



ULAB
UNIVERSITY OF LIBERAL ARTS
BANGLADESH

Media Studies and Journalism Department

Internship (Research) Report

Portraying Shahbag Movement in the Media: A Study of Two Leading Dailies, Prothom Alo and Daily Naya Diganta

Name: Tufael Ahmed
Student ID: 172012006

Term: Fall 2023
Course Code: MSJ 11498

Submission Date: December 19, 2023

Table of Contents

Students Details:	3
PLAGIARISM DECLARATION.....	4
INTERNSHIP REPORT APPROVAL FORM	5
Introduction.....	6
Self-Reflection	7
Objectives:	8
Chapter I:	
• Background of the study	10
• Objectives of the study.....	13
• Research Questions	13
• Significance of the Study	13
Chapter II:	
• Literature Review.....	15
• Theoretical Framework.....	24
• Conceptual Framework.....	25
• Operation Definition	26
References.....	27

Students Details

Name	Tufael Ahmed
Student ID	172012006
Department	Media Studies and Journalism
Concentration	Digital Journalism
Career Goal	To be a successful journalist.
Website	https://sites.google.com/view/tufael-ahmed

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

1. I know that plagiarism means taking and using the ideas, writings, works or inventions of another as if they were one's own. I know that plagiarism not only includes verbatim copying, but also the extensive use of another person's ideas without proper acknowledgement (which includes the proper use of quotation marks). I know that plagiarism covers this sort of use of material found in textual sources and from the Internet.
2. I acknowledge and understand that plagiarism is wrong.
3. I understand that my research must be accurately referenced.
4. This assignment is my own work, or my group's own unique group assignment. I acknowledge that copying someone else's assignment, or part of it, is wrong, and that submitting identical work to others constitutes a form of plagiarism.
5. I have not allowed, nor will I in the future allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as their own work.

Tufael Ahmed

Name: Tufael Ahmed

ULAB ID: 172012006

INTERNSHIP REPORT APPROVAL FORM

Student Name: Tufael Ahmed

ID No. 172012006

Major: Digital Journalism

Year: 2023

Local Phone: 01609361289

Email: tufael.ahmed.msaj@ulab.edu.bd

Semester (Tick one):

☐ Spring 2023

☐ Summer 2023

☒ Fall 2023

Advisor APPROVAL

(Please place a Tick)

☐ Approved

☐ Not Approved

☒ Partial Re-write

☐ Full Re-write

Remarks (If Not Approved/Pretrial/Full Rewrite):

The student will continue his work in the graduate program where it will be further improved.

Signature:



Date: December 20, 2023

Name: Sarkar Barbaq Quarmal, PhD

Title: Associate Professor

E-mail: sarkar.barbaq@ulab.edu.bd

Phone: +880-2-966-1255

Acknowledgement

This Research Internship Report is not only the result of the last three months of hard work, but also the result of the river of knowledge that I have been exposed to little by little through various courses over the last 4 years. From choosing a thesis topic to thesis preliminary research, everything is basically the result of reading media studies so far. How the media shapes the opinion of the common people, whether the media has a great influence on everything from the way of life to the desired activities, I have learned while studying media studies. Because of this I understand how important media responsibility and accountability is. In this thesis I have tried to understand that in more detail and to explain it to others.

I am grateful to the entire faculty of the Department of Media Studies and Journalism for their support and guidance. Special thanks to my Research Internship supervisor Dr Sarkar Barbaq Quarmal and Dr Habib Mohammad Ali for their invaluable contribution. This recognition is a testament to the collective influence and mentorship that has enriched my academic journey.

Self-Reflection

During my four years within the Department of Media Studies and Journalism, I even have gained various skills, knowledge, and cultural knowledge. I have learned to communicate through masks, posters, graffiti, and films. The course projects have boosted my confidence for work, I have noticed. Now I have a far better understanding of the culture and the way to interpret it. I have learnt how media works and the way to use it effectively.

Summary

My study aims to explore the portrayal of the Shahbag movement in the Daily Prothom Alo and Daily Dainik Naya Diganta during the first month of the protest. The study aims to analyze themes, portrayal of key figures, and strategies employed by the media. The Shahbag movement in Bangladesh started after the 2013 verdict in the war crime trial of Abdul Quader Mollah. Main focus of the study lies in contributing valuable insights into media dynamics during important socio political events and their effect on public opinion. This study promotes media literacy, encouraging critical thinking among the public. The theoretical framework based on media framing theory, exploring how language, imagery and story placement affect audience understanding. The conceptual framework contains independent variables represented by the two newspapers and dependent variables such as themes, images, key figures and story priorities. The analysis also explores tone, word usage, title features, theme frequency, and story placement. The study offers a roadmap for understanding the different framing strategies used by each newspaper and their role in shaping public opinion. Next, I plan to advance my research by pursuing a Master's in Communication.



CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The Shahbag Movement, also known as Shahbag Ganadabi, Shahbag Andolan, Shahbag Mass Blockade, or Gana Jagaran Mancha at Shahbag, unfolded on February 5 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This movement emerged following the International Criminal Tribunal's verdict on Abdul Quader Mollah's trial for war crimes during the 1971 Bangladesh War of Independence. Abdul Quader Mollah was sentenced to life imprisonment for crimes that included the murder of poet Meherun Nesa and the killing of 344 people in Alubdi village. However, despite the verdict, a large number of people and young activists online expressed dissatisfaction, and public discontent continued to grow (BBC, 2013; Deutsche Welle, 2014).

