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How Newspapers In China, India And Bangladesh Framed The Rohingya Crisis Of 2017

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HOW NEWSPAPERS IN CHINA, INDIA AND BANGLADESH FRAMED THE ROHINGYA

CRISIS OF 2017

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

The Rohingya persecution in Myanmar's Rakhine state in 2017 attracted intense international media attention. In light of normative theory, media of different countries are assumed to cover an issue differently because of differences in the socio-political systems involved. This study examines how media from three different countries framed the Rohingya Muslim issue. These systematic and qualitative content analyses of six newspapers from three neighboring countries — China, India and Bangladesh — examines media framing of Myanmar in light of Robinson's (2001) Policy-Media Interaction model. The timeframe of the study was one month, starting on the first day of Myanmar's Rohingya crisis on August 25, 2017. The results of 50 qualitatively analyzed news reports and 258 quantitatively analyzed news reports found significant differences in the style of covering the Rohingya issue by the media of three neighboring countries. In Indian and Bangladeshi newspapers the human interest and protest frame emerged as the most important frame, while Chinese media used the conflict and security frame most. In Bangladesh, aid agencies appeared to be the most cited sources in newspapers while in Indian newspapers, national officials were cited most. The Myanmar government appeared top in the list of source used in Chinese newspapers.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my loving wife Shohana Begum, without whose tireless

encouragement and support I could not pursue my degree. During the two years of study, she

took on a lot of troubles, fighting the odds in life alone and taking care of our two daughters,

allowing me to stay 8,412 miles away to pursue the degree.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On August 25, 2017, the Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) military launched an attack on Muslim minority group called Rohingyas in the state of Rakhine, killing at least 6,700 people (MSF, 2017). The military's massive crackdown began in response to violent clashes between Rohingya insurgents and the government forces along the northwest border to Bangladesh. About 200 Rohingyas were drowned in several boat capsize incidents while fleeing the country (Alamgir& Islam, 2017). The military also burned down tens of thousands of structures in 288 villages and forced hundreds of Rohingyas out of their homes (HRW, 2017). As of February 8, 2018, at least 688,000 people fled their country and crossed into Bangladesh since the eruption of the latest spell of violence (IOM, 2018).

The United Nations Security Council on November 6, 2017 called on the Myanmar government to end the use of excessive military force and inter-communal violence in the region (UN, 2017). The Human Rights Watch reported widespread rape against Rohingya women and girls by Burmese security forces as part of a campaign of ethnic cleansing against Rohingya (HRW, 2017a). UN human rights investigators called it a crime against humanity and accused Myanmar military of extrajudicial killings, gang rapes and probable ethnic cleansing. UN secretary general Antonio Guterres said alleged attacks by security forces on Rohingya villagers were completely unacceptable and termed the event as world's fastest-developing refugee emergency and a humanitarian and human rights nightmare (UN, 2017a).

Myanmar is bordered by India and Bangladesh to its west, Thailand and Laos to its east, and China to its north and northeast. The international communities, particularly neighboring countries of Myanmar, have legal obligations towards the suffering Rohingyas (UNHCR, 1945). However, India and China sided with the Myanmar government while Bangladesh opened its border to allow Rohingya to take shelter there (Gao, 2017; 'If we can feed 160m.." 2017). China blocked a resolution that was to ask Myanmar to stop the excessive use of force against Rohingya (Reuters, 2017).

The International State Crime Initiative (ISCI), a cross-disciplinary research center, found that of the six stages of genocide of Rohingya, four stages – stigmatization/harassment, violence/terror, isolation/segregation, and systematic weakening of the Rohingya -- had been completed in Myanmar by 2015. The final two stages – mass annihilation, and finally the symbolic enactment involving the removal of the victim group from collective history – was carried out in the Rakhine State in 2017. These genocide processes were orchestrated at the highest levels of state and local Rakhine governments (Green, MacManus, & De la CourVenning, 2015). The actions were led by state officials, Rakhine politicians, Buddhist monks, and Rakhine civil society activists. To the extent that the ruling elites and government politics were related to the Rohingya crisis, media coverage of the events may have been associated with foreign policy.

Media roles in covering humanitarian crises are important because the critical coverage of a crisis can force government to intervene during a humanitarian crisis (Robinson, 2004). Coverage also can play an influential role in informing countrymen on international affairs (Malek, 1997,) and news media play an important role in setting the public agenda and shaping public opinion through the selection of news stories (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). For example,

media coverage of human suffering and atrocities in different countries, particularly Operation Restore Hope in Somalia in 1992 and Operation Deliberate Force in Bosnia in 1995, forced Western governments to "do something" in the face of growing public pressure (Jakobsen 2000; Hachten&Scotton, 2007; Mermin, 2001; Robinson, 2004). Some scholars, however, argue that even extensive media coverage could not influence policy makers to intervene in humanitarian crises (Robinson, 2001).

News coverage of international conflicts, however, is significantly different from any other type of foreign reporting (Novais, 2007; Lee & Yang, 1996). Several researchers have observed that media coverage tends to support the foreign policy interests of the media organization's home government due to political, economic, and ideological interests (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Paletz& Vinson, 1994). Even the business nexus of countries has shaped framing of news coverage (Lee & Yang, 1996).

There has been a debate about the coverage of Rohingya which some view as biased against the largely Buddhist country (Freeman, 2017) while some viewed the suffering of Myanmar's Rohingya Muslims was worse than it was portrayed by the media. The U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis said that suffering of Myanmar's Rohingya Muslims was worse than it has been portrayed by the media (Meixler, 2018). Myanmar's ambassador to Australia, U ThaAungNyun, claimed that some international media coverage of Myanmar's Muslim community has worsened the current situation in the state of Rakhine (Thein, 2017). Most international media have taken almost three weeks to start reporting on Rohingya crisis (Asiuzzaman, 2017).

As attacks on Rohingya are orchestrated at the highest levels of state, and the governments of the neighboring countries of Myanmar explicitly made their positions clear on

the crisis, the present study focuses on media coverage in light of media-policy interactions. Several scholars have studied how the Rohingya issue has been covered by Western media in the past (Brooten, 2015; Brooten, Ashraf, &Akinro, 2015; Brooten&Verbruggen, 2017). However, almost no systematic research has been done to examine how media of the neighboring countries covered the issue. Therefore, it is worth exploring to what extent the government policy influence coverage of the humanitarian crisis of neighboring countries.

It is assumed that this study will find salient differences in the coverage of the Rohingya issue due to difference of the social political systems involved.

Chinese media are controlled by the Chinese government, and the Chinese Communist Party (Han, 2007; Sun, 2010). Chinese media have been perceived as "entities of control of censorship" (Sun, 2010, p. 69), and the Communist Party controls the financial and personnel resources of mass media organizations through ownership and political power (Han, 2007). However, a gradual introduction of commercialization and decentralization in the Chinese media industry in the late 1970s has brought about economic autonomy to a number of commercially run news media (Sukosd& Wang, 2013). Contrasted with party-sponsored media, commercial news organizations are characterized by more freedom in content production and economic operation (Sukosd& Wang, 2013) in China.

In India, media enjoys freedom and plays a significant role by providing information to the citizens. India, the largest democracy of the world, has a long and distinguished tradition of investigative journalism in the public interest, even causing governments to fall (Verghese, 2003).

Bangladesh has a long history of news media with the first notable newspaper being published in 1847. Modern print journalism came to the area during British rule. Newspapers

first appeared in the territory of present Bangladesh in the mid eighteenth century (Khurshid, 1971). Before the independence in 1971, there were many newspapers in Bangladesh including some English-language dailies such as *Morning News* and *Pakistan Observer*. There were a national television station and a radio station with some substations at that time. Bangladesh is one of those countries where remnants of authoritarianism still remain dormant in the power structure while press freedom, although guaranteed in constitution, remains elusive. Reports on international media indicate that the Bangladesh government often interferes in the media's affairs by telling them what to publish—an authoritarian technique to control media (Safi, 2017). Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, is home to around 150 daily newspapers and 40 satellite TV stations.

The Indian media are expected to play a "watchdog" role, while the Chinese media are the "mouthpiece" of the Communist Party of China. The Bangladesh media is expected to play a critical role as a democratic country, even though the media system of Bangladesh is neither libertarian nor authoritarian and some authoritarian practices are still in place (Islam &Yousuf, 2017).

Drawing on Robinson's (2001) policy-media interaction model, this study examines whether critical coverage appeared when elite consensus existed. The present study also analyzes content using the framing theory to examine whether news media followed government policy in covering the Rohingya issue.

Background of Rohingya Conflict

Nearly all of the Rohingya in Myanmar live in the western coastal state of Rakhine, the second poorest region in Myanmar. Rakhine state extends some 560km along the northernmost

part of Myanmar's coastline and borders Bangladesh to the north-west. Over a million

Rohingyas have been living in ghetto-like camps and a lack of basic services and opportunities.

