

## **Analysis of Pakistani and Indian Media towards Warfare: Case Study of Pulwama Attack & Balakot Airstrike**

**Mr. Muhammad Husnain**

Lecturer, Department of Media & Communication, UMT Sialkot  
muhammad.husnain@skt.umt.edu.pk

**Mr. Muhammad Mateen**

Phd Fellow (Area Study Centre, Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad)  
Lecturer, Department of International Relations, UMT Sialkot  
muhammad.mateen@skt.umt.edu.pk

**Ms. Asia Maqsood**

Lecturer, Department of International Relations, UMT Sialkot  
asia.maqsood@skt.umt.edu.pk

### **Abstract:**

This research is conducted to analyze the behavior of Pakistan and Indian media's role towards warfare between both countries. We took Pulwama attack, Balakot airstrike and fighter jets shot down as a case study, and widely studied the claims made by both countries. We also included the stance of BBC news on this issue. In this paper, the authors conducted research on fake or true news being broadcasted from 14<sup>th</sup> February 2019 to 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 by India and Pakistani news channels, and categorized this news being source of warfare between both countries. However, we have limited our research to only two famous TV channels of India named as AajTak news and India Today, and from Pakistan we picked Geo news and ARY news. Indian TV channel AajTak aired more than 450 news and almost 40 special programs, while India Today aired 154 news and 30 special programs. On the other hand, Pakistan's Geo News broadcasted total 122 news and 5 programs while ARY news aired 137 news and 4 programs on this issue. Based on our collected data we categorized the news of all four channels as fact-less, fact-based content and supported, not supported content towards warfare between both countries. According to our conducted hypothesis results more than 80 % content of Indian channels was fact-less and 20 % content was fact-based. While Pakistani media broadcasted 90 % fact based content and 10 % fact-less. We also concluded that 90 % Indian media content weather fact-less or fact-based was aired in a way that supported warfare among both nations and 70 % of Pakistani media content ,despite being fact based ,has also supported warfare .

**Key Words:** Pakistani Media, Indian Media, Warfare, TV Channels, Analysis

### **Introduction:**

## Analysis of Pakistani and Indian Media towards Warfare: Case Study of Pulwama Attack & Balakot Airstrike

In the circumstances of warfare, the use of information through media and communication channels has been a role of central importance to the public, governments, agencies, and social media specialists. The information broadcasted during warfare scenarios through media either in an offensive or defensive way has great impact on the relations between communities. However the information warfare through media is constantly spreading its roots in new dimensions, by incorporating the battle of brains vs. brawn. So the media today consistently plays its role to conduct a war of nerves between governments, military forces, and masses. Pakistan and India media had been indulged in a constant warfare since their independent existence. Both countries share constant threats on the issue of water resources, and Kashmir dispute from last many years. Indian media along with close cooperation of foreign actors builds propaganda to target the stability of Pakistan's armed forces, intelligence agencies and the country's economic stability, in general.

In this work, we particularly focus on the post-pulwama attacks period of cold war between India and Pakistan. The Balakot airstrike was conducted on 26<sup>th</sup> feb, 2019, when indian warplanes entered in the vicinity of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan, and dropped their payloads in an uninhabited hilltop area. Later, indian media claimed that airstrike was an attack against the deadliest jihadis organization Jaish-e-Mohammad and blamed Pakistan to be responsible of this suicide bomber attack on indian CRPF personnel in the Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir. The Pulwama attack on 14<sup>th</sup> feb, 2019 killed 40 indian security personnel and generated a severe tension between both countries, however, Pakistan denied taking responsibility of this attack and offered to conduct joint investigation. On 27<sup>th</sup> feb, 2019, Pakistan in retaliation to Balakot airstrike, shot down two indian fighter jet and caught their pilot 'Abhinandan Varthaman' as a prisoner. Again indian media claimed without any proofs that Indian air force has also shot down one F-16, fighter jet of Pakistan. After Balakot airstrikes the confusing claims about the military actions of both countries remained a huge source of warfare and hatred among both nations, across all digital media and social media platforms. Besides these two countries were sharing serious strain, the growth of political fears among people as a result of fake news on Balakot airstrike has caused a drastic psychological change across both sides of the border.

