

CONSTRUCTING SOLIDARITY AND RESISTANCE: A CDA OF PAKISTANI NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS ON THE IRAN-ISRAEL CONFLICT 2026

Iman Fatima^{*1}, Nazia Anwar², Fazila Kousar³

^{*1,3}MPhil Scholar, English, University of Gujrat

²Lecturer, English, University of Gujrat

¹imanfatima2504@gmail.com, ²nazia.anwar@uog.edu.pk, ³fazilakousar974@gmail.com

Corresponding Author: *

Iman Fatima

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20234544>

Received	Accepted	Published
19 March 2026	28 April 2026	16 May 2026

ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate how Pakistani newspaper editorials construct notions of solidarity and resistance in their coverage of Iran-Israel conflict 2026. The study is qualitative in nature and employed Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model to examine selected editorials from four major English-language Pakistani newspapers, including Dawn, The Nation, The Express Tribune, and Daily Times, published during March and April 2026. The results show that the Pakistan's newspaper editorials portray Iran-Israel conflict 2026 in the light of humanitarian and political crisis characterized by civilian suffering, environmental destruction, and diplomatic failure. The analysis shows that the language is systematically used through such items as evaluative words, metaphors, modality, and pronouns to create the ideological meanings and to shape public perception. The editorials consistently disrupt prevailing international narratives by depicting the US-Israel alliance as a hegemonic power while regional actors as seeking for peace, dialogue, and regional cooperation. Moreover, the discourse constructs solidarity through a common regional identity and sense of resistance through critiques of war, imperialism, and global power imbalance. Overall, the findings demonstrate how Pakistani media actively participates in building alternative geopolitical narratives and fostering a global South perspective on conflict, justice, and international relations.

Keywords: Iran-Israel conflict, media discourse, solidarity and resistance, geopolitics, political discourse, anti-imperialism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Iran-Israel conflict is one of the oldest and complicated geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. Its roots can be traced back to the late 20th century and especially following the Iranian Revolution in 1979, which greatly altered Iran's political position in relation to Israel. The conflict has since developed into a political struggle, an ideological conflict, and indirect fighting, some of

which has affected regional and global politics. Over time, this conflict has been portrayed in various ways in the international and national media, based on political affiliations, ideology and culture. In many ways, the 2026 Iran-Israeli conflict has drawn a great deal of attention from the international community leading to different portrayals in the global and regional media. According to Fowler in (Sivandi &

Dowlatabadi,2016:92), a newspaper is a report which is reported from a certain point of view so it is not necessarily neutral. As stated by Kabgani, to conceal an ideology, news can be said as “the best shelter” (Kabgani, 2013:58). This means that media can be biased in reporting information from their perspective and consequently developing a perspective within the community on an issue that they support and believe. To understand what is reported in the media, it is necessary to have the ability to understand how a social event is reported by media. One of the ways to uncover the truth of the news provided by media is by using critical discourse analysis (CDA). In this context, newspaper editorials serve as a crucial platform for the ideology construction in which political stances, moral judgments, and collective identities are articulated and negotiated. In Pakistan, editorials have a significant influence in shaping public discourse, reflecting socio-political values and also address larger geopolitical issues.

One of the key approaches used to study such language is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is concerned with examining the role language plays in the representation and repetition of power dynamics, ideologies and social disadvantage. The study of media discourse by scholars such as Norman Fairclough, Teun A. van Dijk and Ruth Wodak have shown that media discourse is never neutral, but is influenced by political, cultural and institutional factors. The aim of CDA is “to investigate critically social inequality, as it is expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use” (Wodak & Meyer, 2001: 2). Through the critique of CDA allow us to investigate how discourse creates reality, but also validates some perspectives and marginalizes others. Media discourse around the Iran-Israel conflict is closely related to issues of solidarity, resistance, political affiliation and humanitarianism. The editorials of Pakistan's newspapers, within a specific cultural and historical context, offer rich insights into these themes.

