

EPISODIC AND THEMATIC FRAMING OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN PAKISTAN: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND URDU NEWSPAPERS

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Abstract

Aim of the Study: Climate change is one of the serious issues of the modern world, and the media help masses to understand this issue in a better way. For this purpose, the press highlights and frames the climate change issue in news, columns, and editorials. The current study focuses on the two types of news frames, i.e., episodic and thematic, in Urdu and English newspapers of Pakistan during the international conferences COPs. It examines and analyzes how climate change stories were reported in Jang, Nawa-i Waqt, Dawm, and Express Tribune.

Methodology:

In the current study, a quantitative content analysis (sample size $n = 985$) of news items, columns, and editorials was conducted during the major climate summits: COP26 in 2021, COP27 in 2022, and COP28 in 2023. Each news item/article was coded based on the framing, placement, genre, style, and climate categories. SPSS was used for statistical tests to examine the data collected. Chi-Square test was used to analyze the significance between Urdu and English newspapers and differences among the selected media organizations.

Findings: The outcomes underscore a crystal-clear difference between the Urdu and English newspapers. The Urdu newspapers emphasize the episodic frames (60.3%) while English newspapers mostly use the thematic frames (61.2%) in the selected period.

Urdu newspapers were more focused on climate change events, e.g., rains, floods, and smog, which directly affect the local communities. The placement and length of news articles support this pattern. Urdu newspapers often published short climate change stories on the front page regarding natural disasters and local crises.

In the case of the native English press, they published a more detailed and longer version climate related issues in the editorial form. The themes and topic selection of English newspapers also differ from those of the Urdu newspapers. English

newspapers published climate stories related to GHG (greenhouse gas emissions), global warming, and climate finance.

Conclusion:

Results and findings indicate a strong language gap in climate change reporting in Pakistan. Urdu newspapers are more connected with the native public; they publish event-based news items and focus on real-life problems during climate disasters. On the other hand, English newspapers shape and figure out the debates at the policy level. Their audience is mostly the elite classes and policymakers.

INTRODUCTION

Climate change is commonly believed to be one of the dangerous global challenges of the 21st century, which has far-reaching outcomes on human health, the ecosystem, and socioeconomic stability (Dietz et al., 2020). Besides environmental and scientific matters, climate change has some communicative changes which are linked with its representation, interpretation, and discussion, affecting public opinion, collective response, and political action (McAllister et al., 2021). The role of media in this regard is important because it not only disseminates the information but also frames climate change as a scientific, social, or political issue, and sets the pathways for individuals and society to understand and react (Guenther et al., 2024).

In 3rd world countries such as Pakistan, which is ranked among the top ten most vulnerable nations of the world, there is an acute need for effective climate communication (Raza & Shah, 2024; Saeed & Salik, 2022). The country faces recurring floods, heatwaves, smog, and glacial melt, yet climate literacy remains low, and media coverage of climate change is inconsistent (Akram et al., 2023; Qaisar et al., 2021; Raza, Iftikhar, & Shah, 2025). In such contexts, the media becomes the most visible bridge between scientific evidence and public understanding. Thus, studying how climate change is communicated through Pakistani media is not only relevant but urgent.

Role of Media Framing

Framing is the mechanism through which the media focuses on and highlights some images of reality and disregards/ignores others (Entman, 1993). Framing is a component of climate change communication that defines whether an issue is

framed as a global systemic crisis that needs structural changes or as an incident that caused immediate but short-term damage. Global studies reveal that framing has a significant impact on both people and policymaking (Feldman & Hart, 2021). Thematic and Episodic frames are an illustrative example of framing; thematic frames, that is, frames associating climate change with systemic causes and long-term solutions, lead to long-lasting engagement and support of policies, whereas episodic, i.e., frames mentioning single events only, cause emotional reactions and offer little structural perspective (Dar et al., 2021).

This is further widened by the linguistic and cultural diversity in Pakistan. English language newspapers like Dawn and The Express Tribune are more likely to be consistent with international discourses, which cover climate change in systemic and policy-based frames. By contrast, Urdu newspapers like Jang and Nawa-i-Waq focus more on local disasters, human-interest reporting, and adopt an episodic style that appeals to the everyday life of ordinary people (Ali et al., 2025; Raza, Iftikhar, & Kashif, 2025). This difference mirrors a more general social division, in which English media targets policymakers, scholars, and elites, and Urdu media targets mass readerships in rural and semi-urban regions (Kokab, 2020).