Pakistani media started broadcasting most of the content after 27<sup>th</sup> feb, 2019, with proofs of Balakot land and Abhinandan statements, in reaction to the indian media fake news. When Pakistan provided proofs against fake news of indian media and the hate it was spreading that caused proper fight between people of both nations on social media. After the initiative steps of warfare from india, Pakistan also requested international troops to visit and clarify about fake claims of indian media about destroying Madrasa in Pakistan. We covered the critical review of BBC news on 'doubts of false claims of indian media', and also the report on the release of Abhinandan as a 'gesture of peace from Pakistan', on 2<sup>nd</sup> march, 2019.

Indian media violated the code of ethics in journalism by broadcasting baseless, fake, and incredible information. This media broadcasting caused negativity both nations. We have categorized our study into two major categories, one is fact-based news vs. fact-less news and the other is supported vs. un-supported content about warfare.

Media content, be it social media or broadcast media, acts as a powerhouse to spread information. This information necessarily turns out to be very critical when it involves warfare information about military forces. Information warfare is the new form of warfare that can control the cultural, social and ideological values of a society. Information warfare through media does not only focus on generating news of their

own interest, but it also simultaneously works upon criticizing and preventing your competitors to perform certain actions.

One of the major disadvantage of media warfare has turned out a total change in cultural identity, ideology, economy, and sovereignty.

**Problem Statement:**

This work covers a study of relationship between Pakistan and India media's content on the issue of Balakot airstrikes in Pakistan, and retaliation from Pakistan. This research work focuses to explore the role of media towards warfare based upon the broadcasted content from two Pakistan media channels ARY News, and Geo News, and India media channels Aajtak News and India Today. To evaluate the nature, degree, frequency and stance of the aired media content by these news channels, the variables and categories are made by focusing on main hypothesis of one feature of the agenda setting theory known as "framing".

**Objectives:**

To explore the role of media towards warfare

To find out the positive or negative portrayal of actions of military forces by Pakistan and India media during Balakot airstrikes 2019

To analyze the starring role of media during such conflicts

To statistically analyze the credibility of broadcasted content from selected channels

**Limitation of Research:**

As mentioned in the problem statement, this work is an analysis of the aired media content in Geo News, and ARY News from Pakistan, and Aajtak News, and India today from India

The focus of this analysis is restricted to aired news of all four channels from 14<sup>th</sup> february 2019, to 5<sup>th</sup> march 2019 about Balakot airstrikes.

**Literature Review:**

There had been many latest studies on the role of war and peace journalism between Pakistan and India. Particularly on the issue of Pulwama attack and Balakot airstrikes include the intrusion of many western countries. The Balakot airstrikes root back to the unrest in south Kashmir when a militant commander 'Burhan Wani' was shot dead by indian army [1]. Then on September 18, 2016, an attack on Uri army base in Indian-occupied-Kashmir was held, causing the death of 19 indian soldiers. The indian forces held Jaish-e-Mohammed responsible for the attack, by blaming Pakistan [2]. Pakistan however denied to take the responsibility. After that, within two weeks indian media claimed to have surgical strikes along line of control in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir [3], however Pakistan rejected any such claims.

Next, on February 14, 2019, a home-grown suicide bomber in in Pulwama district attacked a convoy of vehicles carrying security personnel in Indian-occupied-Kashmir. The pulwama attack caused 40 indian military officers death and again the story repeated itself [4]. India claimed Jaish-e-Mohammad responsible for this attack and Pakistan denied any links to this event. India then threatened Pakistan to attack Jaish-e-

## Analysis of Pakistani and Indian Media towards Warfare: Case Study of Pulwama Attack & Balakot Airstrike

Mohammad in retaliation and launched Balakot airstrikes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan on February 26, 2019. The Indian media reported to have severe loss of casualties in Pakistan, and claimed that they destroyed a militant base and took 300 lives along with it [5]. However, on the other side, Pakistan rejected all such claims of India, and showed with proofs that Indian militants only dropped their payloads in an empty hillside [6, 7]. The next morning, Pakistan and Indian media were caught in a dogfight about warplanes attacks and airstrikes. Pakistan also claimed to have Indian military commander 'Ahinandan' under arrest [8], and showed a video clip of the commander showing his identity in front of Pakistani military forces [9, 10]. On March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019, Pakistan returned Indian commander at Wahga border as a gesture of peace [11]. This has happened, for the very first time, in the history of Pakistan and India that two nuclear-powers held airstrikes against each other. This event caused extreme friction, strain and hysteria in both sides of the nations and led both countries to the edge of nuclear war.