1.2 Problem Statement

Although, a considerable amount of research has been conducted on the discourse of media and international conflicts, there is still limited focus on how the editorials of Pakistani newspapers construct the concepts of solidarity and resistance specifically in the context of Iran–Israel conflict 2026. The existing studies mainly deal with western media or general study of the editorials without analyzing the language features and ideology positioning of the Pakistani editorials. Moreover, there is an absence of detailed examination of the ways in which language is used, including the selection of vocabulary, choice of grammatical features and rhetorical devices in order to convey political attitude, humanitarian concern and ideological attachment in these editorials. It remains unclear how different newspapers may vary in the representations of the conflict and their challenge or reproduction of hegemonic narratives in the world. The gap exposes the need to introduce a systematic Critical Discourse Analysis of the Pakistani newspaper editorials to gain insight into the discursive construction of solidarity and resistance and how it is shaped by the socio-political and ideological context.

1.3 Research Objectives

- To explore the key discursive strategies through which Pakistani newspaper editorials construct solidarity and resistance in their representation of Iran–Israel conflict 2026.
- To analyze how language is used as a means of ideological positioning, political stance-taking, and humanitarian framing in these editorials.
- To examine how editorial discourse in Pakistani newspapers challenges, reinforces, or recontextualizes dominant global and media narratives surrounding Iran–Israel conflict.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What discursive and rhetorical strategies are employed in Pakistani newspaper editorials to construct solidarity and resistance in the context of Iran–Israel conflict 2026?

2. How do lexical, grammatical, and evaluative choices (e.g., pronouns, modality, metaphor) function to express ideological stance, resistance, and humanitarian concern in the editorials?

3. In what ways do Pakistani newspaper editorials frame, challenge, or reproduce dominant international political and media discourses about Iran–Israel conflict?

2. Literature Review

In 2026, Iran-Israel conflict has escalated from an indirect crisis to direct military and political conflict. In this context, media and political usage of language is crucial to the development of notions of solidarity and resistance. This study focuses on how language is used in the presentation of unity, struggle and power in the conflict.

2.1 Ideological Foundations and State-Centric Narratives of Iran–Israel Conflict

The ideological and historical aspects of the Iran–Israel conflict have been extensively discussed in the literature, especially in relation to Iran’s post-revolutionary foreign policy. In this regard, Fatima et al. (2025) conducted a qualitative investigation of Iran's role in the Israel–Palestine issue through the prism of ideology and geopolitical strategies. The authors argued that the Iranian revolution since 1979 has created a set of revolutionary identities that have institutionalized anti-Zionism as a foreign policy principle, operationalized through financial, military and logistic support to organizations like Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Furthermore, the study examined Iran's self-positioning as being a leader of the Islamic world and states while opposing Israeli and Western hegemony in the region. However, the analysis tends to be state-centric and deterministic, thereby under-representing the internal political debates and agency of Palestinian actors.

On the other hand, David Menashri (2006) examined the historical continuity of anti-Israeli sentiment in Iran's foreign policy. In spite of the apparent ideological clash between ideology and pragmatism in Iran's post-1979 diplomacy, the study revealed that hostility towards Israel remains

a non-negotiable ideological pillar that serves as a cornerstone of the country's political unity. Despite this, the study is descriptive and offers limited empirical depth in terms of explicating internal variations among society and the changing political discourses.

2.2 Discursive Construction of the Conflict in Media and Political Narratives

One of the significant focuses of study is to examine the construction of ideological meanings through the discourse and media representation in Iran–Israel conflict. Mokhalad Naji Kamil investigated the 12-days Iran-Israel conflict 2025 using an integrated Critical Discourse Analysis framework of Fairclough and Van Dijk. The results revealed that Israel construct its narrative themes through self-defense, technological superiority and divine legitimacy, and Iran emphasizes resistance, martyrdom and spiritual triumph. Another important finding of the study was that both consistently used “us versus them” dichotomy, showing the role of language in the legitimization of war and world perception.

Similarly, Ismail et al. (2026) examined newspaper headlines from the international press to gain insights into the ideological construction of the US–Israel–Iran conflict. In their research, they found that in the West, the media were mostly depicting Iran as an aggressor while in the Middle East, the media were mostly depicting actions as legitimate resistance and in Asia, the media had a neutral attitude. Furthermore, the study revealed that lexical choice, modality and agency were used strategically to create victim aggressor binaries. However, the study showed that the use of headline level-analysis limited the deeper contextual interpretation, despite the fact that it was so helpful in illustrating ideological bias in media framing. In addition, Roziki et al. (2025) extended this discussion by examining the framing of the Iran–Israel nuclear issue in the media. The study found that Iran is repeatedly portrayed as a defensive actor while Israel and its allies as threats in the media. Importantly, lexical and narrative strategies were used to construct a counter-Western geopolitical discourse. However, the

study offered limited comparative generalizability which focused on single media outlet.