Nirjhar Majumder was one of the earliest reactionaries to promptly express his dissent to this verdict. He posted on his Facebook, 'We will assemble in front of the Chittagong Press Club at 3:30 pm, initiating a protest rally.' Rakibul Bashar Rakib, in a concise comment, said, 'I have taken responsibility for Dhaka.' Notably, the Blogger and Online Activist Network (BOAN) urges Imran H. Sarkar and Dreamer of Bonds (Mahmudul Haque Munshi) to join the solidarity at Shahbag by providing their phone numbers. The event's main promoter, Siddative Hypnotics (Tanzir Islam Britto), had previously organized events promoting or expressing discontent for any cricket-related issue in Bangladesh. Other social media and blog activists spontaneously join with solidarity to this early dissent. Among well-known blogs, Sushant Das Gupta's 'amarblog.com' stands out. This is point out as the beginning of the Shahbag Movement. (Tuhin, 2014). The movement started as a response to the lack acceptance from younger generation of life imprisonment as punishment for several murders, rapes, genocides, and crimes against humanity at Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971.

Before the Shahbag protest in Bangladesh, Online Activism played a crucial role in raising awareness against war criminals of 1971 liberation war. A joint work began in the online space, with people from different backgrounds wanting war crimes trials and assembling groups to raise the government for proper action. The basis set by Online Activism 1971 before the Shahbag protest concrete the way for a larger movement in Bangladesh.

It is noteworthy that, on the eve of the 2008 general elections in Bangladesh, particularly resonating with the younger generation, there was widespread awareness regarding the trial of individuals accused of crimes against humanity committed in East Pakistan in 1971. It is certain that this public demand found a place in the Awami League's election manifesto. Following the party's victory on December 29, 2008, the newly formed government took the initiative to fulfill this election promise (Kibria, 2011). In line with the Parliament's approval, ascertain that on March 25, 2009, the government announced its intention to investigate and prosecute the accused under the existing International Criminal Tribunals Act of 1973. Subsequently, seeking expert opinions, the government sent the proposed amendments to the Tribunal Act to the Law Commission on May 21, 2009. Note that the Law Commission, after consulting experts, provided recommendations to amend the 1973 Tribunal (Reydams, Wouters, & Ryngaert, 2012).

Taking these recommendations into account, the National Parliament, through an oral vote on July 9, 2009, passed several amendments to update the 1973 law, bringing about significant changes. These amendments included provisions allowing the tribunal to bring individuals and groups to trial, along with a clear legal provision ensuring the tribunal's independent proceedings (Rahman & Baxter, 2010). After 39 years of independence, the trial of those accused of war crimes took place in 2010, marked by the formation of a tribunal, a panel of lawyers, and an investigative agency on March 25. After these progresses, the tribunal actively start arrest and investigation of individuals accused of war crimes. The first verdict, sentencing Abul Kalam Azad (Bachchu Razakar) to death, was delivered on January 21, 2013. On February 5, in a second verdict, Quader Mollah was sentenced to 15 years in prison for three offenses and life imprisonment for two. However, the general public could not accept life imprisonment as a punishment for such serious crimes. This disapproval caused in the Shahbag Movement, which led to a change in the law (Alam, 2013).

The protesters opted for a creative form of expression, utilizing slogans, songs, poems, and plays as powerful tools during the rally. In a symbolic act, effigies of war criminals were set ablaze. The protestors has clear demands, wanting for the highest punishment for Quader Mullah and all accused of war crimes. Also, their demands involved the ban of Jamaat-e-Islami's politics and the boycott of all organizations related with Jamaat-Shibir.

The Shahbag Movement in Bangladesh, although marked by significant achievements, also experienced some failures. Despite the initial unity, various controversies emerged within the movement. Direct precipitation of Awami League leaders raised questions about commitment to the movement's principles. The opposition party complains that it is nothing but a dramatic setup, intended to distract attention from government failures and corruption, at the same time ruining the reputation of the opposition and making villains their leaders. Furthermore, the movement failed to address the concern of unemployed activists and students who joined the protests.

During the protest, Bangladeshi media, especially influential newspapers like Prothom Alo, Daily Star, Janakantha, and Kaler Kantho, played a significant role in fostering a collective support system. While there were other news organizations with less backing, few media outlets expressed anti-Shahbag sentiments, such as Amardesh, Diganta Media, and Sonar Bangla blog.

In my research, I aim to investigate how the Bangladeshi media portrayed the Shahbag movement and influenced public opinion. Media, in numerous practices, has a large impact on shaping public views. The presentation of news, highlighted stories, and the tone used to send information all play key roles in people's opinions of the world. This complex relationship between media and public opinion is evident in the coverage of protests, where language choice can frame it as a "peaceful dissent for justice" or a "violent uprising," influencing diverse viewer perceptions (English Plus Podcast, 2023). To explore the portrayal of the Shahbag movement in Bangladeshi media, I will analyze the content of Prothom Alo and Naya Diganta during the first month of the movement.