Significance of Episodic vs. Thematic Framing

The comparison between episodic and thematic framing is an important factor in understanding climate change communication. In climate change communication, episodic framing refers to tragic disaster incidents such as heatwaves, heavy rains, and floods, with more focus on climate victims, damage, and rescue operations. Most of the

episodic frames are based on emotional appeal and do not correlate the catastrophic event to global policy discussion and structural factors, which limits the masses' knowledge (Feldman & Hart, 2021; Iyengar, 1994).

Thematic frames, on the other hand, put these catastrophes into the context of systemic accounts of GHG, absence of good governance, global efforts, and thus update the readers and encourage them to act accordingly (Boykoff, 2011).

These dissimilarities grab special importance in the Pakistani press. Episodic framing enables the Urdu press to organize grassroots awareness with coverage of observable negative consequences of heavy floods, smog, and agricultural loss. The thematic stories of English newspapers can sensitize the governmental officials and international community to fulfill the commitments, including net-zero goals, climate financing, or the Paris Agreement. When uneven, though, this gap will only solidify inequalities in climate literacy and engagement in policy across language and class lines (Saleem & Rahman, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

Though Pakistan is one of the top ten most climate-risk countries in the world, little systematic research work has been done on how the multilingual Pakistani media frames climate stories. The current literature focuses on differences between the Urdu and English press without providing a comparative, data-based historical perspective on international events such as COP summits. Indeed, there is a serious disconnect, as COPs play a critical role in international climate governance, yet this is not reflected in local media.

The current study addresses this gap by conducting a comparative content analysis of major Pakistani Urdu and English newspapers during COP26, COP27, and COP28

Objectives:

1. To explore how climate change issues are framed in Pakistan's leading English and Urdu newspapers.

2. To compare the prevalence of episodic versus thematic framing in climate coverage across the two languages.

3. To analyze framing patterns during major international events (COP26, COP27, COP28).

Hypotheses:

H1: There is a likelihood that English newspapers use thematic framing more frequently than Urdu newspapers in their climate change coverage.

H2: Coverage of COP events (26, 27, 28) will differ significantly in framing across English and Urdu newspapers.

H3: English newspapers are more likely to cover scientific and policy-related categories, whereas Urdu newspapers are more likely to focus on human-interest stories and disasters.

H4: English newspapers are more likely to feature prominent stories (above 1000 words) on climate change compared to Urdu newspapers.

Literature Review

Framing theory provides the conceptual foundation for analyzing how media construct social reality. Thematic and episodic framing is a widely tested distinction in climate communication. Feldman and Hart (2021) claim that thematic frames enrich the knowledge of the population as they relate personal experience to structural causality to allow the audience to reflect on structural changes and long-term policies. Episodic frames, on the contrary, are attractive at first glance but fail to secure the interest of audiences due to limited background information and systematic explanation.

Dar et al. (2021) explained that episodic framing is associated with powerful feelings, such as fear, urgency, and empathy, while thematic framing is associated with more critical thinking and policy issues. There is a great likelihood that audiences who watch episodic frames may show sympathy and compassion to climate victims, while audiences who watch thematic frames are likely to support efficient solutions to climate change problems.

This is not just a matter of style; it has direct climate change literacy implications. Thematic frames help readers to see floods as manifestations of global climate change, whereas episodic frames

present them as natural disasters, not related to global factors.

Comparative Framing in Multilingual Societies

The linguistic and cultural thoughts also complicate the framing in multilingual societies. Language in any society works as a lens rather than just as a tool of communication. The words, phrases, stories, and metaphors people use deeply depend on the social and cultural priorities of the audience (Ding, 2024).

In multilanguage countries/ societies, vernacular media usually use episodic framing, which is based on life of native life, while elite media usually consume thematic framing, which is more aligned with the global narrative. These language and framing gaps are not only due to the editorial policies but also associated with the requirements of audiences. Local and mass readership is interested in event reporting, while elite and policy-oriented audiences want more analytic coverage (Guenther et al. 2024).

The same is reflected in Pakistan. Influenced by the discourse in other countries, English newspapers highlight global warming, emissions targets, and COP negotiations. The Urdu newspapers outline climate change within heat waves, monsoon, floods, and daily suffering. This is indicative of broader sociolinguistic divisions, in which English is associated with power, governance, and higher education, while Urdu functions as the language of the masses. (Saleem & Rahman, 2023).