2.3 Geopolitical Realignments and Regional Power Dynamics

Another body of literature is about structural shifts in Middle Eastern geopolitics brought about by the Iran-Israel rivalry. Al-Khaled et al. (2025) discussed the dynamics of Iran-Israel tensions and its impact on regional power distribution through realist and constructivist lens. The study revealed a dramatic shift in relations, especially among the Arabs' growing cooperation with Israel to counter the Iranian influence. In addition, Iran's use of proxy forces and non-state actors was justified as strategic response to regional constraints. Overall, the authors argued that the Middle East was moving toward being a multipolar and pragmatic order rather than an ideological one. Likewise, Naqvi (2024) examined how Iran-Israel conflict had rebalanced the regional power dynamics from the Arab states to Iran and Israel, thereby escalating proxy wars in the region. Although normalization between the Arab world and Israel had increased, underlying tensions persisted due to the influence of Iran and allied non-State actors. However, the study was mainly descriptive and state-centric, failing to account for agency of smaller regional actors and peace perspectives.

2.4 Religion, Identity, and Instrumentalization of Ideology

Another aspect of literature is concerned with religion and geopolitics. Moses Onyendu Okai and Eke Colnel Ogwumerum (2025) examined that religion does not play a substantive role but is rather a symbolic and instrumental means in the Iran-Israel conflict, suggesting that it is not the root cause of conflict. The study also highlighted that national narratives are embedded with religious discourses, which are well exploited by political elites to support policies and shape attitudes and perceptions of the public. The study based on secondary qualitative data is not as strong in terms of empirical evidence, but it gives an interdisciplinary perspective. In contrast, Fatima et al. (2025) argued that ideology and religious values have deepened roots in Iran's foreign policy and

that the state is not merely a political tool but is religiously institutionalized into the state identity. The differences between scholars suggest a never-ending discussion on the role of religion as an agent and as a legitimate language of the conflict.

2.5 Human Rights, Normative Dimensions, and Structural Violence

In addition to the geopolitical and discursive analyses, there are several studies highlight the humanitarian consequences of the Iran-Israel conflict. According to Sadiq et al. (2024), the conflict was marked by severe human rights violations, including civilian displacement, indiscriminate attacks and systemic humanitarian crises disproportionately inflicted upon vulnerable groups such as women and children. In order to explain how identity and historical power imbalances perpetuate cycles of violence, it considered the Social Constructivist, Symbolic Interactionist, and Postcolonial approaches. However, its strong normative orientation diminished analytical neutrality and limited empirical precision.

2.6 Research Gap

Although there has been a lot of research on media discourse and international conflicts, limited focus has been given to how the conflict between Iran and Israel is specifically discursively constructed solidarity and resistance by Pakistani newspaper editorials in 2026. Previous research tends to be mainly based on the Western media or on general analysis. Furthermore, it is limited in its examination of the influence of language in political attitudes, humanitarian views and variations across different newspapers. This study addresses the gap through Critical Discourse Analysis to gain a deeper understanding of the construction of these meanings and how they relate to broader socio-political context.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The present study is based on qualitative approach that uses Critical Discourse Analysis approach to study the role of newspapers editorials in creating solidarity and resistance in Iran-Israel conflict

2026. The qualitative discourse approach is suited for revealing the purely natural patterns of ideological labor and power dynamics in political writings in this study, especially those written during conflict and humanitarian intervention (Groten, 2025; Kumar, 2025). By focusing on Pakistani newspaper editorials about the Iran-Israel conflict and discuss about language use to express social realities of solidarity and resistance towards the conflict. This design is based on the process of contextualization, that is, a socio-political and religious context that needs to be understood and analyzed in order to understand the role of the editorial and how it serves as site of ideological positioning and humanitarian framing.