Prothom Alo is one of the largest and most circulated daily newspapers in Bangladesh (National Media Survey, 2018). Prothom Alo was first published on November 4, 1998. Ramon Magsaysay Award winner Journalist Matiur Rahman is the founding editor of this newspaper. He also worked as the publisher of this newspaper since 2008. It has a major audience and considered a mainstream and influential media outlet. Prothom Alo is often perceived as a more neutral or progressive media source. Analyzing its coverage shows how a mainstream outlet frames and presents information about a movement like Shahbag.

On the other hand, Naya Diganta is a national daily newspaper of Bangladesh published in Bengali language by Digant Media Corporation since 2004. It is a part of Digant Media

Corporation owned by Mir Kasem Ali, who was later sentenced as a war criminal. Naya Diganta is known for its conservative Islamic approach. Analyzing the coverage of Naya Diganta can shed light on how media outlets of different ideological orientations portrayed and responded to the movement. Adding of Naya Diganta in the analysis offers a wider understanding of the media landscape during the Shahbag movement. This provides a chance to explore how different views and ideological positions were expressed in the media regarding the protests.

I will analyze the news stories, op-eds, features, images, interviews published in the first month of Shahbagh movement and explore the media representation of Shahbagh based on theme, tone of writing, and use of language, key figure portrayal, placement, and frequency.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the portrayal of Shahbag Movement on Daily Prothom Alo and Daily Naya Diganta in terms of the attention, emphasis, prominence, themes, portrayal of key figures, sources cited.
- To explore the frames used in their coverage of Shahbag Movement by Daily Prothom Alo and Daily Naya Diganta

1.3 Research Questions

- In what way did Prothom Alo and Daily Naya Diganta portrayed the Shahbag Movement?
- What frames the said media organizations used in their coverage of Shahbag Movement?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study offers valuable understandings into media dynamics during significant sociopolitical events, contributing to academic understanding of media representation and influence.

The findings of this study address the social impact of media coverage on public opinion, especially during critical events such as the Shahbag movement. It promotes media literacy, encouraging critical thinking among the public.



ULAB

UNIVERSITY OF LIBERAL ARTS
BANGLADESH

CHAPTER II

STUDY FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the study frameworks – Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Framework – and a literature review on the topic, offering understandings and views while reviewing past research in the area. It aims to identify the theory and strategies they used in previous studies and highlight the need for this research. I am also identifying how this media framing tools effects vary on social and cultural context. To conduct a details analysis from various angles, four themes have been chosen.

1. Media Influence on National Identities and Political Landscape in the Context of the Shahbag Movement
2. Media Influence on Shaping Public Perception and Opinion
3. Media Framing of Social Movements:
4. Media Coverage of Protests in Different Cultural Contexts

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Media Influence on National Identities and Political Landscape: The Context of the Shahbag Movement. Parvez (2022) explored the role of the press in structuring national identities within contemporary Bangladesh, employing critical discourse analysis to study newspaper content, mainly focusing on news texts related to three pivotal events in 2013. The Shahbag movement, the murder of blogger Rajib, and the Hefajat movement were subjected to a quantitative critical discourse analysis. The study found out a broader building of two binary and intolerant identities in the news coverage. The study highlighted how each newspaper contributed to affecting meanings related with national identities and ideologies, with a tendency to justify the interests of the in-group ('us') while critiquing the out-group ('them'). Despite offering valuable insights into the media's influence on national identities in Bangladesh, it's notable that the analysis mostly focused on front-page articles, possibly overlooking nuanced viewpoints present in other sections of the newspapers.

Roy's (2017) study on the Shahbag movement in Bangladesh observes its dynamics from February 5 to the year's end. Using Resource Mobilization Theory, The research studies Shahbag's connections with the Awami League. Objectives included probing ideological shifts, evaluating framing tasks' impact, analyzing Awami League merge, and tracing the movement's transition from mass mobilization to demobilization while critically examining limitations. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study integrates movement documents, a participant survey with 300 online participants, and open-ended interviews. Major findings reveal Shahbag's formal recognition as a spokesperson for secularist civil society, especially in urban areas, but with limited acceptance in rural communities. Despite recognition, the movement struggles to profit lasting benefits, weakening secularist lobbying power and shifting influence toward Islamist groups. The study acknowledges limitations related to access constraints, potential online data collection exclusions, oversimplified depictions, response biases, and financial constraints.

Arman (2017) led a study discovering the Shahbag movement's understandings into Bangladesh's political conflict and cultural dynamics. The research evaluated the movement's reflection and influence on the socio-political landscape, contributing to social movement criticism through Kenneth Burke's Dramatism theory. The study focused on the documentary "GonoManusher Gonojoar" using visual analysis, employing a three-step approach—iconographic description, content analysis, and contextualized interpretation. Findings show the documentary's use of visual elements like symbols and interviews to depict the movement's background, activities, and ideological position. The dramatic portrayal highlighted non-violence and cultural symbols. However, the study's limitation lies in the absence of triangulation research strategies and in-depth interviews with Shahbag protesters, potentially limiting a complete understanding of the visual contextualized interpretation.

Rahman (2022) explored how social media platforms, specifically Facebook and Twitter, influence the rise of religious nationalism in Bangladesh after the Shahbag movement. Using a mixed-methods approach containing online observation and in-depth interviews in Sylhet and Dhaka, the research investigated the role of these platforms in shaping views of truth, particularly in branding discourses like secularism and atheism. The study reveals that social media, particularly Facebook, plays an important role in circulating religiously

driven nationalist ideas, contributing to the formation of religious identity. Also, it highlights a widespread social stigma against atheists and secularists in Bangladesh, representing that these groups are alleged as threats to Islam. Social media platforms are recognized as amplifiers of this stigma, raising hate speech and marginalization against individuals identifying as atheists or secularists. However, it acknowledges limitations, including potential lack of generalizability and bias due to the exclusive focus on online perspectives, which may not fully represent the diverse opinions in the broader population.

