

Journalists' Perceptions of Peace in Sectarianism -Affected Areas of Pakistan

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Abstract

This research study is designed to understand the perception of the Journalists regarding creating peace in Sectarianism-affected Areas of Pakistan and what are the major factors that can influence the decision of the Public regarding Peace building and social cohesion in the community. This study uses a qualitative research design to analyse the research question. The scholar used in-depth interviews with journalists in the district Kurram (Mostly Sectarianism-affected Areas of Pakistan). A total of fifteen journalists were employed working for media (print, broadcast and online), primarily reporting the sectarian events along with other beats. The participants of the study were selected by purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Thematic Analysis was used to analyse the data, i.e., interviews with journalists. The data was examined through the lens of Kurt Lewin's conflict resolution theory, which provides valuable insights into understanding and addressing conflicts, including those related to sectarian violence. The findings show that journalists, media, religious and tribal leaders, government and youth have a key role in Peace building and social cohesion in society and it is also further added Education, training, seminars, workshops and the use of social media are also important for the peace process.

Keywords: Conflict, Media, Pakistan, Peace, Reporting, Sectarianism, War

Introduction

The Issue of sectarianism always boosts the bloody violence in Pakistan. The primary reason for this phenomenon is the strong belief held by individuals or groups in their religion or sect, which often leads to an intolerant attitude and feelings of disrespect towards other sects within the same society (Mehfooz & Parveen, 2021).

The sectarianism in Pakistan is a serious and deeply rooted issue that has had severe consequences for the country and its society. The historical divisions between religious communities, and socio-economic disparities, have triggered violence and extremism (Ali et al., 2015). To address the issue of sectarianism in Pakistan, a complete approach is required. Education that emphasizes tolerance and understanding among different religious groups should be included. Also the dialogue between religious leaders and communities is essential as it can be helpful bridging the divide and raise greater understanding. Political reform is also necessary to address the root causes of sectarianism, promoting equal representation and opportunities for all communities. Additionally, efforts should be made to limit external funding and influence on religious political parties to prevent further polarization and conflict (Bibi et al., 2023).

District Kurram, were one of Area which mostly affected by the sectarian violence in Pakistan and has a long history of sectarian animosities. Kurram, the newly merge district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has a border with North Waziristan, Hangu, Orakzai and Khyber, it also shares a border with Afghanistan. Sectarian conflicts have occurred in the Kurram region almost every five to ten years. Major conflicts have taken place in the Years 1961, 1971, 1987, 1996, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 (Khan et al., 2021).

The wave of sectarian violence in Kurram can be attributed to different local, national, and international factors. The local factors include a lack

of trust, the chanting of objectionable slogans during processions, the influence of extremist religious leaders, the fanaticism of the youth, the region's educational vulnerability, infiltration from neighbouring regions such as Orakzai, Khyber, and North Waziristan, and the availability of weapons (Khan et al., 2021). National factors contributing to the rise of extremism in Pakistan include Zia's Islamization, negligence of the government and Political Administration, and the presence of extremist organizations. International factors include the influx of Afghan refugees, the spread of Talibanization, the Islamic Revolution in Iran, and external patronage (Mishali-Ram, 2015).

Kurram was known as an Agency until 2018, after the 31st Amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan, the entire tribal belt was merged with the settled areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Geographically, it is bordered by Afghanistan on three sides to the northwest. It is important to note that while conflicts and differences may arise in Kurram, they are not solely based on religious or sectarian divisions. The majority of conflicts in the region are not based on religious or sectarian differences but rather on issues related to land and property disputes. These conflicts often connected from land and property disputes, highlighting the need for effective conflict resolution system and a fair distribution of resources.

The Journalists, Youth and Local heads play a crucial role in promoting understanding, handling misinformation, and preventing conflicts by providing accurate and unbiased information to the public. In this research, it is aimed to explore the perception of Journalists in promoting peace and bringing positive social change in conflict-affected areas specifically focusing on the district of Kurram.

Significance of the study

This study is designed to find out the perception of local journalists regarding peace in areas which are affected by sectarianism in Pakistan. This study can provide insights into the challenges faced by journalists reporting on the issue of sectarianism and can help identify ways to

promote peace in the affected areas. The study aims to present a neutral and unbiased analysis of the journalists' perceptions and does not take any side or promote any particular ideology.