3.2 Data Collection and Sampling

The primary data for this study is the editorials of four main English language newspapers Dawn, The Nation, The Express Tribune and The Daily Times of Pakistan. The editorials were published in March and April of 2026 when the Iran-Israel diplomatic and military relations were on a high level. Using purposive sampling, those editorials that directly refer to the conflict and are supported by the U.S. are selected. The data collection is focused and the analysis is concentrated to produce narratives around solidarity and resistance at a time of regional volatility to develop an understanding of the languages that are used in these specific outlets.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the study is the Three-Dimensional Model of Norman Fairclough which considers discourse as multi-layered phenomenon. The first level (Text) explores the formal linguistic aspects of the editorials. The second level (Discursive Practice) examines the process of production of these editorials in the institutional norms of Pakistani journalism and their consumption and reframing of international reports. The third level (Social Practice) puts the discourse in a broader geopolitical context in 2026. It is essential for providing an answer to the question of how Pakistani media contradicts or reproduce dominant global discourses as it

connects the first with the second level of discourse whether that of individual words or of macro political stances.

4. Data Analysis

Theme 1: Humanitarian Crisis and Civilian Suffering

The impact of the war being presented as a humanitarian crisis in Pakistan through newspaper editorials through the choice of words and grammar that conveys the message of the vulnerability of civilians. The text level use of metaphors such as “maelstrom”, “doomed march”, “unfolding disaster” and “mini world war” gives the impression that the conflict is out of control and harmful, further enhancing the feeling of the helplessness of the human race. The suffering and destruction are lexically coded as a prolonged effect on the environment and the mental health of the people, using images of violence like “annihilated”, “bombing campaign”, “toxic smoke”, “blackened rain” and “poisoned air”. Pronouns are used to build ideological alignment; inclusive pronouns such as “we” and “us” (particularly in The Nation and Express Tribune) universalize the suffering; “they” is used to distance and hold accountable powerful actors (US/Israel). Transitivity patterns reinforce unequal power relations by clearly assign agency to aggressors (“US-Israeli aggression has targeted schools,” “strikes ignited massive fires,”) while civilians seem as passive victims (“people lose their lives,” “air becomes unbreathable”). Modality such as “must cease hostilities,” “will create a maelstrom,” and “cannot be dismissed” convey certainty and moral urgency, making the humanitarian situation real and urgent, rather than hypothetical.

In the discursive level, editorials rely on discourse of human rights and international law in order to legitimate this discursive context. The intertextuality of ‘breach of international law’, ‘collateral damage’ (which is especially problematic), and comparisons with past conflicts (Afghanistan, Iraq, Gaza) situates the current conflict in a pattern of damage to civilians and violations of norms. The Nation takes up this discourse by depicting destruction not merely as physical but as “attacks on memory itself,” as “psychological wound”,

thus expanding our understanding of suffering to encompass cultural and historical losses. Similarly, the discursively linked ideas of human suffering as the costs of civilian death and injury and of environmental destruction (toxic smoke, polluted air) are also long-term health and environmental effects.

The social practice is an ideological discourse that is aimed at delegitimizing war and building resistance via moral criticism of war, focusing on human effect of war. The editorials which are continually devoted to the suffering of civilians that challenge the idea of "military necessity" and resonate with the common perspective of the Global South which doubts the moral legitimacy of western-led interventions. Meanwhile, outlets are not the same: Dawn and The Nation are surely moralistic in their condemnation of the violence; Daily Times' tone is more strategic, but there is definite awareness of the human dangers and instability created by war. In general, humanitarian speech is an effective tool to build solidarity with the victims and counter the legitimizing narratives of war, both in terms of the content and its emphasis on the ideological and evaluative dimensions.

Theme 2: Failure of Diplomacy and Urgency of Peace

The editorials create the conflict as a failure of diplomacy, requiring peace, through the use of modality, metaphor, and rhetorical structuring to emphasize failure of diplomacy and the impending crisis. At the textual level, a peace is reinforced by strong modal expressions such as 'must immediately cease hostilities', the call for 'an immediate ceasefire' and the assertion that 'there is a very slim window for diplomacy'. These expressions suggest the urgency and obligation to end the fighting immediately. The term diplomacy is described as fragile and deliberately undermined by metaphors like "slim window," "doomed march" and "buying time." Transitivity structures blame the U.S.-Israeli actors for diplomatic breakdown "keeping shifting the goalposts", "talks were a ruse" and "never serious about peace", all while other actors (Pakistan, Turkiye, Oman) are depicted as facilitating dialogue "playing a major role" or "shuttle

diplomacy". Rhetorical questions "How does this end?" emphasize uncertainty and question strategic decision-making.