### **Research Methodology:**

#### **Population**

The population is divided into two main groups. One group contains information from Pakistani news channels and the other group contains information from Indian news channels. The population is made up of all broadcasted news that had been a part of these news channels in the specified time.

#### **Sampling Size:**

It is the count of all broadcasted news that cover Balakot airstrikes 2019, and retaliation from Pakistan. Each channel has broadcasted different number of news and special program in different ways and those news had quantitatively been a part of this research work for sound statistical analysis.

#### **Sampling Technique:**

In this research we applied purposive technique

#### **Data Collection:**

For content analysis on Pak-India Balakot warfare, two national TV channels (Geo news and ARY news) from Pakistan and two national TV channels (Aajtak news and India Today) from India are selected.

#### **Categories of Construction:**

- 1) Special programs
- 2) Broadcasted news

Category 1) includes the special aired programs that particularly focused on the background of Balakot airstrikes, the Balakot airstrikes, or the retaliation from Pakistan.

Category 2) includes all broadcasted news about the certain case study on the specified news channels during the specified time.

#### **Operationalize:**

**Fact-less news:** are those broadcasts which do not involve any visual or documentary proof, and mostly based upon rumors.

**Fact-based news:** include any documentary or visual proof of the sight along with the news being aired.

**Supported news towards warfare:** includes supported content that caused a cold-war between nations on social or any digital media.

**Un-supported content towards warfare:** Any neutral content that do not cause warfare between common people and military.

### **Data Analysis:**

This study considered all special programs and aired news related to our case study of Balakot airstrikes in Pakistani and Indian media channels. We analyzed the aims of broadcasting media channels and the message they tried to convey through media warfare. The data is analyzed under the umbrella of framing theory. This research does content analysis and use quantitative and statistical techniques to analyze the data.

### **Data Presentation:**

In this research the data is presented in tables, graphs, and inferential statistics.

### **Research Questions:**

- 1) How much total coverage is given to Pak-India Balakot warfare in all four TV news channels from 14<sup>th</sup> feb, to 5<sup>th</sup> march, 2019?
- 2) How Pakistan media treated Pak-India Balakot warfare issue?
- 3) How India media treated Pak-India Balakot warfare issue?
- 4) How BBC news treated Pak-India Balakot warfare issue?

### **Research Hypothesis:**

- 1) It is more likely that India media broadcasted fact-less content regarding balakot and f-16 shot down compared to fact-based content.
- 2) It is more likely that Pakistan media broadcasted fact-based content compared to fact-less content.
- 3) It is more likely that Pakistan media created an environment of warfare by broadcasting supported content towards warfare compared to un-supported content towards warfare.
- 4) It is more likely that India media created an environment of warfare by broadcasting supported content towards warfare compared to un-supported content towards warfare.

### **Methodology:**

This study conducts statistical and content analysis methods to get to know the effects of broadcasted news by Pakistani and Indian media i.e. ARY News, Geo News, and Aajtak News, India Today.

### **Theoretical framework:**

This study is closely linked with framing theory. According to framing theory media always highlight international issue like Pak-India warfare according to their own interest, desire and policy. So, in this study the researchers used Framing Theory. This theory is very helpful to analyze the content for this research.