2.1.2 Media Influence on Shaping Public Perception and Opinion. McCombs & Shaw (1972) in their seminal 1972 study aimed to examine the agenda-setting skills of the mass media during the 1968 presidential campaign. Focusing on voters in Chapel Hill, the researchers used a mixed-methods approach combining voter interviews and media content analysis from a variety of sources. One hundred respondents, identified as undecided voters, were randomly selected to ensure diverse representation. They used agenda-setting theory to explore the relationship between media coverage and voters' views of key political issues. The results suggest a strong relationship between media campaign emphasis on different issues and voters' decisions about the importance and importance of those issues. Evidence supports the hypothesis that mass media exert significant influence on public agendas during a campaign, shaping perceptions during a campaign. Additionally, the study sheds light on cognitive style, highlighting the role of affective fluency in voter communication behavior and media use. Despite these valuable insights, the study acknowledged limitations, particularly the reliance on correlations, preventing the establishment of causal relationships and allowing room for alternative interpretations of the observed patterns.

Copock et al. (2018) conducted a broad test of the persuasive effect of newspaper opinion on public opinion through two randomized panel survey experiments, which catered to both mass and elite opinion leaders. Based on John William Atkinson's expectancy value model, the study recruited an elite sample of 2,169 individuals, including professionals in journalism, academia, and politics, as well as a mass convenience sample of 3,567 subjects from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). The study uncovered that the effect of op-eds on attitude change lasts beyond the initial exposure, challenging conventional notions of short-lived effects. Notably, op-eds were identified as highly cost-effective tools for

perspective change, with estimated cost-per-mind varying from about 50 cents to \$3. This underscores the financial efficiency of producing and circulating op-eds as a strategic approach to influencing public opinion. Despite substantial treatment effects, the study acknowledges the limited overall impact on overall public opinion due to the relatively modest readership of op-eds. The stability of the average effect between Wave 2 and Wave 3, along with sustained effects over time, suggests that researchers emphasize that op-eds work primarily by conveying information rather than relying on short-term priming effects. The study's reliance on a sample of Amazon Mechanical Turks and elite opinion leaders, along with recognition of the limited overall impact on overall public opinion due to the op-ed's relatively small readership, poses a limitation to generalizability.

Kanaker et al. (2018) utilized framing theory to analyze how Al Jazeera and the BBC framed the causes and effects of the Rohingya crisis, focusing on news coverage in 2017. The research findings contribute to the understanding of media framing of minority crises, urging media organizations to consider different frames, including economic and ethical perspectives. Utilizing content analysis, the study identified six main causes, with both news outlets predominantly emphasizing security and military causes (91.8% coverage). In terms of ramifications, a total of 20 were identified, and while both Al Jazeera and BBC covered the majority, Al Jazeera independently addressed 17, whereas BBC covered only 10 independently. The study revealed significant differences between the channels' framing, particularly in the category of deportation, where BBC had a higher percentage (58%) compared to Al Jazeera (32.8%). The method employed was quantitative content analysis of news bulletins from both channels throughout 2017. The study recommends further research on the root causes of the Rohingya crisis and advocates for international intervention through organizations like the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

Babu and Venkateswarlu (2017) explored the portrayal of ISIS by Indian newspapers, focusing on The Hindu, The Times of India, Andhra Jyothi, and Prajasakti. Utilizing a content analysis approach, the research identified five main frames—Diplomatic, Military, Violence, Human Impact, and Mixed—to analyze news, editorials, articles, and photos. Applying Framing Theory, the study found that The Times of India and Andhra Jyothi allocated more coverage to ISIS than their counterparts. Also, variation in framing was noted with The Times of India emphasizing violence and the military frame, while The

Hindu prioritized the diplomatic frame. In Telugu newspapers, Andhra Jyoti leans towards the violent frame and Prajashakti focuses more on the diplomatic frame. Despite providing valuable insights into media coverage, the study acknowledges a limitation in not directly examining the impact of such framing on public perception, particularly among young people. A more thorough exploration of social consequences may enhance the overall conclusions and implications of the study.

Dotson et al. (2012) undertake a broad analysis of climate change coverage in Santiago, Chile, contrasting two major newspapers – El Mercurio (conservative) and La Nación (liberal). Investigating articles from 2003, 2005, and 2007 (20% of 1,628), the study scrutinized quantity, length, imagery, sources, framing, and thematic focus. Positioned within media influence, agenda-setting and framing, the study identifies significant findings related to climate change coverage. La Nación significantly outnumbered El Mercurio in the number of articles published, indicating the diversity of attention to climate change among newspapers with different political leanings. Additionally, articles in La Nación were almost twice as long as those in El Mercurio, suggesting a diversity in the presentation of climate change issues. Both newspapers demonstrated an increasing emphasis on climate change from 2003 to 2007, with La Nación consistently publishing more articles and El Mercurio demonstrating an increased commitment during this period. However, a limitation exists in the research scope of source analysis, emphasizing the need for more nuanced examination to understand the forces shaping climate change coverage in these newspapers.