These linguistic decisions are discursively made and refer to narratives of diplomatic betrayal and geopolitical manipulation. The credibility of Western diplomacy is undermined by references to previous agreements like the JCPOA and persistent accusations of being "double-crossed," which create a pattern of lost trust. The phrase "peace... is within our reach" is contrasted with the later escalation of conflict to show that there was a real opportunity for peace which was deliberately undermined. Daily Times extends this argument by challenging constitutionality of the processes and the legitimacy of the war, while Express Tribune, takes the responsibility from the structural to psychological, with war persistence being attributed to "hubris, false bravado and misplaced ego". Diplomacy was not only ineffective but it was actively undermined, and this reinterprets the conflict to be preventable rather than inevitable, across the dataset.

On the social practice level, the construction of a discourse ideology is one that supports negotiated peace and condemns the hegemonic control over conflict resolution. The editorials challenge dominating international narratives, which often view military intervention as a necessary evil, by depicting diplomacy as a system that is broken and war as avoidable. The "cease fire" and "dialogue" calls over and over again indicate a general normative shift towards multilateralism and conflict de-escalation, and also make regional actors like Pakistan as mediators. Meanwhile, the text demonstrates the underlying inequalities of international politics: strong states determine the terms of war and peace. The newspapers vary in their perspectives: Dawn is very critical about the leadership of the West; The Nation denounces the results of diplomacy, and Daily Times questions strategic and institutional failures. In combination these perspectives construct resistance discursively, by affirming peace, accountability, and the construction of 'real' diplomacy, one that confronts and challenges dominant global narratives through editorials.

Theme 3: Regional Solidarity and Alternative Global Order

Through the strategic use of lexical choices particularly in newspaper editorials that highlight collective identity and common regional interests to create the regional solidarity. The metaphors “*maelstrom that will consume the entire region*” and “*doomed march towards an even larger war*” making the region as a victim of external aggressor. Modality also supports this position by introducing obligation and necessity markers like “*must forge a new, region-led security order*” and “*must create a new regional architecture*”, which convey urgency and inevitability in a linguistically explicit manner. Agency is almost entirely given to the US-Israeli bloc (“*aggression*” and “*invade*” highlight the “*Israelis*”; “*parroted Israeli talking points*”), while regional actors are constructed as rational and peace-seeking (“*engaging in shuttle diplomacy*” and “*wish to avoid such a dystopian scenario*”). Agency is constructed in such a way as to create a moral contrast.

These language patterns recontextualize and draw upon larger narratives of regional autonomy and post-western multipolarity at the discursive level. References to actors like Turkiye, Oman, and the Gulf states and about reported speech (*this is not Europe's war; this war is not of Iran's making*), intertextually validate opposition to dominant Western views. Editorial discourse includes international voices selectively, as a part of growing consensus that threatens US hegemony. Likewise, Daily Times frames the conflict as a crisis of the “*future global order*”, asking for questions of nuclear proliferation and loss of faith in American security guarantees for the region, thereby situating the regional conflict within the context of change of global power structures. The Western intentions are further undermined by the repetition of failed narrative (“*talks were a ploy*”, “*the goalposts have shifted*”) and legitimize calls for alternative modes of diplomacy.

Discourse in the social practice level is both a reflection and reinforcement of an ideological project that promotes the idea of a regional security architecture and a reimagined global order. The editorials frame the US as self-interested (“*only one permanent interest...*

Israel”), and of being “*unreliable*,” thus giving credence justifying the need for the regional states to establish strategic autonomy. This aligns with the global discourses from the Global South which challenge the hegemony of the West and advocate for multipolarity. At the same time, intra-regional solidarity is recognized especially in Express Tribune and Daily Times, with Iran's actions threatening to “*alienate Muslim states*,” suggesting that solidarity is not monolithic, but is negotiated. Overall, the discourse constructs resistance as not merely a reaction to military aggression but a discursive rearrangement of the global power in which regional cooperation is a political necessity and ideological alternative.