This study is important for several reasons. First, sectarianism is a significant issue in Pakistan, and it is the reason of social and political instability in the country. Second, journalists are key players in a way they report on this issue and shape public opinion. Therefore, understanding the journalists' perceptions regarding peace in sectarianism-affected areas is important for identifying effective strategies to promote peace and stability in these regions.

Objectives of the Study

- To investigate the perception of journalists regarding peace in sectarianism effected areas in Pakistan.
- To identify different ways of promoting peace in affected areas on the basis of journalists' perceptions.

Research Questions

RQ1. What is the perception of journalists regarding peace in areas which affected by sectarianism in Pakistan?

RQ2. What strategies can be adopted to promote peace in these areas, based on the journalists' perceptions?

RQ3. How can the media play a more effective role in promoting peace in sectarianism-affected areas of Pakistan?

Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

Kurt Lewin's conflict resolution theory provides valuable insights into understanding and addressing conflicts (Wani, 2011). While the provided sources do not specifically mention Lewin's theory in the context of sectarian violence but his work on conflict resolution can be applied to the crises and conflicts of sectarianism. Lewin believed that resolving social conflicts, regardless of their nature, is crucial (Allen, 2024). Additionally, Lewin's field theory emphasized the importance of boundaries in conflict

resolution, suggesting that conflicts can be temporarily resolved by changing the boundaries around them (Rachmatinna, 2022).

This concept aims to identify and address the root causes of conflict and promotes peaceful relationship among diverse groups within the society. It also examines how journalists can contribute to conflict resolution efforts by providing accurate and unbiased reporting, encouraging and facilitating dialogue, and promoting understanding among different sectarian groups (Colucci, 2024).

Wani (2011) also followed the “Conflict Resolution Theory” to understand and address the underlying sources of conflicts and promote peaceful living among diverse groups. According to the theory conflicts arise due to various factors such as power imbalances, lack of resources, identity differences, and past conflicts. Following this framework, journalists can play a crucial role in conflict resolution as they have the power to shape public perceptions and attitudes through their reporting and storytelling. By providing accurate and balanced reporting, journalists can help to create a more nuanced understanding of the conflict and its complexities (Nisa & A’yuni, 2024). The Journalists can also foster dialogue and promote understanding among different sectarian groups. They can provide platforms for diverse voices to be heard that can highlight a more inclusive and comprehensive understanding of the conflict.

This Theory emphasizes the importance of unbiased and neutral reporting. Journalists should be encouraged to critically analyse the main causes of conflicts, challenge prevailing narratives, and offer alternative angles and viewpoints. In this way, they can break the cycle of violence and promote peaceful resolutions.

The theory recognizes the influential role of journalism in shaping public opinion and the narrative regarding conflicts. By providing accurate information, unbiased reporting, encouraging dialogue, and promoting understanding, journalists can contribute to conflict resolution efforts and

help to develop peaceful coexistence among diverse groups living in sectarianism-affected areas.

Methodology

The researcher used a qualitative research design in this study, following the thematic analysis to find out the Perception of local journalists regarding peace in sectarianism-affected areas (Kurram). Qualitative research allows scholars to do detailed and wider research and to have a better understanding of the problem under investigation (Braun & Clarke, 2014).

Data Source

To find out the perception of journalists about peace, the researcher used in-depth interviews with journalists in Kurram districts. It is divided into three sub-divisions Lower, Upper and Central Kurram, each has a Press Club. Those journalists were selected for interviews who primarily reported the Sectarian violence and conflicts, secondly have registered with those press clubs.

Sampling

The purposive sampling technique was used to recruit respondents as developed by Privitera (2013). The purpose of the study was explained to the eligible respondents, and their consent was taken. The data collected for this study consisted of semi-structured interviews with 15 journalists, working with media organizations (print, broadcast and online) for Kurram, those journalists also registered with any Press clubs (Upper, Lower and central Kurram). The data was collected in spring 2023 (January to March 2023). The interviews were conducted in person in the local language (Pashto) and later translated into the English language. The names of the Journalists were anonymized and given identification codes like Participant 1, Participant 2, etc.

Analysis of the Data

The research used qualitative methods in this study. All the interviews were analysed by using the Thematic Analysis method. It is a deductive method that involves identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns or themes in qualitative data (Braun et al., 2014). The analysis is primarily conducted at the semantic level where themes are identified based on the explicit meaning of the data driven by the researcher's theoretical and analytic interests. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that the analytic process involves a progression from description to interpretation.