South Asian Media on Climate Change

English-language newspapers have been focusing on global governance and scientific discoveries, and the scope of information they focus on corresponds to the discourses in the international domain (Montgomery, 2013). Vernacular media, in their turn, center on the short-term consequences of the climate catastrophe on the residents of rural areas. This dichotomy builds socio-economic barriers to climate literacy, with urban elites participating in policy discussions as local communities react to localized discourses.

In Bangladesh, newspapers tend to bundle episodic frames of cyclones and floods with

thematic frames on adaptation and resilience, especially where international aid is in the picture (Haque et al., 2022). Vernacular press in Nepal is devoted to the issues of glacier melting and rural life, whereas English sources are devoted to global treaties and carbon limits.

In this context, Pakistan is a unique example due to its diverse linguistic polarization. Urdu press usually commonly reports the climate issues related to most of the population, including urban flooding, heavy smog, and food scarcity, while the English press takes up climate issues related to global climate governance.

This division contributes to generating two different types of publics within society, one focuses on local survival, and the other on international negotiations (Saeed & Salik 2022).

Theoretical Framework

Framing Theory

The current research work is based on framing theory, as it proposes the major perspective through which climate change communication can be understood and explained in Pakistan. Framing refers to the selection and emphasizes a particular angle of perceived reality to make it more striking in the communication process, to impact how people interpret it (Entman, 1993). Frames usually do not emphasize cause and effect, but sometimes they offer the solution.

Iyengar (1994) differentiated between two prevailing forms of framing, which are thematic and episodic. Thematic frames place issues within wider systemic contexts, including defining floods within the context of failures in climate governance or international commitments on emissions. By comparison, episodic frames concentrate on discrete instances, e.g., on individual victims of floods or relief efforts. The impacts of these two forms of framing on climate change communication are as follows: thematic frames can develop greater understanding and engagement with their policy, whereas episodic ones can evoke emotions but not systemic understanding (Dar et al., 2021; Feldman & Hart, 2021)

With reference to the case of Pakistan, the utilization of the theory of framing shows how the

language mediates a discussion among the people. They are more likely to be framed thematically by English newspapers (Dawn, The Express Tribune), which are in line with international discourses and policy narratives. Newspapers in Urdu (Jang, Nawa-i-Waqt) are based on episodic frames and appeal to the local people who perceive climate change as a local calamity.

Framing does not occur in a cultural vacuum; it must resonate with audience values and experiences to be effective. Sheets et al. (2023) define cultural resonance as the degree to which media frames align with the cognitive schemas and cultural values of target audiences. Frames that lack cultural resonance may fail to engage audiences, even if factually accurate.

Local culture plays a decisive role in shaping climate narratives in Pakistan. Terms like “net-zero emissions”, “loss and damages fund”, and “climate finance” are used by the English press for the urban elite (Boykoff, 2011; Raza, Iftikhar, & Shah, 2025). These have strong connections on the global scale, where elite audiences are engaged in climate governance and policy debates. However, Urdu media frame climate change in terms of local survival events, smog-linked health issues, devastating floods, crop damages, and the lived experience of the rural and semi-urban population of the country (Saleem & Rahman, 2023).

These societal and cultural divisions underscore the risk of fragmented, uneven climate literacy. English media, which is consumed by policymaker underlines international talks, while Urdu media used by the rural population, which tells the stories of climate change as a sequence of disasters. These scattered narratives, if not integrated, may block joint climate action. Inclusive climate communication will work as a bridge in the cultural and linguistic divide by merging the local episodic relevance and thematic analysis (Ali et al. 2025).

Methodology

This research used a quantitative content analysis design to analyze how climate change is framed in Pakistani print media. Content analysis is a commonly acknowledged way to analyze media

texts systematically by detecting patterns, themes, and frames in large data sets (Neuendorf, 2017). It will be especially applicable to climate change studies due to its ability to document only the prevalence of frames and their relationship with other variables, including language, location, and the length of the article (Guenther et al., 2024).

This method was deductive in nature and based upon the framing theory (Entman, 1993; Iyengar, 1994). As the objective of the research was to compare English and Urdu newspapers, a comparative design was used where the researcher examined the difference in framing styles based on linguistic, editorial, and audience.

Sample

The sample was comprised of 985 articles published in four major Pakistani newspapers, two in English (Dawn and The Express Tribune) and two in Urdu (Jang and Nawa-i-Waqt). These newspapers have been chosen since they are the most influential newspapers of their respective linguistic groups, have extensive circulation, and agenda-setting/ framing influence in Pakistan (Ali et al., 2025).