### **Research Method:**

## Analysis of Pakistani and Indian Media towards Warfare: Case Study of Pulwama Attack & Balakot Airstrike

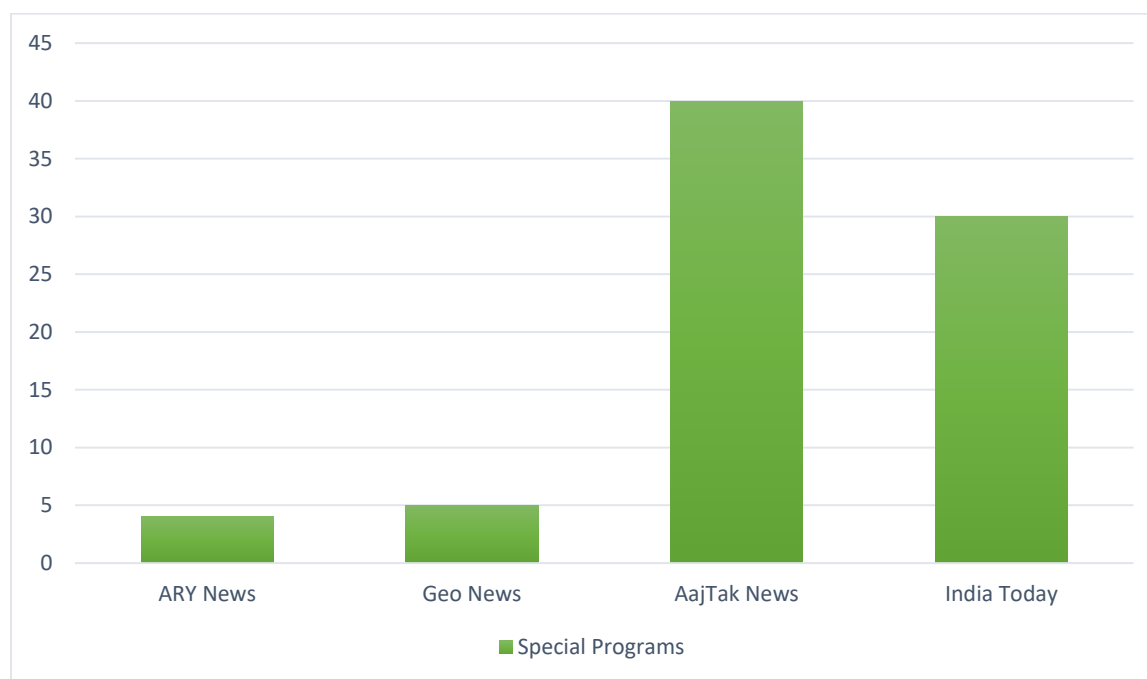
In this study content analysis method was used. The data was collected and analyzed by using quantitative techniques. For this purpose four leading news channels ARY News, Geo News, AajTak News, and India Today were selected to obtain the content. The reason of selecting these four news channels is the information from these channels is considered credible by both countries, and people mostly follow these channels to get updates. These news channels are found very famous across both nations also, and play a vital role through social media.

### Findings:

#### Data Analysis

**Table1: Total news coverage of Pak-India Balakot warfare (feb 14<sup>th</sup> to march 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019)**

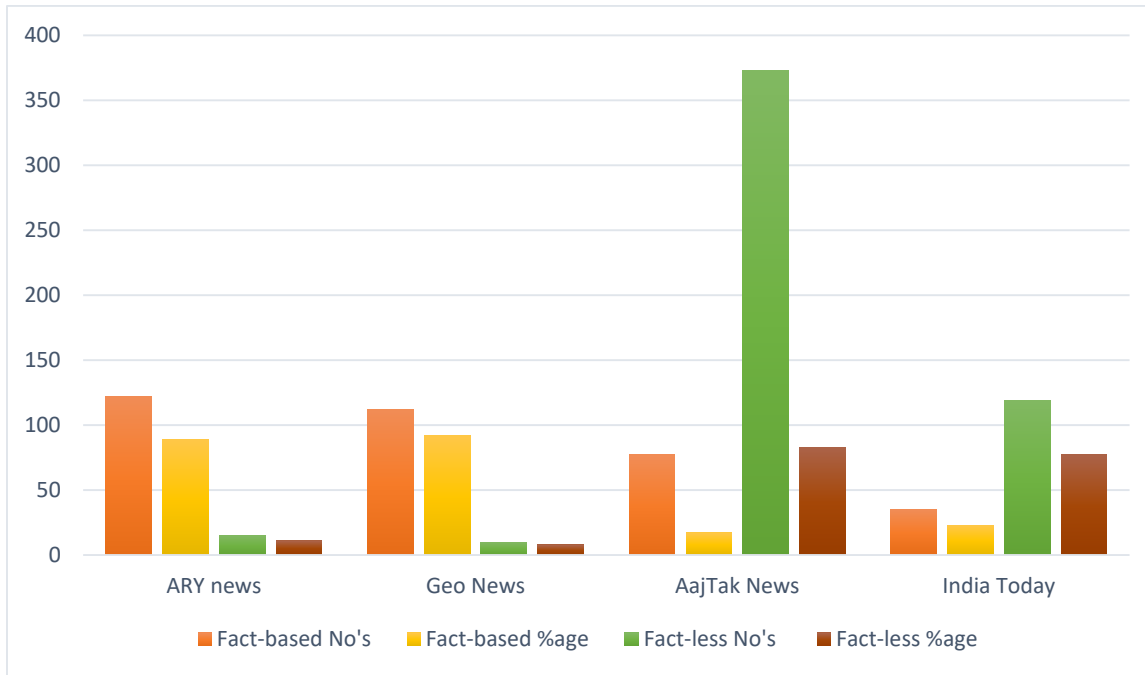
| TV Channel  | Special Programs | Aired News |
|-------------|------------------|------------|
| Geo News    | 5                | 122        |
| ARY News    | 4                | 137        |
| AajTak News | 40               | 450        |
| India Today | 30               | 154        |
|             |                  |            |