The transcribed interviews were transferred to NVivo-10 (Software). The researcher followed the steps for analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2014). The process involved reading the transcriptions several times and making initial notes. Then, interesting parts of the data were systematically coded and combined into themes. The themes were rechecked and a map of themes was created. Finally, the themes were clearly defined and refined in comparison to the overall story the data tells. The last step was to analyse and relate the themes to the study's research questions, and theoretical framework, and literature review.

Results

The following major themes were identified in the analysis of the Interviews of the Journalists working in Kurram.

1. Role of Journalists and media in the peace process

Journalists have a very important role in resolving conflicts and promoting peace. They have the responsibility to gather accurate information and present it to the public, helping to counter misinformation and prevent potential conflicts (Khan et al., 2019).

By providing a balanced and comprehensive view of the issues, journalists can contribute to positive social change and peace building. However, journalists need to use their platform responsibly and avoid biased reporting that may fuel conflicts (Shah et al., 2020). Their focus should be on promoting development, understanding, and showcasing the positive aspects of different communities and regions. Through their work, journalists can help bridge gaps, change perceptions, and promote peace among diverse groups of people. Participant 2, shared his opinion regarding the role of Journalists, "Journalists have played their positive role to reflect each shadowy side of the scene to calm down the incited public for expected violence and conflict."

Participant 1, who has 20 years of experience with international media organizations, further shared that as a journalist, we are trying to share information News and information regarding events, festivals, agriculture, and other activities to the people in a more positive way to change their pre-conceived thoughts and perception.

The role of journalists in shaping public opinion is significant, and they have a crucial responsibility to report the truth in a fair and unbiased manner while ensuring that diverse voices are heard (McCombs, 2002). As gatekeepers, they have the power to determine which issues receive attention and which ones do not.

Participant 7 agreed and pointed out that media organizations at the national level did not fulfil the responsibility for peace, "Journalists and Media outlets play a key role in determining which narratives become dominant in their society. Unfortunately, these often do not play a positive role in the case of conflict-related issues."

Mostly the local Journalists present different stories of their choice either consciously or unconsciously and also how to frame those stories (Ullah & Jan, 2021). They shape reality by interpreting events, morally evaluating the situation, and guiding their audience towards certain explanations.

Participant 5 had the opinion that journalists need positive news and encounter misinformation which leads to conflict in the area. "Journalists have the responsibility to gather accurate information and present it to the public, helping to counter misinformation and prevent potential conflicts."

Participant 13 agreed with Participant 5 that local journalists and media personnel in Kurram significantly contributed to peace building, but they often avoided disclosing facts due to potential extremism threats, which were ignored at local, national, and international levels.

In fact, the media persons/journalists must play a constructive role that leads to prosperity, development and peacebuilding in the region. Every journalist and media professional has undergone a procedure and is well-versed in the rules and regulations governing each news story and report. Unfortunately, sometimes the users of social media share news (disinformation) for their interest about disputes/conflicts resulting in unrest among the general population.

Participant 14 added that journalists in the region engage in constructive journalism and share information that promotes regional harmony, integration and peace. On the other side some users disseminate disinformation for their interest about disputes/ conflicts, which is consequent in unrest among public. Journalist should engage in positive journalism and should be discussed development and stabilization of the peace in the region.

Participant 11 has an opinion that journalists need to reduce the tension in society. "We must focus on minimizing the differences and hostility among people and bringing attention to the social problems that exist in the region, such as widows, orphans, and educational problems, etc."

2. Religious and tribal Leaders' role in the Peace Process

Local and religious leaders play a key role in maintaining peace and resolving conflicts in the Sectarianism-affected Areas (Kurram district). Their experience and social power within the community make them respected and influential figures. They actively support initiatives for peace and development, and their guidance is valued by the younger generation. Their involvement in programs and gatherings helps address local issues and advocate for better healthcare, education, and overall development in the area.

Participant 13 further added, "Local elders and religious leaders have always been instrumental in promoting peace and resolving conflicts in Kurram. Their wisdom and experience make them respected figures within the community."