The study period covered three critical climate events: the annual United Nations climate summits COP26 (2021, Glasgow), COP27 (2022, Sharm el-Sheik), and COP28 (2023, Dubai). Articles were collected from November to December of each year (2021, 2022, 2023), ensuring coverage of pre-summit build-up, summit proceedings, and immediate post-summit reporting. This periodization was chosen because COPs dominate global climate discourse and offer a valuable opportunity to examine how local media align with or diverge from international narratives (Ejaz & Najam, 2023; Philander, 2012; Raza, Iftikhar, & Shah, 2025).

The final sample included 200 articles from 2021 (COP26), 471 from 2022 (COP27), and 314 from 2023 (COP28), reflecting a year-on-year climate coverage.

Coding Scheme

To operationalize episodic and thematic framing, a structured coding sheet was developed, drawing on previous research (Ali et al., 2025; Dar et al.,

2021; Feldman & Hart, 2021; Iyengar, 1994). Articles were coded along the following dimensions:

1. **Frames:**

Episodic: Coverage focused on discrete events such as floods, smog, or local relief efforts.

Thematic: Coverage connecting events to systemic causes such as global warming, emissions, or international negotiations.

2. **Genre:**

News story, editorial, opinion column.

3. **Climate Categories:**

Floods, smog, heatwaves, global warming, greenhouse gas emissions, international agreements, climate finance, adaptation/resilience.

Each article could be coded for one primary frame and multiple categories if relevant. For example, an article about smog in Lahore presented as evidence of global warming would be coded under both *smog* (category) and *thematic* (frame).

To achieve reliability and reduce subjectivity, the dataset was analyzed by two trained coders. A pilot test was conducted on 50 randomly selected articles, with them undergoing a pre-training session to familiarize themselves with the coding scheme. Cohen’s kappa was used to determine inter-coder reliability, and the coefficient was 0.82, indicating a high level of agreement beyond chance (Viera & Garrett, 2005).

Statistical Analysis

Once coding was completed, the data were entered into SPSS for statistical analysis. Major emphasis was on recognizing differences in language, length, genre, and framing styles.

Chi-square tests were employed to examine associations between language (English vs. Urdu) and framing type (episodic vs. thematic). Crosstabulations were used to explore how length influenced framing, while frequency distribution was used to highlight thematic priorities. A combination of descriptive statistics and inferential tests allowed the analysis to reveal not only the prevalence of a particular frame but also the structural factors (length, genre) that determine the use of frames.

Inter-Coder Reliability

Results

Table 1

Language, Genre, and COPs Crosstabulation

COPs			Genre			Total
			News Story	Column	Editorial	
COP26	Language	Urdu	69	5	8	82
		English	76	32	10	118
	Total		145	37	18	200
COP27	Language	Urdu	214	17	9	240
		English	164	40	27	231
	Total		378	57	36	471
COP28	Language	Urdu	91	6	12	109
		English	119	62	24	205
	Total		210	68	36	314
Total	Language	Urdu	374	28	29	431
		English	359	134	61	554
	Total		733	162	90	985

English newspapers published more opinion-based pieces on climate change than Urdu newspapers. Urdu papers mostly published news

stories at that time. In Urdu papers, 87% of items were news stories, 6% were columns, and 7% were editorials. In English papers, 65% were news

stories, 24% were columns, and 11% were editorials. During COP26 and COP27, Urdu coverage focused mainly on straight news. English papers offered more columns and editorials, showing deeper debate and interpretation. In COP28, this pattern continued.

Overall, Urdu newspapers reported events, while English newspapers provided more analysis and opinion. This difference shows how English papers engaged more critically with climate change topics.

Table 2
Language, COPs, and Depth of Coverage Crosstabulation

Depth of coverage			COPs			Total
			COP26	COP27	COP28	
Episodic	Language	Urdu	46	161	53	260
		English	51	97	65	213
	Total		97	258	118	473
Thematic	Language	Urdu	36	79	56	171
		English	67	134	140	341
	Total		103	213	196	512
Total	Language	Urdu	82	240	109	431
		English	118	231	205	554
	Total		200	471	314	985

English newspapers used more thematic framing in all three COP events. Urdu newspapers focused more on episodic stories. In COP26, 56% of Urdu coverage was episodic, while 55% of English coverage was thematic. In COP27, Urdu newspapers had 67% episodic stories, and English newspapers had 58% thematic ones. In COP28, Urdu coverage was 49% episodic and 51%

thematic. English coverage was 32% episodic and 68% thematic.