**Table2: Comparison of Aired News on the issue of the reflection of Balakot warfare**

| TV Channel  | Fact-based News |    | Fact-less News |    |
|-------------|-----------------|----|----------------|----|
|             | No's.           | %  | No's.          | %  |
| Geo News    | 112             | 92 | 10             | 8  |
| ARY News    | 122             | 89 | 15             | 11 |
| AajTak News | 77              | 17 | 373            | 83 |

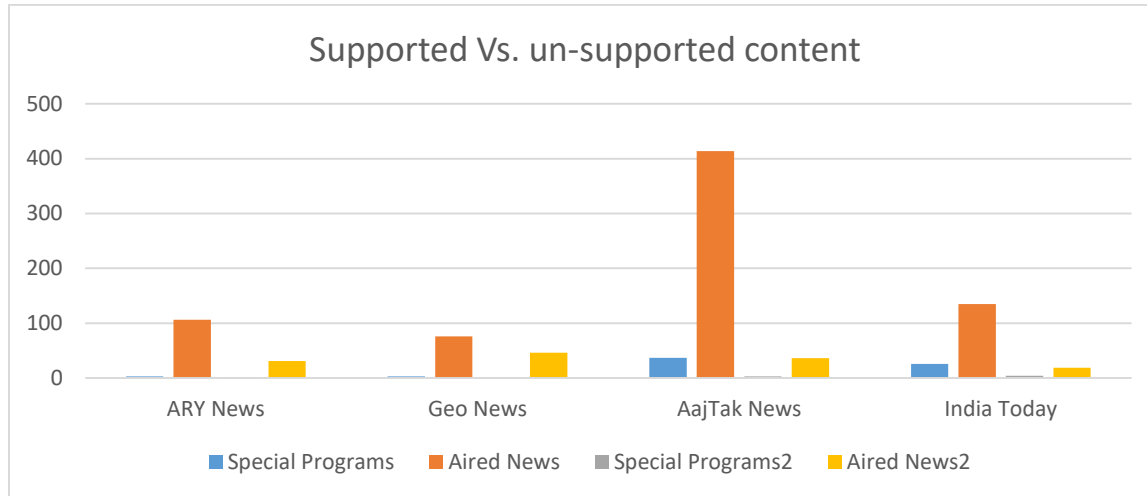
|                    |    |    |     |    |
|--------------------|----|----|-----|----|
| <b>India Today</b> | 35 | 23 | 119 | 77 |
|--------------------|----|----|-----|----|



**Table3: Comparison of Supported vs. Un-supported media content towards warfare on the issue of Balakot airstrikes**

| TV Channel         | Supported Content      |                  |    | Un-supported News      |                  |    |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|----|------------------------|------------------|----|
|                    | Special Programs No's. | Aired News No's. | %  | Special Programs No's. | Aired News No's. | %  |
| <b>Geo News</b>    | 3                      | 76               | 63 | 2                      | 46               | 37 |
| <b>ARY News</b>    | 3                      | 106              | 78 | 1                      | 31               | 22 |
| <b>AajTak News</b> | 37                     | 414              | 92 | 3                      | 36               | 8  |
| <b>India Today</b> | 26                     | 135              | 88 | 4                      | 19               | 12 |

## Analysis of Pakistani and Indian Media towards Warfare: Case Study of Pulwama Attack & Balakot Airstrike



### Discussion on Research Questions

#### Z-test

Z-test gives difference between two population means based upon their variances. Z-test works under the assumption that data is normally distributed, and data points are independent and have equal opportunity to get selected. This test provides the probability of occurrence of an event with some confidence level  $\alpha$  when compared with a null hypothesis. In this research work, we have used this test to statistically observe the role of Pakistani and Indian media towards warfare regarding Balakot airstrikes 2019. The formula to calculate z-score is given by:

$$\frac{(\widehat{P}_1 - \widehat{P}_2) - (P_1 - P_2)}{\sqrt{\frac{\widehat{P}_1 * Q_1}{n_1} + \frac{\widehat{P}_2 * Q_2}{n_2}}}$$

#### Hypothesis-1 testing

It is more likely that India media broadcasted fact-less content regarding balakot and f-16 shot down compared to fact-based content.