Myanmar has a long history of inter-religious and inter-ethnic conflict particularly

conflict between Muslim Rohingyas and Buddhists, state violence, repression restrictions on

population movement. The state has a dark legacy of oppression against its ethnic minority

people, but the Rohingya have been singled out for repression (Walton & Hayward, 2014). Anti-

Muslim violence broke out during the colonial period in 1930 and 1938, and under military

dictatorship in 1978, 1991, 1997, and 2001. The spark that ignited the recent spate of violence

that began in June 2012 and revisited again and again in 2014 and 2017.

Major discriminatory policies against the Rohingya was taken in 1982 when the then

government removed Rohingya from the list of officially recognized ethnic minorities and

stripped their citizenship though they had enjoyed equal rights since Burma became independent

from British rule in 1948 (Calamur, 2017). After the 1962 military coup in Myanmar, all

citizens were required to obtain national registration cards. The Rohingya, however, were only

given foreign identity cards, which limited the jobs and educational opportunities they could

pursue. According to 1982 Burmese Citizenship Law of Ne Win government (1962-1988)

Rohingyas became state less population in Myanmar. But before the implementation of the said

citizenship law in 1982 Rohingyas was the citizen of Myanmar.

Local Buddhists and state and central government officials use the term "Bengalis" or

"illegal Bengalis" and refuse to accept the term Rohingya, branding them as illegal aliens from

neighboring Bangladesh. The government also condemns anyone nationally or internationally

who use the term 'Rohingya' and excluded Rohingya from the 2014 census. The country's

Muslim population dropped from 3.9 percent to 2.3 percent due to exclusion of Rohingyasduring

enumeration in the 2014 census. Countrywide, 89.8 percent registered as Buddhist, 6.3 percent as Christian, 2.3 percent as Muslim, 0.5 percent as Hindu, 0.8 percent as Animist, 0.2 percent as "other" and 0.1 percent as having no religion (Lynn, 2016). But many independent historians said several reports suggest the Rohingya has resided in Myanmar since the 12th century. When Myanmar was under British rule from 1824 to 1948, a large number of migrant laborers came into the country from India and Bangladesh. The Myanmar government, after gaining independence, considered the migration during British occupation illegal and refused citizenship to a large portion of Rohingya. Following independence in 1948, opposition to Rohingya Muslim became a key point in the mid-century Burmese National Movement, which coincided with a Buddhist religious revival (Alam, 2017). Since the 1970s, a number of crackdowns on the Rohingya in Rakhine State have forced nearly one million Rohingya have fled Myanmar due to widespread persecution ("Myanmar: Who", 2018).

The 2017 military crackdown was prompted by an attack on August 25th by the ArakanRohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), a Muslim insurgent group that killed 12 security officers at border posts. Prior to the latest crackdown, the UN published a report in February 2017 that found that government troops "very likely" committed crimes against humanity since renewed military crackdowns began in October 2016. The top United Nations human rights official ZeidRa'ad Al Hussein said that Myanmar's latest treatment of the Rohingya appears to be a "textbook example" of ethnic cleansing and denounced the "brutal security operation" against the Rohingya in Rakhine state, which he said was "clearly disproportionate" to insurgent attacks carried out last month. On September 21, 2017 Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina told in UN General Assembly that Bangladesh was sheltering more than 800,000 of whom 4,30,000 had arrived in past three weeks".

Country Position on Rohingya Crisis

During the latest Rohingya crisis around 700,000 Rohingya took refuge in Bangladesh. This has distorted the geopolitical situation of the South-East Asia. The bilateral cooperation between Bangladesh and Myanmar was interrupted due to the Rohingya issue and tensions have been mounting between the two countries. On November 9, 2017 Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the UN General Assembly urged to put more pressure on Myanmar to help deal with the crisis. Bangladesh also separately urged India to contribute towards exerting sustained pressure on Myanmar to find a peaceful solution to the crisis. All the political parties and groups in Bangladesh unitedly urged the local administration to provide shelters refugees on humanitarian ground and urged the government and international communities to mount pressure on Myanmar to take back Rohingya.

China and India, regional super powers, try to maintain silence on this issue and want to maintain a balanced diplomatic relationship with Myanmar and Bangladesh both because it is significant for strategy, trade, and cross border terrorism and because of the energy resources of Myanmar (Chattoraj, 2018). To ensure the future supply of energy resources, both China and India have close ties with Myanmar.

On November 16, 2016,the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the situation of human rights in Myanmar by 135-10 votes, with 26 countries abstained, in the 193-strong house in New York. The resolution called on the Myanmar authorities to ensure the sustainable return of Rohingyas to their original places of residence in safety, security and dignity. India abstained from the vote while China voted against the adoption of the resolution, proposed by Egypt and backed by 97 countries.

China is Myanmar's long-time trusted friend. China was Myanmar's only strategic partner from the military junta regime starting in 1962 when the country was isolated from the rest of the world for the sanction imposed by America and western countries.. Amid harsh international criticism of the Myanmar military for gross violations of human rights, China has remained firm in opposing UN involvement. Myanmar State Counselor Aung San SuuKyi visited China on December 1, 2017 and met Chinese President Xi. They hailed close ties between the two countries and avoided any mention of the Rohingya. China's tacit support to Myanmar on Rohingya issue likely results in part from its business and strategic interests in the area.

Indian Prime Minister NarendraModi visited Myanmar in the first week of September, when Rohingyas were fleeing their homes to Bangladesh by the thousands everyday to save their lives. But India did not raise the Rohingya issue during Modi's Myanmar visit. Modi expressed concern over "extremist violence" in Rakhine, but did not mention the alleged persecution of the minority Rohingya Muslim community. "We hope that all stakeholders together can find a way out in which unity and territorial integrity of Myanmar is respected," Modi said in a joint statement with Aung San SuuKyi in Nay Pyi Taw, the Myanmar's capital. On September 8, 2017, India refused to sign The Bali Declaration, a global declaration, adopted at an international conclave as it referred to the violence against Rohingya (PTI, 2017). However, the Indian High Commission in Dhaka on October 23, 2017 signaled an apparent policy shift on Rohingya issue and said that Myanmar must take back the Rohingya people. "On the issue of displaced persons from Rakhine state, [the] External Affairs Minister reaffirmed India's continued support in responding to the influx," the Indian High Commission said in a statement (Chowdhury &Vashishtha, 2017). Indian main opposition party, The Congress, termed the Rohingyas is a

"humanitarian" issue and very sensitive one, and said the government must handle it carefully and compassionately. Even some Congress members of parliament staged a walkout from a regional assembly after speaker refused to raise an adjournment motion on the plight of Rohingyas (Masoud, 2017). West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee expressed support for the Rohingyas, adopting a stand contraryto the position of the NarendraModi government. It is evident that there is dissensus within the political elite in India over the Rohingya crisis.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is conducted within the theoretical framework of framing analysis in light of Robinson's (2001) Policy-Media Interaction model to examine whether news media of three countries followed government policy in covering the Rohingya issue.

Media coverage of international conflicts started drawing academics' attention in the early 80s and attracted more researchers in the 2000s involving the political context of Western democratic regimes, particularly the U.S. media (Herman and Chomsky, 1988; Entman 1991; Herman, 1993; Malinkina& McLeod 2000; Auerbach& Bloch-Elkon, 2005). Some scholars have studied the role of European media in reporting international conflicts (Novais, 2007; Kristensenand Ørsten, 2007; Halttu, 2010). A few have specifically examined media coverage of the Rohingya conflict (Brooten, 2015; Brooten&Verbruggen, 2017; Brooten, et al., 2015).

Many studies have shown that news media tend to follow their home country's foreign policy in coverage of foreign news, especially in covering political, ideological and economic issues (Lee & Yang, 1996; Novais, 2007; Hallin 1986; Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Zaremba, 1988; Bennett, 1990; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). For example, Herman and Chomsky (1988) argued that the American 'elite media" have become the government's accomplice, by commission or omission. Giving example of news coverage practice of the U.S. media in condemning Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and justifying the U.S. intervention in Vietnam and Grenada on "humanitarian" reasons, Herman and Chomsky

showed a double standard of the media. Herman and Chomsky (1988) methodically examined how the news media carried out their assignment of keeping the American public informed about U.S foreign policy in a way that is supportive of that policy. They analyzed media coverage of several international crises in their famous book, "*Manufacturing Consent*," concluding that

> The mass media of the United States are effective and powerful ideological institutions that carry out a system-supportive propaganda function by reliance on market forces, internalized assumptions, and self-censorship, and without significant overt coercion. This propaganda system has become even more efficient in recent decades with the rise of the national television networks, greater mass-media concentration, right-wing pressures on public radio and television, and the growth in scope and sophistication of public relations and news management (p.306)

Herman (1993) analyzed media coverage of the U.S. government's actions, inactions and invasion in different countries from the 1980's to the 1990's. He demonstrated through empirical evidence that mainstream media follow a state agenda in reporting on foreign policy, and to some extent the media also functioned as public relations arms of the government. He argued that the mainstream media served government policy but not democratic polity. Herman (1993) summarized his argument about media-state relations:

> Both structural analysis and empirical evidence of media performance support the view that the mainstream media tend to follow a state agenda in reporting on foreign policy [...] The real problem, however, is the already high level of subservience to government

agendas and the media's consistent failure to provide context, and to encourage or even to allow debates extending to fundamental criticism. These failings are incompatible with the media's acknowledged obligation to serve the informational needs of a democracy (p.45).