In the Pashtun society, the local tribal elder is a highly respected person who exercises power in determining the community's direction. They are a key player in the decision-making process, and their opinions carry significant weight in matters that affect society's welfare. Participant 2 shared his opinion and stated, "The guidance and support of our local elders and religious leaders have played a crucial role in fostering peace and development in our district. Their influence and knowledge have helped bridge gaps and address issues effectively."

Participant 7 agreed with Participant 2 and added more "Since early childhood, we see that elders play their role in the same context for the establishment of peace in society. The happening of conflicting scenarios (crises) is attached to human life. During a state of crisis, whether you face domestic issues communal property issues or any other, it is imperative for a person to tolerate it with an open heart, and never lose temper. So, local elders have always played the same role in our society to maintain peace and calmness."

Besides the elder leader, the religious leader has a key role in the decision-making process in Pashtun society. Participant 11 added, "Alhamdulillah,

Ullama (religious leader) so far supported the narrative of peace and development and that's the reason that due to their leading role, from the last few years we are witnessing peace in district Kurram."

Participant 9 further added "Furthermore, I will say that we are all the same Kurmiwaal (people of Kurram), we believe in the same religion and our religion Islam has been contained in different".

The elderly and religious leaders always interest in peace, and also demand health facilities, development and education in Society.

Participant 6 shared his opinion and stated

In Kurram, at this point, so many different programs and gatherings were held relevant to local issues, either hosted by the district administration, tehsil administration, and other governmental and non-governmental organizations. In all these programs, the elders always demanded for health facilities, educational facilities, and overall development of the area.

3. Role of the Government

Governments have the responsibility to identify and direct national and local priorities for sustaining peace through inclusive development and peace building (Gledhill et al., 2021). Conflicts can greatly impede good governance. Governance plays a crucial role in either creating or resolving conflicts. Governments can make significant contributions towards peace by fulfilling their responsibility of managing the country's budget and overseeing overseas development assistance (ODA) (Dawar, 2023).

Participant 4, working with the National level Newspaper added, "The government should resolve conflicts in Kurram valley based on merit and proper records. The community needs education, development, and peace.

The Government should collaborate with other social sector organizations to achieve better results.”

Participant 6 further added that, “Conflict resolution requires everyone's involvement, but the government has the primary responsibility in District Kurram. The revenue office can assign land to actual owners, and the council of elders can help with reconciliation through dialogue.”

Participant 9, had the opinion that the Government take all the decisions on merit, it will bring peace in the area, “then government to instruct the local administration to do each decision on merit, decide any matter of property through the proper record and actual ownership as per the share in the property. The administration needs to become active and vigilant; the elders of the area are already active to minimize these issues.”

Participant 4, is worried about their children and their education, and he shared his opinion.

Enough is enough, now we want our children to go to schools, we need development, we need education. Further, we don't need wars and conflicts any more, we hate wars and conflicts. Kurram Valley is a place of education and learning. We had produced good officers, doctors, engineers and foreign immigrants. We must be identified with these positive things contrary to the negative ones because we want to live with peace and tolerance.

Participant 1 suggested that the government should invalidate different stakeholders in the peace process, particularly in lower Kurram where land ownership is based on registered records. In central Kurram, revenue records are outdated, and land is handled by tribal customs. The council of

elders can still play a role in reconciliation and conflict resolution, as any issue can be resolved through dialogue.

Lack of information and knowledge is one of the reasons for the conflicts while sharing basic information about the issue resolves many problems. Participant 15 further added.

The main reason behind all conflicts is lack of awareness. Conflict is the two opposite opinions because every individual mindset is different. The important thing is bringing change in the mindset. So, this can be handled through compromise and accommodation. Sudden reaction shall be avoided rather he/she shall go for patience. Conflict is the result of mental disagreement which resultantly becomes violent. All the stakeholders including elders, Ullama, women and youngsters took part in bringing peace to the region.

4. The role of youth in Promoting Peace

Pakistan has the fifth largest young population in the world, according to the UN Population Report. About 63% of the country's population is comprised of youth aged between 15 to 33 years old, as stated by the UN Population Fund Report 2017 and Growing Population of Pakistani Youth (Saeed & Ullah, 2021). The majority of Pakistani youth actively use social media, and as of January 2023, there were 71.70 million social media users in Pakistan, which accounts for 30.1% of the total population of 238.1 million. Out of these social media users, 73% are male and 27% are female.