Kiwanuka-Tondo et al. (2012) applied framing theory to a research study examining Ugandan news coverage of HIV/AIDS between 2000 and 2004, with a focus on influential factors such as media ownership and journalistic sources. The study, rooted in framing theory, explored about 800 articles from prominent private and government-owned newspapers in Uganda. The results suggest a distinct non-linear trajectory of print news coverage, marked by a decline between 2000 and 2002 followed by an upswing. Notably, curative medicine emerges as the prevailing frame, while high-risk behaviors gain the least prominence. The private press exhibits more extensive coverage, different news frames and higher contributions from foreign journalists. Conversely, government-owned newspapers emphasize the 'solution' frame, and local journalists display clear variation in the application of the frame. Despite the decline in HIV prevalence, the study revealed an

unexpected increase in news coverage, challenging the expected direct relationship. However, limitations including the focus on two newspapers and the use of broad issue frames emphasize the need for nuanced interpretation of coverage dynamics.

Suryandari and Arifin (2021) conducted a qualitative study with the primary objective of comprehending and analyzing the negative portrayal of Islam and Muslims in international media, particularly post-9/11, with a specific focus on Western media. Employing a literature review and examining existing studies, the research delved into British press discussions about Muslims, applying framing theory to understand how media selectively shapes information to influence audience perceptions. The results revealed a consistent pattern of Islamophobia in Western media, perpetuating stereotypes of extremism, terrorism, and backwardness, thereby fostering discriminatory attitudes. Important events such as the 9/11 attacks and Paris bombings increased negative representations, serving as promoters for biased media coverage relating Islam with violence. Also, the study claimed the media's distortion of the concepts of jihad and Islam, relating them to extremism and terrorism, and create a doubtful and tensed Western audiences. However, a notable limitation acknowledged was the potential lack of diversity in the analyzed sources.

2.1.3 Media Framing of Social Movements. Karyotakis et al. (2017) conducted an in-depth investigation into the key role of digital media organizations in covering the Egyptian 'Arab Spring' and assessed the framing strategies employed by examining 92 English-language articles by Al Jazeera, BBC and China Daily. February 9 to 13, 2011, coincided with the end of Hosni Mubarak's presidency. The study uncovers different framing patterns with Al Jazeera, BBC and China Daily emphasizing the 'public affairs', 'civil unrest' and 'human interest' frames respectively. The frequency of the 'civil unrest' frame, particularly in Al Jazeera's coverage, portrays the Egyptian coup as a war zone. Contrary to popular belief, China Daily's comprehensive coverage challenges the perception of the Chinese media's exclusive focus on domestic affairs. While emphasizing quantitative analysis, the study suggests the need for qualitative exploration to enrich the understanding of media dynamics during transformative events such as the 'Arab Spring'.

Arpan et al.'s (2006) study delves into the news framing of social protests, specifically the prevalent narrative of "police vs. protesters," exploring the impact of photographs and prior attitudes. Through an experimental design involving undergraduate students, the research unveils that visual framing, particularly the use of conflictual photos, significantly

shapes participants' evaluations of protesters and the perceived effectiveness of protests. This influence is more pronounced when the issue being protested is of greater interest. Conflictual photos related to the exit exam issue result in more negative evaluations of protesters, including heightened criticism, reduced identification, lower perceived effectiveness, and a belief in diminished support from other students compared to peaceful photos.

Zhang et al. (2023) explore reporting bias in Chinese protest event coverage using Weibo data. Focusing on the role of the government and the media, the study analyzed 136,330 protests from 2010 to mid-2017. It discovers media selectivity, using logistic and quasi-Poisson regression models to quantify bias. The research, adapting Western methods, addresses gaps in understanding state-media-society dynamics in China's authoritarian context. The findings reveal stark differences in coverage: the government reports only 0.4% of Weibo protests, while news media cover 6.3%. This contrast stems from the government's strategic emphasis on legitimacy, resulting in underreported protests. Furthermore, reporting bias emerged, with government accounts portraying the events as less disruptive, while the news media portrayed them as more violent. Despite the insightful findings, the study cautions against potential errors in machine-predicted datasets, emphasizing caution in interpreting regression model estimates.

Gause et al. (2023) aimed to examine how the race of protesters influences media coverage of protests in the United States. They analyzed 638 transcripts of television news stories from 2008 to 2016, focusing solely on liberal protests. Using Critical Race Theory and Media Framing Theory, the researchers found that news media were more likely to use language linked with fear and anger when covering protests involving people of color, compared to protests with mostly White protesters. The study proposes a statistically important pattern in media framing based on the racial composition of protesters, with a more definite difference in fear-inducing words than anger-inducing words. The researchers also noted differences in coverage based on both race and ideological likings of media outlets, especially among liberal-leaning broadcast networks. However, the study's applicability to conservative protests or different ideological contexts may be limited.

2.1.4 Media Coverage of Protests in Different Cultural Contexts. Palmer (2021) study is to investigate the portrayal of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in both national legacy and digital-native newsrooms. Analyzes a sample of 412 articles from national legacy and digital-native newsrooms while using framing theory. Framing theory suggests that presenting an issue from different angle can effect public opinion. The study uses keywords related to tone and framing for content analysis of the selected articles. The findings explain that both types of newsrooms use various frames when covering the BLM movement. Digital-native outlets tend to portray BLM more positively, while legacy newsrooms focusing on reaction and conflict show increased coverage during key moments of social unrest Digital-native newsrooms prove a more varied use of frames, including conjecture and historical outlook. Despite its findings, the study may not fully capture the diversity of media coverage because of its restricted article sample. There is also a possibility for search term biases, manipulating the articles included in the analysis.