Entman's (1991) comparative study was about media coverage of two similar air accidents —when Korean Air Lines Flight 007 was shot down by a Soviet fighter in 1983 and when an Iran Air Flight was shot down by a U.S. Navy ship in 1988. He found different framing of similar incidents across U.S media. U.S. media coverage was consistent with the government's foreign policy of cold-war regime, the Iranian plane accident was portrayed as a technical problem while the Korean accident was portrayed as a moral outrage.

By examining the coverage of KAL Flight 007 in the newspapers of six countries — Nigeria, India, U.S., Pakistan, Nicaragua and the Soviet Union – Paletz and Vinson (1994) found careful selection and interpretation of facts, and the strategies of headlines that suit their own objectives according to the political, economic and ideological affiliations of the newspaper's home country. Specifically, the study analyzed stories from the *Daily Times* (Lagos, Nigeria), *The Times of India*, the *Durham Morning Herald* (North Carolina), *Dawn* (Pakistan), *Nuevo Diurio* (Nicaragua), and *Pravda* (Soviet Union).

Zaremba (1998) examined press coverage of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War by the *Daily Graphic of Ghana*, the *Times of London* of Great Britain, the *Asuhi Evening News* of Japan, the *Straits Times* of Singapore, the *Moscow News* of the Soviet Union, and the *New York Times* of the United States. It revealed considerable differences in perceptions and interpretations of the conflict, based on the political and ideological alliances of the newspaper's home country.

Downing (1988) compared Soviet coverage of the intervention in Afghanistan with U.S. coverage of conflict in El Salvador in 1980. Downing's analysis of Soviet media coverage of Afghanistan from 1979 to 1986 revealed that neither the United States nor the Soviet media offered an adequate account of conflicts in which superpowers were deeply embroiled. The Soviet media downplayed the involvement of the Soviet military in terror-bombing rebel-held areas and indiscriminate firing into villages, while the United States failed to give sufficient attention to the displacement of civilian population and deaths from aerial bombing in El Salvador.

Lee and Yang's (1996) study found different political and economic suppositions in coverage of the Tiananmen movement in China. The study revealed that *Associated Press* coverage was consistent with U.S. ideological interests in defining the movement as a fight for democracy against a Communist regime, while the Japanese news agency, *Kyoto News*, was reluctant to challenge the Chinese government's authority. Japanese economic interests dominated the news agency's accounts of the event (Lee and Yang, 1996).

 Yang (2003) compared the news coverage of the U.S. and Chinese newspapers about the NATO air strikes on Kosovo and revealed that the newspapers of both countries adopted two different media frames. The author found that Chinese newspapers framed the air strikes as an intervention of Yugoslavia's sovereignty and territory, while the U.S. newspapers framed the air strikes as a humanistic aid to Albanians to stop the ethnic cleansing initiated by Serbians.

Using content analysis method Rasul, Shahzad, Bilir, &Rasul (2018) examine coverage of the Afghan conflict in four newspapers—one elite newspaper each from China, Iran, India and Pakistan— and the relationship between elite press and the governments of the neighboring countries of Afghanistan. They found that the elite English newspapers followed the official

foreign policy of their countries while covering the war in Afghanistan and the Taliban at a time when the entire region was in the grip of terror attacks. Some scholars argue that some sort of national bias in international news reporting is natural because the coverage at a home audience (McQuail, 1999:195; Malinkina&McLed, 2000: 39–40).

As the Rohingya crisis is a long standing problem in South Asia, researchers produced a good amount of literature on different aspects of the issue. For example, Parnini, Othman and Ghazali (2013) investigated human rights violations against Rohingya Muslims and the relations between Bangladesh and Myanmar. Southwick's (2015) analysis found Myanmar's central government support for human rights violations against the Rohingya Muslim minority by the majority Buddhist Rakhine population.

A few studies examine how the mainstream newspapers portrayed the Rohingya issue. Brooten (2015) examines a series of *Reuters* reports that won the 2014 Pulitzer Prize on the sectarian violence between Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims in western Myanmar and found global media portray the Burmese Buddhist culture dealing with Rohingya issue as savage and reinforces the need for an external savior. The author analyzed five lengthy investigative reports and two short companion pieces from *Reuters* wire service using strategies of textual analysis, in particular the SVS [a "three-dimensional prism," or the savages-victims-saviors] framework to identify how key players are rhetorically constructed as victims, savages, or saviors.

Brooten, Ashraf, and Akinro (2015) examined texts from *New York Times*, and the *Inter Press Service* and found humanitarian news stories in Western media and wire service that portray explosive violence unleashed by Myanmar Buddhists and found clear vast of victim, villains and heroes. Later Brooten and Verbruggen (2017) explored the newsmen's access and

procedure of collecting news from Rakhine between 2012 and 2014. They fund journalists relied on local fixers who emotionally involved and became victim in the polarized situation due to different reason including government restrictions on visiting sites, language barriers, and difficulties with translation that tend to reinforce the "us vs them" narrative.

Naeem Afzal (2016) conducted content analysis of editorial opinions of three newspapers from Pakistan, America and United Kingdom to investigate how the Myanmar government's treatment of Rohingya crisis was portrayed by the newspapers. His findings showed that editorials of the newspapers frequently framed emotional appeals to withhold the reader's attention and interest in crises.

Policy-Media Interaction Model

A large body of literature has documented governmental influence on media in coverage of international conflicts, not only supporting a country's foreign policy, but also to serve a crucial propaganda function known as executive and elite versions of manufacturing consent (Robinson 2001; Bennett, 2003). Robinson's (2001) model of interaction between media and power elites theorized that elite consensus over an issue pressures the news media into producing coverage of prevailing notions and that critical journalism is unlikely to surface while dissensus provides the media freedom to choose from a great number of interpretations. Robinson's theory also posits that amid policy uncertainty, news media can play a more active role in policy debate and formulation, because the possibility exists for news media coverage to take sides in the elite debate. In reviewing existing theories of media–state relations, in particular the work of Daniel Hallin and Lance Bennett, Robinson highlighted theoretical and empirical shortcomings in the manufacturing consent thesis and developed the media-policy interaction theory. Robinson's

(2001) model is built upon existing research integrating these apparently contradicting theses of

the CNN effect and manufacturing consent paradigms. The greater the level of uncertainty over

policy within the executive, the more vulnerable the policy process is to the influence of

negative media coverage. The disagreement among the policymakers over a policy cause

the policy uncertainty and that makes rooms for critical media coverage (Robinson, 2001).

News Framing

Framing is one of the most frequently used theories in media and communication

research (Bryant &Miron 2005) which aims to analyze the ways media pay attention to certain

aspects while covering an issue. The process of putting emphasis on certain sides tends to create

and place them within a field of meaning. Journalists usually make some aspect of an event or

issue more salient to promote particular interpretation and problem definition (Entman, 1993).

Scholars have defined news frames in various ways, thus a clear definitional boundary remains

elusive for news framing. Erving Goffman (1974), originator of the framing theory, described

framing as a way in which we interpret our world, using a primary framework. He stated that

frame is an interpretative context which helps us better understand a message. Entman's (1993)

definition of framing is important for the present study because it focuses on textual elements of

the news reports. Using framing journalists "select some aspects of a perceived reality and make

them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem

definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item

described" (Entman, 1993, p. 52). Frames define problems, diagnose causes, and make moral

judgments (Entman, 1993).

Frames are made through both conscious and unconscious ways and reporters and editors routinely choose those to the presentation of news stories. However, choosing from various approaches is not a natural or neutral process, it is a result of internal and external factors of news organizations (Scheufele, 1999). These factors include cultural norms and values, social and political ideologies, organizational constraints, and professional routines (Kim, Carvalho& Davis, 2010). According to Davies (2009), interest groups, spin doctors, advertisers, spokespersons also influence the media frame.

The present study focuses on the ways Rohingya crisis have been framed in media because framing theory presents explanations and influences of media coverage on issue relating to a crisis. Most of the studies mentioned in the literature review examine the media frames to find out the ways media filter reality in the foreign policy decision-making processes. Researchers have identified five most commonly used news frames in coverage of conflict (Semetko&Valkenburg, 2000). These are: conflict, human interest, economic consequence, moral and responsibility.