Level of significance:  $\alpha = 0.05$

Sample Evidence: z-score= 17.5, P-Value= 0.0000

The p-value is less than 0.05 so we accept our research hypothesis-1.

|                   | Sample Proportion of fact-less news | Sample Proportion of fact-based news |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Sample Proportion | 0.81                                | 0.18                                 |
| Sample Size       | 604                                 | 604                                  |



### Hypothesis-2 testing:

It is more likely that Pakistan media broadcasted fact-based content compared to fact-less content.

Level of significance:  $\alpha = 0.05$

Sample Evidence: z-score= 25.27, P-Value= 0.0000

The p-value is less than 0.05 so we accept our research hypothesis-2.

|                   | Sample Proportion of fact-less news | Sample Proportion of fact-based news |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Sample Proportion | 0.09                                | 0.90                                 |
| Sample Size       | 259                                 | 259                                  |

### Hypothesis-3 testing

It is more likely that Pakistan media created an environment of warfare by broadcasting supported content towards warfare compared to un-supported content towards warfare.

|                   | Supported towards warfare | Un-supported towards warfare |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Sample Proportion | 0.70                      | 0.29                         |
| Sample Size       | 268                       | 268                          |

Level of significance:  $\alpha = 0.05$

Sample Evidence: z-score= 4.99, P-Value= 0.0000

The p-value is less than 0.05 so we accept our research hypothesis-3.

### Hypothesis-4 testing

It is more likely that India media created an environment of warfare by broadcasting supported content towards warfare compared to un-supported content towards warfare.

|                   | Supported towards warfare | Un-supported towards warfare |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Sample Proportion | 0.90                      | 0.09                         |
| Sample Size       | 674                       | 674                          |

Level of significance:  $\alpha = 0.05$

Sample Evidence: z-score= 10.8, P-Value= 0.0000

The p-value is less than 0.05 so we accept our research hypothesis-4.

### Conclusion

We conclude in our research that both Pakistani and Indian media created an environment of warfare among people by broadcasting such content on famous national televisions. Though Pakistan has shown a gesture

## Analysis of Pakistani and Indian Media towards Warfare: Case Study of Pulwama Attack & Balakot Airstrike

of peace, and aired news in retaliation or keep the general masses in peace, but it is still an important issue to air news that do not cause warfare.

### References:

- [1] Bukhari, S. (2016). Why the death of militant Burhan Wani has Kashmiris up in arms. *BBC News*, 11.
- [2] Swami, P., & Roy, S. (2016). Uri attack: Jaish-e-Muhammad Suspects in Hand, Evidence shown to Envoy. *The Indian Express*.
- [3] Anon. (2016). India's Surgical Strikes across LoC: Full Statement by DGMO Lt. Gen Ranbir Singh. *Hindustan Times*.
- [4] Gurung, S. K., & Shaurya, K. (2019). what happened at Pulwama and history of terror attacks on convoys. *Economic Times*.
- [5] Slater, J., & Constable, P. (2019). Pakistan captures Indian pilot after shooting down aircraft, escalating hostilities. *The Washington Post*.
- [6] Dawn: Indian aircraft violate LoC, scramble back after PAF's timely response: ISPR (2019). <https://www.dawn.com/news/1466038/indian-aircraft-violate-loc-scramble-back-after-pafs-timely-response-ispr>
- [7] The Express Tribune: No blood. no bodies. no debris. no tragedy (2019). <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1919080/1-no-blood-no-bodies-no-debris-no-tragedy/>
- [8] Gettleman, J., Kumar, H., & Yasir, S. (2019). Deadly Shelling Erupts in Kashmir Between India and Pakistan After Pilot Is Freed. *The New York Times*.
- [9] BBC News: India Pakistan: Kashmir fighting sees Indian aircraft downed (2019). <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-47383634>
- [10] The Hindu: IAF plane shot down, pilot taken captive by Pak. army (2019). <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/iaf-plane-shot-down-pilot-taken-captive-by-pak-army/article26390980.ece>
- [11] BBC News: Abhinandan: Captured Indian pilot handed back by Pakistan (2019). <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-47412884>