Overall, Urdu papers showed 60% episodic and 40% thematic framing. English papers showed 38% episodic and 62% thematic framing. Urdu coverage was more event-based, focusing on speeches and national news.

Table 2a.
Chi-Square Test Results for Language and Depth of Coverage (Framing, Thematic Vs Episodic)

Test	Value	df	p-value
Pearson Chi-Square	47.39	2	< .001
Likelihood Ratio	48.44	2	< .001
Linear-by-Linear Association	47.23	1	< .001
Number of Valid Cases	985		

The results indicate a statistically significant difference between English and Urdu newspapers in terms of framing patterns ($\chi^2 = 47.39, p < .001$).

Thematic framing is more in tune with English newspaper audiences because it is designed to portray an issue in a broader context and with

relevant analysis. H1 is accepted, which claims there is a likelihood that English newspapers use

thematic framing more frequently than Urdu newspapers in their climate change coverage.

Table 3

Climate categories, Language, Depth of coverage, Crosstabulation

Depth of coverage		Language		Total	
		Urdu	English		
Episodic	Climate categories	Global Warming	90	77	167
		Droughts	0	2	2
		Heatwaves	0	1	1
		Glacier Melting	0	3	3
		Rains/Floods	82	71	153
		Smog	76	32	108
		Forest fires	0	1	1
		GHG/CO2 Emissions	3	22	25
		Human activities	9	4	13
		Total		260	213
Thematic	Climate categories	Global Warming	56	131	187
		Droughts	0	2	2
		Heatwaves	0	2	2
		Glacier Melting	1	6	7
		Rains/Floods	39	89	128
		Smog	62	58	120
		GHG/CO2 Emissions	13	49	62
Total		171	341	512	
Total	Climate categories	Global Warming	146	208	354
		Droughts	0	4	4
		Heatwaves	0	3	3
		Glacier Melting	1	9	10
		Rains/Floods	121	160	281
		Smog	138	90	228
		Forest fires	0	1	1
		GHG/CO2 Emissions	16	71	87
Total		431	554	985	

English newspapers focused more on scientific and policy topics. Urdu newspapers focused more on human-interest and disaster stories. In English papers, 37% of all stories were about global warming, and 29% were about rain or floods. About 13% discussed greenhouse gas emissions. In Urdu papers, 34% were about global warming,

28% about rains or floods, and 32% about smog. Only 4% of Urdu stories discussed emissions. These results support H3. English newspapers covered more scientific and policy issues. Urdu newspapers gave more attention to disasters and human-interest stories.

Table 4
Language and Length of News Items Crosstabulation

	Language	Length			Total
		Small	Medium	Large	
	Urdu	361	58	12	431
	English	293	221	40	554
	Total	654	279	52	985

English newspapers published longer stories on climate change than Urdu newspapers. Urdu papers mostly ran short pieces. In Urdu papers, 84% of stories were small, 13% were medium, and only 3% were large. In English papers, 53% were small, 40% were medium, and 7% were large. This shows English newspapers gave more space and depth to climate coverage.

Long stories often mean detailed reporting, background information, and expert views. Urdu newspapers mostly published short updates or event-based reports. These results support H4. English newspapers were more likely to feature long and detailed stories on climate change than Urdu newspapers.

Discussion

The results of the conducted study also reveal that the communication on climate change in Pakistan is culturally and linguistically divided. Thematic framing was most used in the English newspapers (Dawn, The Express Tribune) (61.55%), whereas Urdu newspapers (Jang, Nawa-i-Waqt) made use of episodic framing (60.32%). Placement and length of stories helped to support these framing patterns: episodic coverage was more common on front pages and short stories in Urdu newspapers, whereas thematic frames were more common in editorials and long stories in English newspapers. Categories of climate also showed a difference: English sources highlighted systematic problems (including global warming, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and climate finance), and Urdu sources concentrated on floods, smog, and heatwaves.

These trends highlight the duality of language and audience orientation in the construction of the media narrative. The English press, which serves the elite audience, places the vulnerabilities of Pakistan within international climate governance and policy discourses. Facing larger communities,

Urdu media interprets climate change as localized, familiar narratives, sometimes as a dramatized disaster. Each of the two approaches has communicative potential, as well as potential risks: thematic frames can turn lay audiences off, whereas episodic ones can fail to produce systemic climate literacy.