Chang (2020) examines the impact of media coverage on social movements, using the Bersih 3.0 rally as a case study. Employing frame analysis, the research analyzes news reports from two major Malaysian newspapers, Utusan Malaysia and SinChew Daily, to understand how media framing shapes public perception of the social movement. The findings indicate that both newspapers utilized diagnostic framing, employing terms like "topple" and "hijack" to negatively portray the Bersih 3.0 movement, contributing to a biased and unfavorable cognitive impact on readers. The study applies the frame analysis theory to emphasize the role of media in constructing frames that influence public understanding of social movements. However, it acknowledges the limitation of potential oversimplification in attributing definitive cognitive impacts to media framing.

Lee (2014) examined the protest paradigm in Hong Kong newspaper coverage of protests, treating the protest paradigm as a variable influenced by various factors. Analyzing 1,767 articles from four newspapers between 2001 and 2012, the study finds that the protest paradigm is more likely to emerge in coverage involving radical tactics, responses from protest targets, and, in politically conservative newspapers, political topics. Political protests exhibit more negative coverage, aligning with the protest paradigm, while coverage becomes less negative over time. Lee's analysis also considers the role of media outlets' political stances, radicalism in protest tactics, responses from targets, protest

topics, and social discontent in shaping news coverage. Despite limitations, including reliance on media content for protest characteristics and the study's non-comprehensive range of factors, the research contributes to understanding the conditions triggering the media's social control function, specifically in the context of Hong Kong's evolving sociopolitical landscape.

In their study, Proust and Saldaña (2022) aimed to explore the connection between generic frames and protest frames in the media coverage of Chile's *Estallido Social*, a series of significant political protests occurring from October to December 2019. Focusing on 417 stories from Radio Bío Bío, a highly trusted Chilean news outlet, the researchers employed content analysis. The researchers conducted content analysis of news stories published on Radio Bío Bío's Facebook page. To estimate the relationship between generic frames and protest frames, the researchers modeled a multinomial logistic regression. Inter-coder reliability was established at 93%, with a Krippendorff's alpha of 0.84. Utilizing multinomial logistic regression, the study found that a majority of news stories depicted the political unrest from either the Riot (26%) or Confrontation (12%) perspectives. A smaller portion explored protester motivations through the Debate frame (7.5%), and even fewer adopted the Spectacle frame (5%). Additionally, around half of the stories did not align with any protest frame, concentrating on providing information about navigating the city safely. However, a limitation of the study is its reliance on a single news source, Radio Bío Bío, raising concerns about the generalizability of the findings to the broader Chilean media landscape.

Wasserman et al. (2018) aim to investigate and describe the nature of print media coverage of service delivery protests in post-apartheid South Africa. Employing a quantitative content analysis, the study explores how these protests are framed in relation to democracy, seeking to understand mainstream South African newspapers' portrayals and the interpretations provided to frame the conflicts. Motivated by the observed increase in service delivery protests and the media's role in shaping public perceptions, the study analyzes 251 news stories from four newspapers, namely *Business Day*, *Mail and Guardian*, *the New Age*, and *the Daily Sun*. Using the protest paradigm method, the study identifies that a majority of protest stories appear in the political section (68.5%) and attributes causes mostly to political culture (88.8%) and economic factors (79.9%). The

Daily Sun tabloid portrays democracy most negatively (4.05), and its coverage of institutional (4.45) and societal aspects (4.29) is particularly negative. However, it's important to note that the study's focus on mainstream commercial print media may result in a narrow representation of perspectives, potentially overlooking alternative viewpoints from non-commercial community print media, thus limiting the comprehensiveness of the findings.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a set of interrelated concepts, definitions, and propositions that explain or predict phenomena or the relationships between them. (Creswell and Creswell, 2018) It is a structure or framework of ideas that is used to guide the research process and helps to organize and define the key concepts being studied. It can be seen as a roadmap for research, providing a way to guide the research process and help researchers interpret their findings.

Media framing theory, pioneered by Erving Goffman, explained how news agency form public opinion by emphasizing certain aspects of an issue while downplaying others. It explores the subtle ways in which language, images and story placement effect the audience's understanding of events, tell the powerful role media play in shaping our view of the world. (Goffman, 1974) In the context of the Shahbag movement, this theory became most important in understanding how Prothom Alo and Naya Diganta shaped public opinion. By choosing which themes and narratives to highlight, these newspapers played an important role in creating the meaning of the movement for their readers. My research aims to analyzing these framing strategies, shedding light on the indirect ways in which the media contributed to shaping public understanding during the crisis.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

In my research, the independent variables are represented by two prominent newspapers, Prothom Alo and Daily Naya Diganta. The study focuses on the portrayal of the Shahbag Movement, with the dependent variables Themes and Narratives, Portrayal of Key Figures, and Story Priority. The analysis contains various content forms such as news stories, op-eds, and images. My analyzing contains observing tone, word usage, headline characteristics, theme frequency, and the placement of news stories in both newspapers.