Iyengar (1991) found episodic and thematic in the media coverage of political problems. Episodic frames produced individual attributions for political problems and thematic frames produced societal attributions. Episodic framing trivializes public discourse focusing on individual case studies. The thematic news frames focus on trends over time, and highlighting contexts. Conflict frame focus on disagreement and conflict between individuals, groups, parties or institutions; economic consequences frame emphasize on consequences of an event, issue or problem will have economically on an individual; responsibility frame focus on an event or issue in a way as to responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or to an individual; moral frame puts the event, issue or problem in the context of religious tenets or moral

18

prescriptions and human interest puts a human face on news reports and emphasize on the personal and emotional side of an event, issue, or problem (Semetko&Valkenburg, 2000).

New Sources

It is not possible to be present on the spots all the time to see the events for journalists because they are few in number and must locate themselves in places where information is likely to flow to them' (Sigal, [1973] 1999: 224). So they need to depend other ways of getting information of events. The news media called those that provide information a source. The sources can be anything including people, letters, books, files, films, tapes which journalists use to put news stories together (Henshall& Ingram, 1991). Shoemaker and Reese (1996) describe them as "external suppliers of raw materials" in news making,

Source is an integral part of the news making process and very important because that can set the agenda and influence the construction of meaning (Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, &Sasson, 1992; Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993). Even media are exploited by their sources through inserting information or propagandizing the reporters (Sigal 1973). Sigal examined the relationship between journalists and their sources and found that government departments, tend to enjoy advantaged access to the news media because journalists rely to a great degree on official sources and routine channels. Messner and DiStaso (2008) noted that that source can shape news reports and "influence the context under which a journalist evaluates an issue" (p. 449).

After Sigal's (1973) examination of the relationship between journalist and their sources scholars like Tuchman (1978), Gans (1979) and Fishman (1980) conducted studies with a theme that the act of making news is the act of constructing reality itself rather than 'a picture of reality'.

Though Gans' study dealt with the organization of story selection, objectivity and ideology, profits and audiences and pressures and censorship, he emphasizes the relationships that play the key roles in the news making process. Gans sees the media as passive on the whole and powerful sources particularly public officials exert their influence through their dominance of journalism.

Sources alone do not determine the news, but they go a long way in focusing the journalists attention on the social order described earlier. Neither do sources alone determine the values in the news, but their values are implicit in the information they provide. Journalists do not, by any means, parrot these values, but being objective and detached, they don't rebut them either. (Gans 1979 p. 145)

While filing report on conflict, journalists usually use different sources to make news trustworthy and to avoid claims of bias (McQuail, 2012). But reporting national conflict where foreign events are involved, news outlets heavily relied on officials sources of home country to frame the issues and events with an inevitable bias. In supporting his claimed, McQuail (2012) cites Yang's (2003) comparison between Chinese and American press coverage of the Kosovo air strikes that shows wide differences in sources and in the direction of coverage. News media of both the countries mostly used their own national news sources and thus reflected respective government views on the events. Choices of news sources by the journalists are often subjective (Graber, 1997) and they intentionally select certain sources to tell the stories in their predetermined ways (Kim & Lee, 2008).

During the Rohingya crisis, it is expected that reporters would consider the political strategies of the government and use more government sources of their home countries. A pre-coding test of qualitative analysis of 50 news reports showed that eight kinds of people were the most frequently quoted: government officials of home country including ministers and law

enforcement agencies, Myanmar government, Rohingyas (mostly refugees), international aid agencies and human rights groups (International Organization of Migration, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, United Nations etc), Official of other country (ministers and diplomat of other countries, local administration (police and civil administration and locals based in cox's bazar and officials) and national elite (political leaders, members of civil society etc).

Research questions

The literature on governmental influence on media in coverage of international conflicts and the Policy-Media Interaction Model provide a general framework about how the press works depending on elite consensus or dissensus over foreign issues relating to a humanitarian crisis. Based on the literature, this study explored three research questions:

RQ1: What sources of information did newspapers from different countries use to frame the Rohingya crisis?

RQ2: How did media framing differ across newspapers from three countries?

RQ3: To what extent did the newspaper coverage reflect the policy positions of the newspapers' host governments?

CHAPTER III

METHOD

This study employs both qualitative and quantitative content analysis to examine whether

the press coverage of the Rohingya crisis reflects the national foreign policy line in the

newspapers' host countries.

In the field of political communication, content analysis is a widely used research method

in order to determine the presence or absence of certain issues in reporting. For example does the

report references to casualties, anarchy and humanitarian aspects. The content analysis is an ideal

methodology because it utilizes a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text (Weber,

1990).Content analysis permits a scholar to scrutinize the nuances of a particular article or of

even a particular sentence. This type of analysis permits one to investigate the underlying content

in the text or to define the purpose of the text the author intentionally or sometimes

unintentionally wants to deliver to the readers (Hofstetter 1981).

Based on findings from the qualitative analysis, a codesheet and codebook were prepared

for quantitative analysis. While going through news reports for qualitative analysis, the overall

tone of the report, main ideas and major storylines of the texts were identified. Specifically, the

analysis identified whether the tone of the story criticized army actions against Rohingya or

justified the action, if the report described the plight of thousands of refugees, or described a

policy issue. In addition, the main topic and key concepts of each article were recorded by

underlining the phrases like use of words in the articles. Other noticeable descriptions, including the tone of the language and sources of the news, were noted.

Policy position of home countries' newspapers

Policy statements of governments, made by prime ministers or presidents, or foreign ministers of the three countries, were examined. Then statements of political elites, particularly opposition political parties, were examined to find consensus or dissensus over the Rohingya issue. Based on the statements of both governments and political elites, an index of country positions was constituted. A frame of policy statements can construct meanings and allowing for interpretations (Gamson et. al, 1992). If there were similarities in statements from both governments and elites then the statements were categorized as consensus. If there was a difference of opinion, the statement was coded as dissensus.

Sample

Two newspapers, with the widest circulation and perceived most influential in their countries, were selected from each of the three countries. This study focused solely on English language media, due to language and resource restrictions. The newspapers are *People's Daily* and *China Daily* from China, *TheTimes of India* and *Hindustan Times* from India and *The Daily Star* and *New Age* from Bangladesh. The one-month time frame was chosen from August 25, 2027 to September 24, 2017 because major incidents happened within this period. Three fourths of the total number of refugees crossed the border during this period and the crucial meeting of the UN general assembly was held during this period.

Chinese sample: Both the selected Chinese newspapers for this study are government-controlled media. Based on circulation, *People's Daily* was selected as the most influential national newspaper. *People's Daily* is the official newspaper of the Chinese government and the Communist Party. *China Daily* is regarded as one of the country's most authoritative English-language media outlets and an important source of information on Chinese politics, economy, society and culture (Lihua, 2009).

Indian sample: *The Times of India*, the oldest English-language newspaper in the country, was established in 1838. From the beginning it has aimed primarily at the English-educated intelligentsia, and it continues to be widely read by professionals, businessmen, and the urban educated elite. The *Hindustan Times* is the second largest circulated daily english language daily. It has a circulation of 993,645 copies as of November 2017. The newspaper was founded in 1924 with roots in the Indian independence movement.

Bangladeshi sample: On the list of English newspapers, *The Daily Star* is the highest circulated daily in Bangladesh followed by *The Financial Express*. The third position is jointly shared by the *New Age* and *Daily Observer* ("Bangladesh Pratidin", 2016). The author dropped *The Financial Express* because it is a specialized financial daily and selected *New Age*.

Sample collection and selection

Table 1. Overview of the news reports containing Rohingya crisis

China		India		Bangladesh		Total
Peoples's Daily	China Daily	Times of India	Hindustan Times	The Daily Star	New Age	
3	7	60	46	174	216	506

Stories from the Indian and Chinese newspapers were retrieved using LexisNexis. Two newspapers from Bangladesh were not found in the database. To retrieve Bangladeshi newspaper stories, Google Advanced search and archive searches of respective newspapers were applied using the keywords "Rohingya" and "Rakhaine".

The initial searches yielded 806 news stories, editorial and opinion pieces. All news stories were selected that contained at least two references to the 2017 Rohingya crisis. This search yielded three news reports from *People's Daily*, seven from *China Daily*, 138 news reports from *TheTimes of India*, 186 from *Hindustan Times,* 203 from *The Daily Star* and 269 from *New Age*. The final creation of a database of articles from each newspaper was made based on inclusion of the article's content relating to the crisis. Only news reports were kept, and editorial and opinion articles were omitted because news stories were assumed to be objective and reflect facts. Some news reports appeared more than once under different headlines, so among the similar news reports only one was kept in the database and the remaining were omitted. For example, the same report appeared under two different headlines: "Born after exodus, into a stateless existence" and "Infants condemned to stateless existence".