Theme 4: Environmental Destruction and Ecological Consequences of War

The editorials represent an ecological war through evaluative lexical choices which are emphasizing environmental harm. Terms such as “*Toxic smoke*”, “*black, acidic rain*”, “*poisoned air*”, or “*ecological collapse*” suggest the material and enduring destruction such an incident can cause, whereas the metaphor of a “*carbon footprint of war*” and “*environmental lifelines*” reframes the military actions within environmental discourse. The use of modality further extends the discussion, especially in declarative and assertive sentences “*the environmental implications are stark*” and “*this raises a rarely discussed problem*”, where environmental damage is presented as a fact, not as an opinion. Transitivity patterns highlight destructive processes involving war as the main processer, whereas human and environmental are the affected players, “*urban populations are exposed*”, “*ecosystems are destroyed*”. This grammatical formatting helps emphasize the systematic and “*long-term*” consequences rather than immediate violence.

From a discursive perspective, these texts rely on international climate change narratives, and involve war in environmental and climate justice discourses. The references to different institutions such as the Conflict and Environment Observatory (CEOBS) and concepts such as “*UNFCCC reporting frameworks*,” give the editorial content scientific and institutional

credibility and enable it to be an evidence-based critique. Intertextual connections with other conflicts (“Gaza”, “Syria and Iraq”) establish a sequence of “*normalized environmental destruction*” and imply that ecological destruction is not accidental but inherent in the structure of modern warfare. Furthermore, the term pollution is used to suggest that it transcends boundaries (“*carried by regional wind systems*” and “*drifting across Central and South Asia*”), enlarging the scope of the impact, turning the conflict into a global environmental problem instead of a localized one.

In terms of social practice, the discourse resists the dominant international frameworks by revealing the systematic exclusion of war-related emissions from global climate governance. These editorials underline the selectivity of the accountability in global environmental policies by demonstrating how “*military emissions are largely invisible*”. This is consistent with a wider ideology of climate justice, especially relevant to countries like Pakistan which have been built as disproportionately affected despite low emissions. The claim that “low emitting countries are most exposed” is the restatement of the struggle as a global inequality, where geopolitical power actions of strong countries intensify the vulnerability of other countries. The destruction of the environment is therefore not only a side-effect of war, but also a politically and ethically charged issue, thus strengthening resistance narratives that demand transparency, reforms and the incorporation of conflict-related damage into global environmental dialogue.

Theme 5: Anti-Imperialism and Critique of US-Israel Hegemony

The editorials of The Pakistani newspapers develop a definite anti-imperialist position by using the evaluative lexical selections and strategic grammatical structures. At textual level, words like “*aggression*”, “*illegal war*”, “*warmonger*”, and “*proxy*” explicitly delegitimize the US-Israeli actions, and the frequent juxtaposition “US-Israeli” actually portrays them as a single hegemonic entity. Pronouns contrast between “regional states” and “the US and Israel” results in an ideological distinction between rational, peace-oriented “self”

and interventionist “other”. The metaphors like “*doomed march*” and “*shifting the goal posts*” make their activities seem reckless and manipulative. Transitivity also reinforces this by attributing agency to the US-Israel bloc of actors (“*launched aggression*” and “*kept shifting the goalposts*”), whereas others seem like reactive or diplomatic actors. Moral obligation is implicit in modal expression, as in the use of the phrase “*must cease hostilities*,” which makes the criticism more forceful.

These features operate at the discursive level and are related to wider narratives of hegemonic control and political manipulation. The term double-crossing as a way of evoking a pattern of bad faith, and diplomacy as a ruse, as well as intertextual connections with war in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya, suggest that the war is part of a larger history of interventionism. Some editorials go further, and cite cultural and ideological domination as the other main arena of destruction, calling it “*attacks on memory*” and “*civilizational identity*.” Others challenge internal legitimacy by using terms such as “*outsourcing war*,” pointing to the paradoxes in the US political process. As a whole these discourses systematically attack the credibility of Western authority. The editorials are positioned at the social practice level, articulate a resistant Global South perspective, one that calls for a different framework to challenge the dominance of the US. The discourse frames the US as being only about itself and ignoring international law, revealing power imbalances in international politics. At the same time, it fosters the autonomy of the region and a multipolar world. While Dawn offers a geopolitical critique, The Nation moralizes imperial violence, and Daily Times points out strategic contradictions, but they all come together to create anti-imperialism as a discursive resistance to hegemonic power and global inequality.