The objective is to methodically study these elements to understand diverse framing strategies used by each newspaper. This contains a close analysis of emotional touch in tone and word usage, understanding primary focus through headline characteristics, counting the frequency of specific themes, and calculating the placement of news stories to explain perceived impact. With this broad content analysis, the purpose is to discover the indirect details of media framing and its role in shaping public opinion and thoughts of the Shahbag Movement.

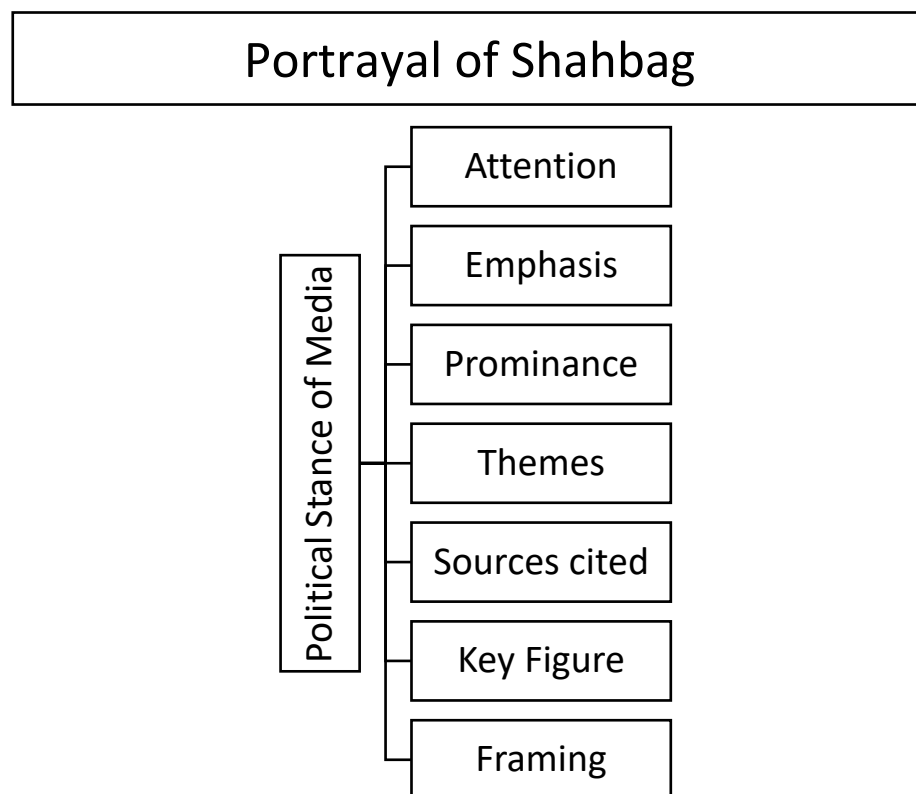


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.4 Operational Definitions

2.4.1 Media Portrayal. In the context of my study, media portrayal means the presentation of Shahbag movement by two leading newspapers of Bangladesh, Prothom Alo and Naya Diganta. It contains themes, narratives, language used, and the overall set up of the movement in stories, op-eds, features, images, and interviews.

2.4.2 Key Figures of Shahbagh Movement. Key figures means to individuals who have played important roles in the Shahbagh Movement, activists, bloggers and leaders. Important figure related to Shahbag movement are Imran H Sarkar, Tanzir Islam Britto (সিডাটিভ হিপনোটিক্স), Arif Jebtik, Luckey Akter, Nasiruddin Yousuff, Muhammed Zafar Iqbal, Mahmudul Haque Munshi, and Omi Rahman Pial.

2.4.3. Media Bias. Media bias discusses the bias or prejudice that exist in the coverage of any events. In my study, this relates to any pattern or bias in the reporting of the Shahbag movement by Prothom Alo and Dainik Naya Diganta, which may influence public opinion and involvement.

2.4.4. Public Opinion. Public opinion means the shared opinions, attitudes and feelings of the general public. My study aims to explore how media coverage of the Shahbag movement shape or effect public opinion, contributing to the larger debate on the social impact of media coverage during critical events.

2.4.5 Story Priority. Story priority is defined as the deliberate arrangement of news articles on the Shahbag Movement in the newspapers, reflecting the weight or relevance that these stories are thought to have. This will be evaluated by looking at how Shahbag Movement-related stories were positioned in Prothom Alo and Daily Naya Diganta throughout the given time period, including page placement, headline size, and frequency of coverage.

2.4.6 Media Framing. Media framing is the deliberate choice and presentation of material by news organizations that affects how the public interprets and comprehends a story. (Goffman, 1974) To explore and analyze how Prothom Alo and Daily Naya Diganta framed the Shahbag Movement in their reporting, the study used framing analysis methods, such as language analysis, theme identifying, and visual analysis.

2.4.7 Media Literacy. Media literacy involves individuals' ability to critically analyze and interpret media messages. My study's findings have suggestions for media literacy, it contributes to understanding how media representations can influence public opinion and nurture critical thinking among viewers.