The number of final selected stories stood at 506. Only three related news reports were found in *People's Daily,* seven in *China Daily,* 60 in *The Times of India,* 46 in *Hindustan Times,* 174 in *The Daily Star and* 216 in *New Age.* The difference between the initial number of news reports and final selected number of news reports of Indian newspapers was significant. Though news reports contain the words Rohingya and Rakhine, most of the reports discussed the deportation of Rohingya who were living in India before the 2017 crisis. All such reports were omitted because these were not related to the 2017 crisis.

Data for qualitative analysis

Within each newspaper's database, 10 news stories were selected within the time frame previously indicated. This was done by dividing the total number of articles that addressed the conflict by 10, resulting in "x" number of articles, and then selecting every "x"th article. This resulted in a total of 50 articles from the final database of articles of six newspapers because only 10 news reports were found in two Chinese newspapers. During search at the *People's Daily* using "Rohingya" and "Burma" keyword no result was found during this period.

Data for quantitative analysis

For quantitative analysis 50% of the total number of news reports was selected. Initially all the headlines of the newspapers articles were copied into a Microsoft Excel file with a serial number. Then every odd number from each newspaper, except two Chinese newspapers, was deleted. The number of final selected stories for quantitative analysis stood at 258.

Codebook

A codebook was developed based on qualitative analysis of 50 news reports. Initially basic information about the articles such as name of the newspapers' country, newspapers' name, and length of the articles were coded. Other information such as news sources, news frames and main theme of the news reports were coded as follows:

News sources: If the news reports cited government officials including ministers and law enforcement agencies and other officials of the home country of the respective newspaper the reports were coded as (1) national official. In this way, seven more categories were coded based on the attribution used for each. Source categories are (2) Myanmar (e.g., Myanmar government officials, country's State Counsellor Aung San SuuKyi or army of the country), (3) Rohingya (e.g.,Rohingyas, mostly who took refuge in Bangladesh and victims of the crisis), (4) Aid agency (e.g., United Nation and its other bodies, international NGOs and aid agencies such as International Organization of Migration, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Médecins Sans Frontières), (5) Foreign officials (e.g., head of the states, ministers and diplomats of others country), (6) Local admin (e.g., civil and officials of law enforcement agencies stationed at Cox's bazaar in Bangladesh where Rohingya took shelter), (7) Local elite (e.g., political leaders, experts and civil society members of respective newspaper's own country. If sources mentioned above did not fall under the categories, such news reports were mentioned as others (0).

News Frame: Initially the study identified five main frames based on Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) categorization of crisis frame: conflict frame, human interest frame, morality frame, responsibility frame, and economic consequences frame. During careful readings of 50 articles for qualitative analysis, three more frames have emerged which do not fall under

the five main frames and redefined the existing frames. This study then explored frames inductively. Based on the findings a codesheet was developed including a total of six frames. These are: (1) Conflict, (2) Human interest, (3) Economic consequence (4) Aid (5) Security and (6) Protest. Some reports were not matched under the six frames which were coded them as "others". Though a small number of reports relating to economic consequence were found during the qualitative study, this study kept this frame because most of the frame analyses of crises in the past gave attention to this particular frame.

Conflict frame: News reports that represent the crisis using the conflict frame refer to the Rohingya crisis as a clash between Rohingya people and Myanmar law enforcement agencies including army or clash between Rohingya and Buddhists. In this frame the Rohingya also have been portrayed as a terrorism-sponsoring group having capacity of engaging with law enforcement agencies. For example: first paragraph of a report of *China Daily* reads: "At least 18,500 Rohingya have crossed into Bangladesh since fighting erupted in Myanmar's neighboring Rakhine state six days ago." Another report of People's Daily reads: "The State Counsellor of Myanmar Aung San SuuKyi is calling for international support to bring peace back to her country as Rakhine state in the north has been besieged by violence… The violence erupted in Rakhine state late last month after terrorists attacked police outposts." Both reports focus on two parties involved in fighting. Another example of the use of the conflict frame from the Times of India is "Prime Minister NarendraModi on Wednesday refused to join the chorus of criticism of Myanmar government for its alleged mistreatment of Rohingyas and said India empathises with its concern over extremist violence."

Human interest: News reports that represent the crisis using the human interest frame focuses on the human rights abuse of the Myanmar army such as murder, rape and burning down

houses of Rohingya. The frame also focuses on the suffering of individuals taking shelter in Bangladesh, like lack of food and water. Those news reports describe persecution of Myanmar army and emphasis on the personal and emotional side of an event. For example, The Daily Star reports "The limited shelter capacity is already exhausted. Refugees are now squatting in makeshift shelters that have mushroomed along the road and on available land in the Ukhiya and Teknaf areas". The Hindustan Times reports: "Thousands of starving Rohingya refugees are fleeing the latest round of violence in Myanmar, with many being stranded at the Bangladesh border without access to food or medicine". Another example of using human interest frame is New Age's report "A severe health crisis looms large as the Rohingyas are faced with shortage of safe drinking water." In all three examples of news reports describe the plight of Rohigya people.

Economic consequence: News reports that represent the crisis using the economic consequence frame describe economic aspects of the crisis. How the crisis affects the home country's investment in Myanmar, trade relations and economic consequence of Rohingya refugees. For example, a New Age report reads: "Commerce minister Tofail Ahmed on Wednesday ruled out severing trade ties with Myanmar over the ongoing persecution of minority Rohingyas by military forces in Rakhine state." Another example of use of economic frame is The Daily Start's reports: "Last Tuesday, when we went to the Bangladesh-Myanmar border area to cover news of Rohingya refugees in Ghumdum of Ukhia, we came across a small border bazaar (local market) full of cattle. What amazed us were the price tags of the cows -- most of them were being sold at Tk 10,000 to Tk 15,000." In the later example, the article described that victims were forced to sell their domestic animals at one fourths of the original price due to the crisis.

Aid frame: News reports that represent the crisis using the aid frame describes calling for aid and shelter of Rohingya, sending relief materials, helping refugees, spreading moral message to help the destitute, urging the welfare of the refugees and expressing sympathy towards the refugees. For example People's Daily report reads: "China has provided 200 million kyats (over 147,058 U.S. dollars) to help restore peace and stability in Myanmar's Rakhine state on Tuesday." Hindustan Times's report reads: "Amidst the Centre's rejection to provide asylum to Rohingya Muslims of Myanmar, RJD chief Lalu Prasad said that India has been a generous country since time immemorial and has welcomed a wide range of people from across globe into its territory." Another example of report of The Daily Star that uses air frame reads: "A rubella and polio vaccination campaign for 1.5 lakh children of Rohingya refugees started in Ukhia and Teknafupazilas of Cox's Bazar this morning as Bangladesh sees an influx of people fleeing persecution in Myanmar". In all the news reports focus on relief activities and how people were encouraging for helping refugees.

Security frame: News reports that represent the crisis using the security frame portrays Rohingya refugees as a threat to national security, focusing on illegal border crossing and their links with extremist groups. For example, a Hindustan Times report says "The government told the Supreme Court on Monday many Rohingya refugees had links with global terror outfits and allowing them to stay in India would pose a security threat to the country." The Times of India report says "A section of Rohingyas may have used Indian territory to try and enter Bangladesh before the alert along the international border." In the first report used a quote that explicitly mentioned that the Rohingyas are a threat to the national security and the report in in the second example mentioned the illegal border crossing by Rohingyas.

Protest frame: News reports that represent the crisis using the protest frame focus on

condemnation and protest against the Myanmar government and army, the adaptation of resolution calling an end to persecution of Rohingya, and staging demonstration against Myanmar government and its officials and calls for international intervention. For example, a New Age report reads: "Socio-political and cultural organisations on Friday staged demonstrations in the capital and different parts of the country protesting at the genocide and persecution of Rohingya people by the Myanmar security forces in Rakhine State." Another example of use of protest frame is The Daily Star's news report that reads: "Twelve Nobel laureates including Dr Muhammad Yunus are among 27 international eminent personalities who have sent an open letter to the UN Security Council urging its intervention to end the Rohingya crisis in Rakhine state of Myanmar." In both the reports mentioned condemned the protested against the Myanmar government and urged to put pressure to bring an end to the crisis.

Inter-coder Reliability

To test inter-coder reliability, a second coder analyzed 30 news reports (Lacy &Riffe, 1996). The percentage agreement for frame was 83.2% and sources agreement was 92.6% which were acceptable (Neuendorf, 2002).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Table 2. Overall and country-wise source frequency

Sources	Combined frequency	China	India	Bangladesh
National official	21.1%	15.4%	34.7%	17.8%
Myanmar	7.6%	46.2%	6.9%	5.9%
Rohingya	9.6%		8.3%	10.4%
Aid agency	20.3%	30.8%	20.8%	19.6%
Foreign officials	14.1%		8.3%	16.3%
Local admin	11.3%	7.7%	1.4%	14.1%
Local elite	13.5%		11.1%	14.8%
Others	2.5%		8.3%	1.1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

The combined results of the three countries confirmed previous qualitative findings that

national officials were cited the most often, followed by United Nation bodies and aid agencies.

