore, Ahmadiyya media, especially prosecution reports should be accessible for general public.

Last but not least, ethical reporting and religious sensitivity training for media professionals is a must. This is particularly important in the Urdu press, where most inflammatory content is found.

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