5. Findings and Discussion

Based on the findings of this research, Iran-Israel conflict 2026 in newspaper editorials is a multi-layered construction of different humanitarian, political and ideological discourses that collectively to create narratives of solidarity and resistance. The analysis of this study presented the

conflict as humanitarian crisis, focusing on civilian suffering, displacement and long-term social and environmental impacts to provoke empathy and moral urgency. In contrast, the editorials continually question the prevailing international narratives on the conflict, viewing it not as a security matter or a defense but as an effect of power dynamics and geopolitical politics. The discourse also highlights the failure and manipulation of diplomacy, and frames war as avoidable and a tool to be maintained in accordance with strategic interests. A key finding is the construction of diplomacy as fragile, manipulated and sometimes even deliberately undermined. Repeatedly, peace is described in editorial discourse as possible but hindered, which construct war as avoidable and not inevitable. This is a framing that enhances a larger worldview that emphasizes negotiation, multilateralism, and ethical responsibility. At the same time, the study indicates a strong anti-imperialist bias, in which the US-Israel alliance is framed as a superpower that is acting in a disproportionate manner, whereas regional players are depicted as rational, peace-minded and able to provide alternative solutions. This results in a discourse of regional solidarity that focuses on vulnerability, collective identity, the need for a regional-led security framework.

Moreover, the results reveal that conflict is not limited to the violence of the event; it extends to an understanding of the conflict as connected to climate injustice and inequality all over the World. This is indicative of a larger Global South perspective, where countries such as Pakistan are discursively impacted by the effects of conflicts out of their control. Linguistically, these meanings are created by a consistent use of evaluative vocabulary, metaphorical framing, pronouns and strong modality that guide readers to a corresponding and specific interpretation of the meaning of the text. These strategies also follow the idea of Critical Discourse Analysis, which involves the identification of the reproduction of power, the legitimation of some perspectives and the marginalization of others in the use of language. The discussion also highlights variation among newspapers in tone and emphasis can

impact the presentation of narratives from moral condemnation to strategic and institutional critique. Significantly, the study revealed that the media does not just reflect reality, it constructs reality by either highlighting some narratives and minimizing others. Pakistani editorials play a role in shaping the public perception of the conflict by building up calls for peace, accountability and alternative power structures in the world.

Overall, the findings indicate that the newspaper editorials in Pakistan not only report on the conflict between Iran-Israel but also actively mold the conflict as a moral, political and global affair. Employing strategic framing and linguistic choices, the media frames the public's perception, reinforcing calls for peace and accountability and plays a role in the wider debate over power, justice and resistance in the world.

6. Conclusion

This study concludes that Pakistani newspaper editorials are not only the site of reporting, but they are also a discursive arena which powerfully constructs, interprets and challenges the 2026 Iran-Israel conflict. Using Critical Discourse Analysis, the conflict is framed in terms of a humanitarian crisis, whereby civilian suffering, environmental destruction, and moral urgency are employed to challenge the war's legitimacy. Meanwhile, editorials portray diplomacy as fragile and sometimes deliberately undermined and the conflict as avoidable, not inevitable. Analysis also reveals that the use of language is strategically used in the construction of ideological alignments in the form of lexical choice, metaphors, modality and pronouns use. During this process, the US - Israel alliance is generally viewed as hegemonic and interventionist, and regional actors are portrayed as rational, peace-oriented and able to provide alternative solutions. This helps to build regional solidarity and reinforces a global multipolarity concept. Additionally, the study highlights the potential of Pakistani editorials to disrupt and interpret current international narratives by providing a Global South perspective that emphasis power imbalances, justice and accountability. Although, there are differences in tone and emphasis between newspapers, a

common discursive pattern in newspapers that can be found: criticism of war, advocacy of peace, challenge of the hegemony of control. However, this study focuses on a selected sample of the English-language Pakistani newspapers and a certain period and hence may not fully reflect the diversity of media representations. The study may be extended in future to include Urdu language mass media, or to include a comparative analysis of the situation from different countries, to achieve a more in-depth understanding of global media discourse on the conflict.

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