Foreign officials that included heads of state, ministers and diplomats of different countries other

than Myanmar and the three selected countries for the research appeared in third position as

sources. Officials of Myanmar were cited the least. National officials appeared around 21%,

Myanmar appeared at 7.6%, Rohingya appeared at 9.6%, aid agencies made up at 20.3%, foreign

officials showed at 14.1%, local admin appeared at 11.3%, national elite came up at 13.5% and other appeared at 2.5%.

Only four categories of source were found in Chinese newspapers. Of the categories, the Myanmar government appeared top in the list of source with 46.2% followed by aid agencies with 30.8%. National official appeared 15.4% while local administration appeared only 7.7%. None of the Rohingya or national elites was quoted in the news reports.

In India, national officials were cited most often with 34.7 percent followed by aid agencies with 20.8%. Myanmar appeared 6.9%, Rohingya appeared 8.3%, aid agencies appeared 20.8%, foreign officials appeared 8.3%, local admin appeared 1.4%, national elite appeared 11.1% and other appeared 8.3%.

In Bangladesh, aid agencies were the most cited sources in newspapers with 19.6% followed by national officials with 17.8%. Myanmar was cited the least with 5.9%. Rohingya appeared 10.4%, foreign officials appeared 16.3%, local admin appeared 14.1%, national elite appeared 14.8% and other appeared 8.3%.

All sources used in filing news reports varied by country. The disparities in the use of Rohingya who are victims and witness of the crisis as source can be explained by ease of access to sources because Rohingya took refuge in Bangladesh territory. Local administration and Rohingya source are more accessible for Bangladeshi journalists than for Chinese and Indian reporters. Other use of sources across countries depended on particular newspapers' preferences.

Table 3. Overall and country-wise frame frequency

Frame	Overall	China	India	Bangladesh
Human Interest	28%	9.1%	17.7%	31.8%
Protest	22.2%		21%	23.6%
Aid	21.5%	18.2%	27.4%	20%
Security	11.6%	18.2%	21%	8.6%
Conflict	7.5%	54.5%	4.8%	5.9%
Others	7.2%		8.1%	7.3%
Economic Consequence	2%			2.7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

The combined results of frame frequency show that the human interest frame emerged as the most frequent with 28% of news reports indicating that the stories put a human face on the problem most and described the Myanmar army's brutal action prominently. The second most frequent frame is protest with 22.2%, meaning that newspapers were active in focusing on protest and criticism of the Myanmar government for attack on Rohingyas. Around 21.5% news reports used aid frame, focusing on different aspects of aid including calling for aid and providing shelter. The frequency of use of security frame in articles is 11.6% and conflict is 7.5%. Only 2% news reports used other frame that did not fall the six categories of frames developed in this study.

In Chinese newspaper, the most frequent framing was conflict (54.5%) followed by security and aid (18.2% each) and human interest (9.1%). No economic consequence frame was used in Chinese newspapers.

In Indian newspapers, the order of frames changed: aid frame emerged as most used frame (27.4%) followed by protest and security (21%). The human interest frame was used in 17.7 percent news reports and conflict used in 4.8 percent news reports. The Indian newspapers did not use any news report using economic consequence frame.

In Bangladeshi newspapers the most frequently used frame is human interest (31.8%) followed by protest (23.6%). The aid fame was used in 20% news reports while use of security made up 8.6% of news reports. The least used frames emerged as conflict (5.9%) and economic consequence (2.7%).

The second question asked whether there was any difference in the use of frames. The study shows an affirmative answer. For example, in Indian and Bangladeshi newspapers the human interest and protest frame emerged as the most important frame while Chinese media used conflict and security frame most. In contrast, 4.8% of news reports of Indian newspapers used conflict frame and Bangladeshi newspapers used the frame in 5.9% of news reports. In Chinese newspapers no news report appeared using protest frame while both Indian and Bangladeshi newspapers used the same frame in around 22% of news reports. Bangladeshi newspapers used the security frame less compared to Indian and Chinese newspapers. Bangladeshi newspapers used the security frame in around 8.6% news reports while this particular frame emerged as the second most used frame in Indian and Chinese newspapers, with 21% and 18.2% of the articles suing the security frame.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Most of the Rohingya people took refuge in Bangladesh and they urgently needed food and shelters. Bangladeshi reporters focused on the Rohingya people's plight and relief work. They also highlighted the actions of UN bodies against the Myanmar government's atrocities. Therefore, aid agencies ranked as the most used sources. On the other hand, Chinese media focused on the Myanmar government and army officials' activities, remarks and plans. So, they were used as sources in highest numbers of stories in Chinese newspaper.

India tries to maintain good relationship with both neighbors- Bangladesh and Myanmar. Since Bangladesh and Myanmar were playing opposite roles during the crisis, the India government had a major role to play in order to balance their foreign relations and cooperation. India media also focused on their government's activities in the highest numbers of stories.
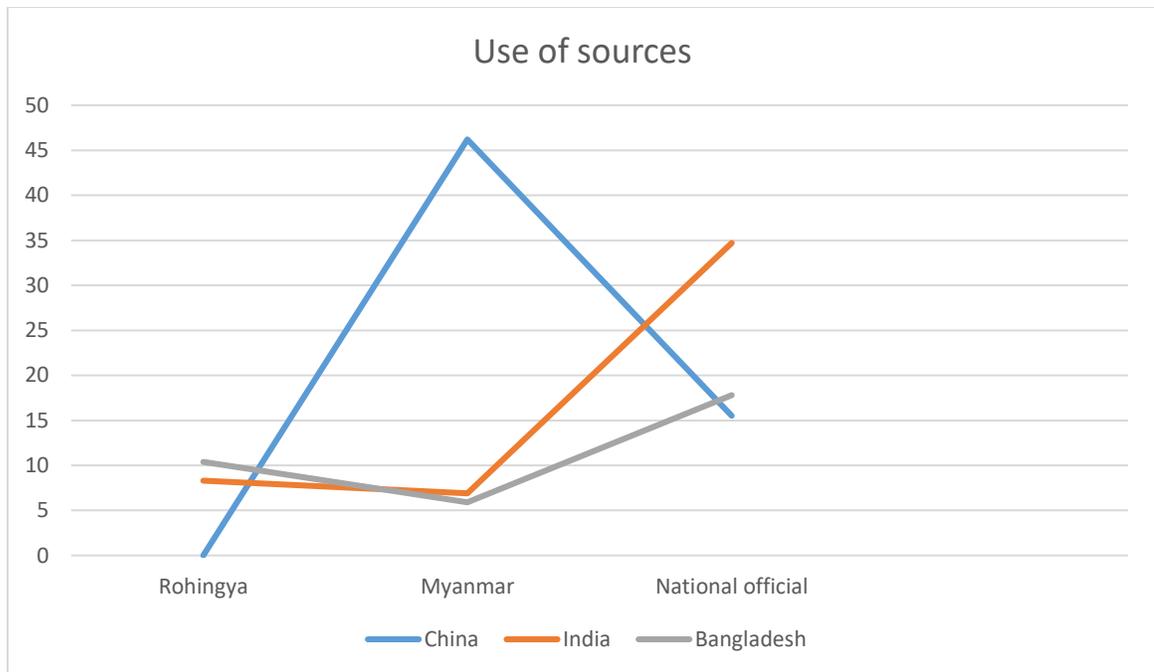
Figure 1. Use of sources

In contrast with Chinese media, officials of Myanmar were cited in a minimum of stories in Bangladeshi and Indian media. The Chinese government had showed its inclination towards the Myanmar government from the very beginning of the Rohingya situation. The Chinese newspapers also showed their inclination towards the Myanmar government. Dissimilarly, Bangladeshi and Indian media rather highlighted the humanitarian crisis and the plight of refugees.

Foreign officials including ministers and diplomats of different countries had important roles during the crisis as they tried to put pressure on Myanmar authorities for stopping atrocities. As Bangladeshi media was critical of the Myanmar government from the very beginning, they focused on foreign officials to find out how they reacted against Myanmar authority. Foreign officials appeared in third position as sources in Bangladeshi newspapers. The officials also appeared in third position as sources in Indian newspapers; however, they were

cited half relatively much lower percent than Bangladeshi newspaper. On the other hand, Chinese media did not cite foreign officials at all.

Since Cox's bazaar in Bangladesh where Rohingya took shelter it was easily accessible for Bangladeshi reporters. The officials of local administration in Cox's bazaar who were responsible for looking after refugees, were also more accessible for Bangladeshi journalists than for Chinese and Indian reporters. The situation was reflected in Indian newspapers where officials of local administration were cited the least. Surprisingly, Chinese media cited officials of local administration in relatively higher percentages than Indian newspapers.