Public Engagement and Climate Literacy Implications.

This framing difference between English and Urdu media has far-reaching consequences on the citizens of Pakistan and their climate literacy.

1. Discontinuous Climate Narratives.

The English readers are introduced to stories of systematic interconnection and global accountability, and the Urdu readers see climate change as a familiar calamity. This division divides the public into two main categories: those policy-oriented and those other ones that are survival-oriented and Coping-oriented. Without integration, this gap will only become a force supporting class and language inequalities in climate knowledge.

2. Mobilization vs. Education

Urdu newspapers have been able to use episodic frames to efficiently mobilize sympathy and instantaneous action (e.g., donations, relief action). Nevertheless, they do not necessarily lead to a better understanding of systemic causes and solutions. English newspapers are thematic and encourage structural comprehension but not necessarily emotional engagement with mass audiences, which inhibits mobilization at the grassroots level.

3. Climate Literacy Gaps

In Pakistan, there is a low level of climate literacy, especially among rural communities (Saeed & Salik, 2022). Not linking local calamities to global warming in Urdu newspapers is dangerous, as it will tend to feed the wrong notion that climate change is natural or temporary. Wide audiences will also be turned away by English stories that use technical jargon and internationalist language.

4. Policy Implications

Policymakers, who are the most frequent consumers of the English media, will think more of climate change as a global governance issue based on negotiations, finance, and global responsibility. Such a viewpoint can ignore localized adaptation demands as identified in Urdu reporting, like the health crisis of smog or community-level displacement due to floods.

An implication of this is that effective climate communication requires balanced framing, i.e., thematic depth and episodic relatability. Climate literacy and engagement gaps in journalists and policymakers require that both methods be integrated to close these gaps.

Comparison with Global Scholarship

The results are in line with the global literature on framing. European and North American studies indicate that thematic frames facilitate perceiving a system, but episodic frames trigger emotional interest, but not a systemic overview (Dar et al., 2021; Feldman & Hart, 2021). Pakistan mirrors this global trend and exaggerates it with the help of its linguistic fault line.

Similar patterns were observed by Baarsch et al. (2020) in South Africa, in the English-language media, the focus was on systemic problems, whereas in the vernacular media, the emphasis was on the effects. International climate diplomacy was in the English newspapers in India, and farmer distress and droughts were in Hindi newspapers (Montgomery, 2013). Pakistan is, therefore, part of a wider South Asian trend in which the language of segregation determines climate discourses.

In Pakistan, the situation is more dramatic because English and Urdu readers belong to very different

cultural and educational backgrounds. This duality, according to Ali et al. (2025) this divide can be risky because it creates two different climate audiences: the elite focus on global climate talks, while common people focus on local climate problems.

The findings also echo the observation of Boykoff (2011) that the media framing is not only descriptive; it has political implications. By positioning the floods as an act of systemic injustice, English news outlets urge the world to finance climate. Urdu outlets represent humanitarian suffering in episodic frames, thereby missing the opportunity of relating to the global debate.

Conclusion:

This study investigated the framing of climate change in the English and Urdu newspapers in Pakistan and found that newspapers with two different languages fluctuated considerably in terms of the framing styles, placement, length, episodic, and thematic priorities. The thematic frame was predominantly used by English, whereas the Urdu outlet used an episodic frame; this was confirmed through analysis of 985 articles published during COP26, COP27, and COP28 by Dawn, The Express Tribune, Jang, and Nawa-i-Waqt.

These trends were further supported by placement and length. Urdu newspapers mostly used brief, front-page stories of short-term disasters like floods and smog, whereas English newspapers used longer, editorial-style stories of systemic drivers of disasters like global warming, GHG emissions, and climate finance. Even thematic categories were dissimilar: Urdu reporting gave more importance to localized effects, whereas English news outlets focused on international negotiations and structural reform.

Policy and practice implications are evident. When policymakers who consume English media listen to Pakistan, they should be aware that most of the population of Pakistan accessing Urdu media hear something radically different when it comes to the narrative of climate. It is in the absence of this gap that climate policies will become technocratic and unconnected to the

realities on the ground. For journalists, the challenge lies in integrating episodic relatability with thematic depth: linking floods and smog to systemic climate drivers in Urdu reporting, while simplifying policy debates for broader accessibility in English outlets.

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