References

- Alam, S. (2013, February 11). *Bangladesh approves law to swiftly execute war criminals*. Yahoo! News. <https://sg.news.yahoo.com/bangladesh-approves-law-swiftly-execute-war-criminals-175452869.html>
- Arman, Z., & Assistant, G. (2018). The Rhetoric of the Shahbag Movement: Understanding Political Conflict and Culture of Bangladesh. *Asian Profile*, 45, 311-319.
- Arpan, L. M., Baker, K., Lee, Y., Jung, T., Lorusso, L., & Smith, J. (2006). News coverage of social protests and the effects of photographs and prior attitudes. *Mass Communication and Society*, 9(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327825mcs0901_1
- Ballan, D. (2023, November 22). *The power of media: How it shapes public opinion and society*. English Plus Podcast. <https://englishpluspodcast.com/the-power-of-media-how-it-shapes-public-opinion-and-society/>
- BBC. (2013, February 8). *Huge bangladesh rally seeks death penalty for war crimes*. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-21383632>
- Coppock, A., Ekins, E., & Kirby, D. (2018). The Long-lasting Effects of Newspaper Op-Eds on Public Opinion. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 13(1), 59-87.
- Deutsche Welle. (2014, February 4). *শাহবাগ আন্দোলনের বর্ষপূর্তি* – DW – 05.02.2014. dw.com. <https://shorturl.at/cgopV>
- Dotson, D., Jacobson, S., Kaid, L., & Carlton, J. (2012). Media Coverage of Climate Change in Chile: A Content Analysis of Conservative and Liberal Newspapers. *Environmental Communication: A Journal of Nature and Culture*, 6, 64-81. DOI: 10.1080/17524032.2011.642078
- Gause, L., Moore, S. T., & Ostfeld, M. C. (2023). Anger, Fear, and the Racialization of News: Media Coverage of Protest Activity. *The Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics*, 2023, doi:10.1017/rep.2023.27
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Harper & Row.
- Iqbal, A. (2015). Clashing Nationalisms and Corrupting Co-Existence: An Analysis of the Shahbag/Hefajot Frenzy in Bangladesh. *Crossings: A Journal of English Studies*, 6(1), 78–84. <https://doi.org/10.59817/cjes.v6i.212>
- Kanaker, O., Abughazlih, M. O., & Kasmani, M. F. (2020). Media Framing of Minorities' Crisis: A Study on Aljazeera and BBC News Coverage of the Rohingya. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 36(2), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.17576/JKMJC-2020-3602-01>
- Karyotakis, M.-A., Panagiotou, N., Antonopoulos, N., & Kiourexidou, M. (2017). Digital Media Framing of the Egyptian Arab Spring: Comparing Al Jazeera, BBC, and China Daily. *Studies in Media and Communication*, 5(2), ISSN: 2325-8071, E-ISSN: 2325-808X. Published by Redfame Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v5i2.2664>

- Kiwanuka-Tondo, J., Albada, K. F., & Payton, F. C. (2012). Media ownership and news framing: An analysis of HIV/AIDS coverage by Ugandan Press. *African Journal of AIDS Research*, 11(4), 361–371. <https://doi.org/10.2989/16085906.2012.754837>
- Lee, F. (2014). Triggering the Protest Paradigm: Examining Factors Affecting News Coverage of Protests. *International Journal Of Communication*, 8, 22. Retrieved from <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/2873/1215>
- Madhu Babu, J., & Venkateswarlu, S. (2017). Indian Newspapers Framing of ISIS Coverage: A Content Analysis. *IRA-International Journal of Management & Social Sciences*, 9(1), 38-46. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21013/jmss.v9.v1.p5>
- McCombs, M. E., & Shaw, D. L. (1972). The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36(2), 176–187. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2747787>
- Palmer, M. (2021). Black Lives Matter in the National Media: Analyzing Coverage of Legacy Newsrooms and Digital-First Outlets. *The Minnesota Undergraduate Research & Academic Journal*, 4(4). Retrieved from <https://pubs.lib.umn.edu/index.php/muraj/article/view/3635>
- Parvez, S. (2022). Understanding the Shahbag and Hefajat Movements in Bangladesh: A Critical Discourse Analysis. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 57(4), 841-855. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096211038657>
- Proust, V., & Saldaña, M. (2022). Another Violent Protest? New Perspectives to Understand Protest Coverage. *Media and Communication*, 10(4), 18-29. doi:<https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v10i4.5796>
- Rahman, M. (2022) Religious Nationalism in Digitalscape: An Analysis of the Post-Shahbag Movement in Bangladesh. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 10, 201-218. doi: [10.4236/jss.2022.105015](https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2022.105015).
- Reydams, L., Wouters, J., & Ryngaert, C. (2012). *International prosecutors*. Oxford University Press.
- Roy, A. D. (2018). Shahbag Stolen? Third Force Dynamics and Electoral Politics in Bangladesh. *South Asia Research*, 38 (3_suppl), 1S-24S. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0262728018791698>
- Suryandari, N., & Arifin, S. (2021). Islamophobia and Media Framing in West Media. *Karsa: Journal of Social and Islamic Culture*, 29(1), 27-45. <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v29i1.3793>
- Tuhin, E. H. (2014, February 4). শাহবাগ আন্দোলনের এক বছর: ইতিহাসের নতুন পথ রচনা. <https://www.banglanews24.com/opinion/news/bd/265492.details>
- Wasserman, H., Chuma, W., & Bosch, T. (2018). Print media coverage of service delivery protests in South Africa: A content analysis. *African Studies*, 77, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00020184.2018.1426312>.
- Zhang, H., Lu, Y., & Bai, R. (2023). Selection and Description Bias in Protest Reporting by Government and News Media on Weibo. *The China Quarterly*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741023001042>