In the first month of the crisis, the two Chinese English-language media outlets largely ignored and did not report the developments in Rakhine. The *People's Daily* did not run a single story describing the situation in Rakhine state although it came up with stories on the matter. This study found reference to the crisis in two news stories with headlines: "China provides assistance for restoring peace, stability in Myanmar's northern state" and "UN chief highlights "nuclear peril" in work report to General Assembly". The first one was a very short story of 111 words that described the Chinese government's contribution of over $ 147,058 to help restore peace and stability in the Rakhine state. But the report did not mention what kind of instabilities were going on there. The second one contained only two sentences with regard to the Rohingya crisis which is in fact a quote of the UN chief.

The *China Daily* published five news reports along with two brief summaries of these reports. The *China Daily* first ran the story on August 28 with the headline, "Terrorist attacks escalate in northern state of Myanmar". The report termed the ArakanRohingya Salvation Army "extremist terrorist groups" and held them responsible for the attack. The report using "official sources" of Myanmar government mainly focused on how the law enforcement repelled the

attack. The reports used the term "fighting", (not the persecution as claimed by the global community) to describe the crisis that led Rohingya to cross the border. The reports mentioned burning of villages, but did not mention who were the perpetrators.

The *China Daily* reports focused on the attacks and the Myanmar government's response to safeguard the country against "extremist forces". The report indicated China's stance by obliquely supporting the Aung San SuuKyi administration in Myanmar. For example a new brief reads: "China welcomes the measures taken by the Myanmar government to alleviate situation involving Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine state." The *China Daily* and *People's Daily* paid no attention to the atrocities committed by the Myanmar army and the plight of Rohingyas. The reports rather reflected China's positions on the Myanmar government though some references of the plight of Rohingyas were found. The findings showed no indication of use of words and language that can create empathy towards any humanitarian crisis.
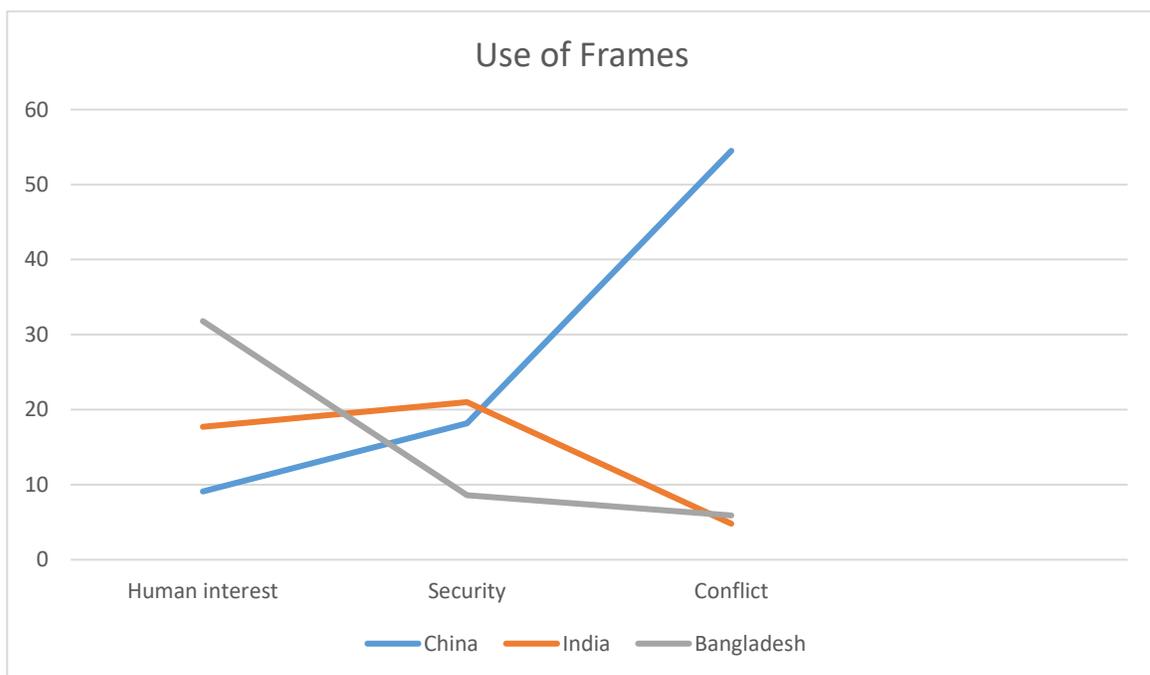
Figure 2. Use of frames

The overall use of frame indicates Chinese newspapers support the home country. They used conflict frame (54.5%) most giving an indication that that there was fighting between two groups, echoing the Myanmar army's narrative on the crisis. In this case, selections of sources in Chinese newspapers were also very important because sources have the capacity and capabilities to influence the construction of meaning. This study found Myanmar government and army officials appeared most frequently (46.2%) as news source. In contrast, Rohingyas were totally missing from the list of used sources in Chinese newspapers.

The Times of India vividly described the plight of Rohingyas in a way that can create empathy towards them. A combination of the human interest and the aid frames were evident in the reports. The human interest and aid frames were used in the same frequency, with 25.7%, followed by security frame (20%). While analyzing the reports, words like 'refugee', 'victim', 'violence', 'humanitarian', and 'civilian' were found frequently. The Times of India reports highlighted Indians' support for Rohingyas and protest against the Myanmar army's actions. Some of the headlines read: "Sikhs join protest in Australia against persecution of Rohingyas", "Muslim League to take out protest march to Myanmar embassy on Rohingya issue" "Hundreds take to the streets, demand justice for Rohingyas" and "Sikhs to start langar for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh border town". *The Times of India* gave readers accounts of eyewitnesses or observers. The author found two out of 10 selected reports which contained such accounts. They are: "Rohingya refugee crisis: Desperate need of food, water at Bangladesh shelters", and "We're victims of terror, not a security threat". These headlines carried the overall gist of the topic of a news articles. Along with using the official source of the home country, the newspaper

used the officials of different aid agencies who were working on the ground as first and second most frequent sources.

In the reports of the India-based Hindustan Times, the findings indicated that aid and human interest appeared to be the most salient frames followed by the security frame. In The Hindustan Times, issues of ethnic cleansing, refugee crisis and sufferings of Rohingyas appeared in a thematic way indirectly focused on security concerns. Around 22.2% of news reports of the newspaper used the security frame directly. For example a headline reads: "Rohingya refugees have IS, ISI links: Centre to SC." It reported the country's concern over the casualties of the Myanmarese security forces rather than the loss of innocent lives and highlighted the nobility of their own religious group with stories like "Sikh volunteers come to aid of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh." The newspaper in its headlines used words like "crisis" "refugee" "security" and "illegal." The *Hindustan Times* presented to the Indian audience a picture of just how the Rohingya were posing a threat to the country. Instead of covering the 2017 Rohingya crisis in Arakan, the newspaper focused more on existing Rohingya refugees who have been living there. The newspaper termed the Rakhine crisis a clash between the government forces and the armed militants and branded the ArakanRohingya Salvation Army as a Rohingya militant group. For example, one sentence from a report with headline "More Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh since Aug 25 than in the last two decades" reads: "Intelligence agencies have long reported that groups such as the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh and the Lashkar-e-Taiba have established links with the ArakanRohingya Salvation Army, a Rohingya militant group." The newspaper mostly used "national official" sources while filing the news reports on Rohingya. The *Hindustan Times* used security framing while *The Times of India* used more episodic and

empathy framing. The *Hindustan Times* did not file any report based on spot visits as *The Times of India* did.

In the Dhaka-based *The Daily Star*, the coverage of the Rohingya was reported with graphically dramatic descriptions of devastation and tragic accounts of hundreds of fleeing Rohingyas which is clearly evidenced in the stories headlined: "Stranded in no man's land", "Rohingya Crisis: Persecution on despite int'l call", "Water, Sanitation Crisis: Roadside refugees suffer the brunt" and "Rohingya villages still burning, mines laid". A report starts with a sentence: "Ignoring international call for halting cruelty to Rohingyas, Myanmar security forces continue persecution of members of the ethnic minority in the Rakhine State". Another report begins with a sentence: "Tens of thousands of Rohingyas, who are staying either in the open or in makeshift tents by the Cox's Bazar-Teknaf highway, hardly have any drinking water and sanitation facilities."

An analysis shows, the newspaper used the episodic frame to describe the suffering of the Rohingyas. This newspaper used the human interest and aid frames most. Among all the six newspaper this study analyzed, The Daily Star quoted Rohingya most around 15% of all use of sources. This indicates that the newspapers deployed their own staff on the spot to cover the event. The Daily Star covered widely the interviews of the people who fled their homeland, creating an emotional, empathy-caring and sympathy appeal. The use of words in its headlines provides a glaring example of ethnic cleansing and human rights debacle. Frequently used words in headlines are: "refugee" "influx" "violence" "genocide" "ethnic" "fleeing" and "atrocity". The newspaper quoting Rohingys gave horrific accounts of rape, mass killings – including beheading of their children, and arson attacks.