The youth can utilize social media platforms to propagate messages of peace, tolerance, and understanding, and these efforts have contributed to

minimizing the intensity of conflicts and potential damages. Participant 3 further added, "In the hands of youth lies the weapon of social media, which they can use to ensure peace and bring positive social change in their communities."

Participant 7 advised that youth can stay away from local and religious conflicts, he stated, "The role of youth is crystal clear across the globe and is important, but I would suggest that youth should stay away from religious conflicts and the spread of religious intolerance."

Religious intolerance is also promoted by using social media, to share the positive side, share videos and audio of positive people. Participant 8 further added, "Youth should eliminate linguistic, racial, and religious differences and become normal human beings, giving importance to merit, education, and peace."

Youth also promote peace by sharing beautiful images of the mountains, life, culture and stories of the people who love peace and development. Participant 3 further added, "Youth hold the power of social media to project a positive image of their village, area, customs, and culture, changing prevailing negativity and paving the way for peace, development, and prosperity."

5. Role of social media

Social media can be unreliable as a source of news and information. It is recommended to rely on credible media sources instead (Ullah et al., 2020). False news about Kurram can cause frustration and hurt feelings among those who rely on remittances from family members working abroad. Different workshops and training events have enhanced the understanding and abilities of individuals in mass communication media, promoting social cohesion and peace in the region, participant 8 recommended that organizations promoting media should consider social media engagement, involving activists from each region. However, social media users' unique content can be inaccurate and based on personal

opinions. The general public should not trust personal accounts or pages based on religion, sects, or regional differences, as they can lead to extremism. Instead, trust media persons and channels for authentic information and avoid social media pages.

Foreign remittances are one of the key sources of income in the northwest of Pakistan. In the Kurram most of the people working in the Gulf country own their livelihood. So negative and fake news is shared on social media, making wire about their family, participant 3 has opinion that foreign remittances are crucial for our livelihood, but false information about Kurram causes frustration among emigrants, causing unrest and a gap in relationships.

6. Role of Education in Peacebuilding

The lack of education is one of the reasons for the involvement of people in violence, conflict and terrorist activities (Ullah & Khan, 2017). Education can help develop interfaith harmony, religious tolerance, and employment opportunities in the region. Participant 5 has a master's degree in Journalism and added, "Education is the key to development and peace. Without access to quality education, youth in conflict-affected areas are more vulnerable to engaging in violence and conflict activities."

The lack of basic infrastructure and educational opportunities in conflict-affected regions are key factors in the lack of educational institutions, schools, and colleges in the Northwest of Pakistan. Participant 6 further added that.

The cycle of under-development caused by the absence of basic infrastructure and educational opportunities hampers the potential for peace and prosperity. Peace is not just connected to education, but rather, peace is essential for education, life, prosperity, interfaith harmony, religious tolerance, and employment.

7. Training, seminars and workshops

The different training, workshops, and seminars have played an important role in promoting tolerance, understanding, and harmony among participants. Those events brought together different groups of people, including Journalists, elders, local community leaders, individuals and scholars from different backgrounds, to involve in dialogue and discussion. The participants share their perceptions, ideologies, and misconceptions and build connections, and stand-in a sense of unity and brotherhood.

Different organizations (National and international) organized training and workshops, focused on Peace, tolerance and brotherhood (Rahman & Jan, 2021). In addition to promoting dialogue and understanding, these training programs have also addressed the socioeconomic needs of the community. The developmental projects, such as construction work and the establishment of embroidery and handicraft centres for women. By addressing both the physical and psychological needs of the community, these initiatives have had a positive impact on the overall well-being and resilience of the people.

Participant 1 added more,

The workshops, seminars and training have been established to be a transformative experience for individuals in conflict-affected areas. It has not only provided them with valuable knowledge and skills but has also fostered a sense of unity, understanding, and hope for a better future. The continued support and engagement of organizations are crucial in sustaining these efforts and promoting long-term peace and development in the region.

Participant 12, Abdul Khaliq Pathan shared his experience regarding different training and stated

Through the training on tolerance organized by different NGOs, we were able to challenge our defined notions and develop a deeper understanding of each other's perspectives. It was a transformative experience that has positively impacted our relationships and interactions within the community.

Workshop and training for different stacks are always helpful in understanding the peace process Participant 8, Mr, Ramzan Ali Paracha added.