New Age focused more on the condemnation and the protest by local political groups and international communities, and called for a united effort to tackle the situation. Describing the situation, the newspaper mostly used the protest frame (32%) and presented the news in a thematic way. The daily used the terms "crisis"," refugee"," genocide"," persecution"," shelter" and ," influx" in its headlines. The overall tone of the New Age stories was pro-Rohingya, reflecting Rohingya sufferings and holding the Myanmar army responsible for the crisis. A headline reads: "Bangladesh hospital struggles to cope with Rohingya wounds." The newspaper ran stories covered by international news agencies including Reuters and Agence France-Presse (AFP) and heavily relied on "official sources" of the home country. For example, the newspaper ran a story quoting the health minister that several thousand pregnant Rohingya women entered Bangladesh.

The newspaper used national elite as its most frequent source with (21.5%) indicating that national political leaders and civil society members staged demonstration and issued statements criticizing the Myanmar government.

Regarding headline symbols, The Daily Star used more emotionally charged words while *New Age* used more plain and simple words. The *Daily Star* used the episodic frame more than *New Age*. New Age used the thematic frame more.

In both Indian and Bangladeshi media, SuuKyi was harshly criticized for her inactions and accused of resorting to political gambling. The Myanmar army was described by the Bangladesh media as barbarian while Chinese media praised Myanmar army for their effort in handling situation in Rakhine. The ArakanRohingya Salvation Army was branded as an insurgent group in the Bangladeshi media while Chinese media branded them as terrorists. Rohingya casualties were completely ignored in the Chinese media while both the episodic and

thematic frame surfaced in Bangladeshi and India media while covering the plight of thousands of Rohinga refugees. Bangladeshi newspapers' coverage focused more on multilateral/international help and people's sufferings from the conflict than the Indian and Chinese media. The Indian government avoided using the term "Rohingya", as the Myanmar government does not recognize members of the minority group as "Rohingya". But Indian newspaper widely used the term. Both the Indian newspapers the author studied used the term even in their headlines.

The study found significant differences in the style of covering the Rohingya issue by the media of three neighboring countries. News coverage of both the Chinese and Bangladeshi media is almost consistent with the foreign policy of their respective home countries as there was a consensus over the issue. However, amidst the policy uncertainty, the Indian media played both critical and supporting roles while reporting the crisis, consistent with Robinson's (2001) model. The elite dissensus provides the Indian media to choose from a great number of interpretations, not any unilateral approach in covering the issue.

It is very difficult to reach a conclusion with results of the qualitative analysis of a limited number of samples that there is clear correlation between consensus or dissensus in the government policy line and the coverage of the event because there might be other factors that influence the way in which the media covers the Rohingya issue.

This study examined news reports of online version of English-language newspapers, but English was not the native language of the countries. As the stories were downloaded from online archives there are possibilities of missing news reports. Future research should consider the vernacular press and print edition.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. CODEBOOK FOR QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

1. Articles no: The identification number was identical to the number from the dataset that helped identify the article in the codebook.

2. Headlines: The headline of the articles were identical to the original headline of the newspapers.

3. Newspapers' country: Identify the country name of the published news reports. The unique numbers will identify news reports' home country.

> (1) China
>
> (2) India
>
> (3) Bangladesh

4. Newspaper name: The variable helped identify the name of certain newspaper from the sample of six newspapers. The unique numbers will identify data from the relevant newspapers as follow:

> (1) People's Daily
>
> (2) China Daily
>
> (3) The Times of India
>
> (4) Hindustan Times
>
> (5) The Daily Star
>
> (6) New Age

5. Info Sources: Coder went through all the news reports and identify the sources the newspaper use to file the particular article and code for the following categories: if multiple sources are found, coder will code up to three sources.

> (1) National official: government officials including ministers and law enforcement

agencies and other officials of the home country of the respective newspapers.

(2) Myanmar: government officials of Myanmar, country's State Counsellor Aung San SuuKyi or army of the country

(3) Rohingya: who took refuge in Bangladesh and victims of the crisis

(4) Aid agency: United Nation and its other bodies, international NGOs and aid agencies such as International Organization of Migration, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Médecins Sans Frontières).

(5) Foreign officials: Heads of the state, ministers and diplomats of others country

(6) Local admin: Civil and officials of law enforcement agencies stationed at Cox's bazaar in Bangladesh where Rohingya took shelter

(7) Local elite: political leaders, experts and civil society members of respective newspaper's own country.

(8) Others: If sources used are not fall under the categories mentioned above

6. Frames: The variable helped identify the particular frame the article applied. If some articles use more than one frame, coder will identify three main frame and code accordingly.

(1) Conflict: News reports that referred to the Rohingya crisis as a clash between Rohingya people and Myanmar law enforcement agencies including army or clash between Rohingya and Buddhists. It portrayed the Rohingya as a terrorism-sponsoring group.

(2) Human interest: News reports that focuses on the human rights abuse of the Myanmar army such as murder, rape and burning down houses of Rohingya.

(3) Economic consequence: News reports that represent the crisis using the economic consequence of the crisis

(4) Aid: News reports that describes calling for aid and shelter of Rohingya, sending

relief materials, helping refugees, spreading moral message to help the destitute, urging the welfare of the refugees and expressing sympathy towards the refugees.

(5) Security: News reports that portrays Rohingya refugees as a threat to national security, focusing on illegal border crossing and their links with extremist groups.

(6) Protest: News reports that focus on condemnation and protest against the Myanmar government and army, the adaptation of resolution calling an end to persecution of Rohingya

APPENDIX B. CODEBSHEET FOR QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

Variables	Coding schema
Articles no	1.The number of the story
Headlines	2. The headline of the articles
Newspapers' country	3. The story was published in the newspaper of_____ (1) China (2) India (3) Bangladesh
Newspapers' name	4. The news report was published in the newspaper of _____ (1) People's Daily (2) China Daily (3) The Times of India (4) Hindustan Times (5) The Daily Star (6) New Age
Info sources i	5a. The news report used the source _____ (1) National official (2) Myanmar (3) Rohingya (4) Aid agency (5) Foreign officials (6) Local admin

	(7) Local elite
	(0) Others
Info sources ii	5b. The news report used the source _____
	(1) National official
	(2) Myanmar
	(3) Rohingya
	(4) Aid agency
	(5) Foreign officials
	(6) Local admin
	(7) Local elite
	(0) Others
Info sources iii	5c. The news report used the source _____
	(1) National official
	(2) Myanmar
	(3) Rohingya
	(4) Aid agency
	(5) Foreign officials
	(6) Local admin
	(7) Local elite
	(0) Others
Frames i	6a. The news report uses the frame _____
	(1) Conflict
	(2) Human interest

	(3) Economic consequence
	(4) Aid
	(5) Security
	(6) Protest
	(0) Others
Frames ii	6b. The news report uses the frame _____
	(1) Conflict
	(2) Human interest
	(3) Economic consequence
	(4) Aid
	(5) Security
	(6) Protest
	(0) Others

VITA

Born in 1980, MdKhadimul Islam is a seasoned journalist in Bangladesh. Raised in a small town in ChapaiNawabganj, a district of the north-western part of Bangladesh, he had to move to capital city Dhaka for higher studies at the age of 15. Soon after getting admitted into the University of Dhaka, a dream school for many students, he started his career in journalism as the university correspondent with The Independent, a national English language daily newspaper published from Dhaka, in 1999 when he was an undergraduate student. In 2003, he joined another national English language daily, New Age, where he has been serving on different positions. He had also led the team of reporters of the newspaper for about a year as a chief of correspondents.

In his sixteen years as a journalist and reporter, he covered three national elections, a military coup, the arrest and trial of two former prime ministers and the UN peacekeeping mission in Liberia. He was twice injured in police violence and stood very close by during an assassination attempt on the current Prime Minister of Bangladesh, then Leader of the Opposition. Khadimul filed more than 500 special and exclusive stories, some creating an uproar in society and moving the government to take remedial actions. He reported from Liberia, Japan, Singapore and Dubai. He was only yards away when the current Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, came under a grenade attack during a political rally in 2004.

In 2015, his report on rising cost of health care was selected as the best report in health category by the leading professional journalists association in Bangladesh. His reporting on the

corruption of examinations officials led to the cancellation of a national recruitment examination. His academic research paper titled "How newspapers in China, India, and Bangladesh framed the Rohingya Crisis of 2017" got "best abstract award" at the AEJMC Mid-winter conference 2018.

He participated in two prestigious fellowships — the Asia Journalism Fellowships in Singapore and the International Institute for Journalism (IIJ) in Berlin, Germany in 2010— and represented Bangladesh in the South Asian Youth Exchange Program in Japan. He always enjoys getting involved with leadership and social activities. He had the opportunities of serving different professional and social bodies including Dhaka University Journalist Association, Reporters Forum for Election and Democracy, Centre for Advanced Media and ChapaiNawabganj Welfare Society as elected representative in different capacities. I was also an elected leader of the associations of the journalist working out of Dhaka.