The workshops and training programs facilitated by NGOs and the Government have been instrumental in promoting religious harmony in our area. By bringing together scholars, community leaders, and individuals from diverse backgrounds, we have been able to engage in meaningful dialogue and build connections based on mutual respect and understanding.

Some of the training and workshops not only provided us with valuable knowledge but also created a space for open and friendly interaction. It helped us break down barriers and build lasting relationships, ultimately promoting a sense of unity and harmony among participants.

Conclusion and Discussion

This study was designed to better understand the perception of journalists regarding the issue of sectarianism in Pakistan, with a specific focus on the district of Kurram. There are many factors which influence the issue of sectarianism and district Kurram one of the most sectarian effect areas of Pakistan, where both Suni and Ahl e Tashi communities live together. The data was collected from the 15 Journalists registered within the Upper, Lower and Central Kurram Press Club. The qualitative research design used thematic analysis to understand journalists regarding sectarian issues and to identify ways to promote peace in these areas based on journalists' perceptions. The data was collected from the 15 Journalists registered within the Upper, Lower and Central Kurram Press Club.

The paper highlights the multi-faceted approach needed to address sectarianism, including education, dialogue, and political reform. In the district Kurram, the role of Journalists, religious and tribal leaders, youth and government is very important. The role of journalists and media play an important role in resolving conflicts and promoting peace. They are responsible for gathering accurate information and presenting it to the public, helping to avoid misinformation and prevent potential problems. By providing a balanced and comprehensive view of an issue, journalists can contribute to positive social change and peace-building. However, journalists need to use their platforms appropriately and avoid biased reporting that could fuel controversy. Their focus is to enhance development, understanding and highlighting the positive aspects of various communities and regions.

In the tribal built (broader area with Afghanistan), The local tribe and religious leaders are highly respected and have the authority to determine the direction of society (Baber & Ullah, 2020). Their guidance and support play an important role in promoting peace and development in our region. Their influence and knowledge have helped to transform opportunities and solve problems. Elders and religious leaders continue to focus on peace and also call for cleaning, development and education in the community.

All the Journalists agreed that education can help to develop interfaith unity, religious tolerance, and job opportunities in the region. Without access to quality education, young people in conflict-affected areas are more likely to become involved in violence and conflict (mofept, 2021). The lack of basic infrastructure and educational opportunities in war-affected areas is a major reason for the lack of educational institutions, schools and colleges in western Pakistan. Training, seminars and workshops also increase tolerance, understanding and unity among communities in conflict-affected areas. These events bring together different groups, including academics, community leaders, and people from different backgrounds, to discuss and exchange ideas.

Majority of the Journalists have the opinion that It is the responsibility of governments to promote development and peace-building in a focused and coordinated manner and to identify, encourage and guide national and regional priorities, strategies and actions to keep the peace (Khan et al., 2019). The government should collaborate with other social sector organizations to achieve better results. The government will order local governments to make all decisions based on merit and determine property issues with proper records and ownership of each Property.

The lack of information and knowledge is one of the causes of conflict, and sharing basic information about an issue can solve many problems. The role of social media cannot be relied upon as a source of news and information. The fake news about Kurram will cause trouble and hurt the feelings of those who depend on remittances from their families working abroad.

Theoretical contributions

The study using Kurt Lewin's conflict resolution theory focuses on identifying and addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting peaceful coexistence among diverse groups and encourage journalists to provide accurate and unbiased information through reporting and storytelling that have the power to shape public perceptions and attitudes

(Akram & Wahid, 2021). By highlighting common ground and potential areas of cooperation, journalists can foster empathy and reconciliation. This study also highlights the need for sustained efforts in conflict resolution, encouraging journalists to play a role in monitoring and reporting on the progress of peace building initiatives.

Limitations of the Study

In this study the researcher used purposive sampling technique to select participants. However, it's important to note that the findings of this study are limited in their applicability to a wider population due to the specific selection of participants. Another limitation of this research is that it only focuses on the perceptions of journalists regarding peace in Sectarianism-affected Areas, without examining the media content. Additionally, the study utilized in-depth interviews, and it should be noted that the researcher acted as an interpreter of the data provided. While the researcher accurately presented the words of the participants, the meaning behind those words may not always be fully understood.

Future Research

This research study looked at the perception of the journalists in district Kurram. Future research should expand the study to other areas and also analyse media contents. To do so, future researchers should collect data from editors and media owners about violent events.

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