Cross-border Perspectives: Analyzing Online News Media in Bangladesh and India

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the dynamics of online news media in South Asian two countries: Bangladesh and India. Using agenda-setting and cultural studies frameworks to investigate this issue, it focuses on various factors--politics, economy, environment, entertainment, and many other social issues--that may influence the content and presentation of news coverage. It also investigated the cultural perspectives that shape the language of news, news tone, and representation in both countries. The study demonstrates the difference in news coverage and presentation styles between Bangladesh and India. These differences, however, underscore the importance of cultural, political, and economic factors in shaping journalistic priorities and practices. This study highlights the need to consider the cultural context in which online news media operate. This insight can help guiding media practices and shape audience perspectives in diverse cultural settings. The research results carry a great importance in enhancing the standards of online news media in South Asian nations and other regions across the globe.

Introduction

The role of online news media in shaping public discourse and influencing opinion have become increasingly significant in the digital era. The widespread adoption of digital platforms and the proliferation of online news sources have disrupted the traditional news industry, transforming how news is produced, consumed, and interpreted. However, the impact of cultural diversity on news development in the digital age needs to be studied, and this is where our research comes in.

This study presents a comparative analysis of the online news environments in two South Asian countries- Bangladesh and India, two countries with vast cultural diversity in the region. By examining the 10 news portals in these nations, we aim to uncover the fundamental processes that drive the creation, distribution, and consumption of news in the context of digitalization. The research seeks to determine whether the cultural diversity may impact on creation and distribution of news in the digital domain. At the same time, it aims to analyze the similarities and differences in approaches used by online news media in these countries.

The significance of our research lies in its potential to enhance our understanding of the complex relationship between culture, technology, and news media. Understanding how news media mirrors and strengthens cultural values can promote dialogue and facilitate well-informed decision-making in an increasingly interconnected

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world. Our research initiative has the potential to benefit a diverse range of individuals and groups, including scholars, media practitioners, policymakers, and global citizens.

Research Objectives

The study aims to explore how online news media from different cultures and regions are influenced by global trends, regional issues, and cultural norms. The specific objectives are:

1. To examine the look, features, tone, and presentation style of online news from various cultures and regions to find similarities and differences.

2. To compare topics and issues in online news across cultures and countries to understand how they reflect audience concerns and interests.

3. To investigate how political, economic, environmental, entertainment and social factors shape news content and presentation in online media from different cultures and regions.

4. To explore how global news trends and regional cultural norms influence online media news across cultures and areas to guide future research.

Literature Review

Since ARPANET's creation in 1969, internet technology has revolutionized global communication and collaboration. The development of TCP/IP and domain name systems enabled email and data exchange, while Tim Berners-Lee's introduction of the World Wide Web in 1990 marked a significant milestone. Traditional media moved online, offering breaking news, multimedia content, and interactive features. Social media further changed how news is shared and consumed.

News Consumption across Cultures

Over the past two decades, online news media plays an increasingly significant role in the global community with unique reading habits among different cultures. Such as the fact that 71% of the people in the U. S. citizens get their news online (Shearer Matsa, 2021). In the same vein, 63% of Europe gets their news primarily from the internet, and social media dominates (Newman et al., 2021). That transition mirrors the overall global movement toward a 24/7 news cycle, particularly in third world and developing nations such as Kenya and Nigeria where online news is a necessity (Nielsen Ganter, 2017).

However, news consumption behaviors vary across different cultural contexts. For example, in collectivist societies like many of the Asian and African cultures, it is all about social harmony and loyalty to the group, but in individualist societies such as the U. S. the emphasis lies on personal gain and self-promotion (Triandis, 1995). For example, in Hong Kong internet news media is used to keep up with social relationships, but in the U. S. it is primarily used for self-promotion (Kim-Olmsted Chan, 2001). This difference in consumption among cultures implies that the packaging and delivery of news is strongly related to cultural values.

News Sources and Media Ownership

The structure of who owns the news media plays a very big part in what is reported and what editorial direction is taken. State run media would narrow the range of stories that are critical and thus effect how the news is reported and received (Hall, 1980). For example, media in Russia and China often face strict government censorship, shaping public perceptions through limited and controlled reporting (Nielsen Ganter, 2017).

Ownership structure molds the character and nature of news dissemination in Bangladesh. All independent newspapers, such as Prothom Alo and The Daily Star, admittedly enjoy a pretty high reputation for their relatively balanced reporting. The Transcom Group owns Prothom Alo, a highly diversified business conglomerate considered reputable for its investigative reporting Hossain (2018) states. Similarly, Mediastar Limited owns The Daily Star, which is committed to independent journalism and carries incisive analyses of political and social issues (Rahman, 2020).

On the other hand, Kaler Kantho is more sensationalist in their approach. Being a paper from Bengal Group with significant political connections, Kaler Kantho often prioritizes entertainment value and headlines that grab eyeballs, reflecting the influence of ownership in editing decisions, as argued by Ullah (2019).

Media ownership in India significantly shapes the construction of news stories. The Hindu represents excellence in quality reporting with their tough standards of journalism and comprehensive coverage. The Hindu Group Publishing owns it, and it tries to maintain editorial independence to provide in-depth analysis (Kumar, 2021). Another major player, NDTV, is credited with hard-hitting investigative reporting. The ownership structure has a number of different shareholders, which allows them some editorial freedom, though it is subject to political pressures (Sharma, 2022). Conversely, Zee News, which operates under the umbrella of Zee Entertainment Enterprises, typically emphasizes sensationalism and content oriented towards entertainment. The organization's ownership framework is intricately linked to various business interests and political connections, which frequently results in a presentation of news that is

more populist in nature and potentially biased (Raghavan, 2020).

While there are many differences, the ownership structure in Bangladesh and India reflects, on the whole, greater socio-political forces impinging on the editorial lines and the kind of journalism pursued. Independent media houses would, as a rule, give balanced reports, while outlets allied to political and commercial interests would veer toward sensationalism. Ownership, a political climate, and media ethics play an important role in the interaction that underlies the media concept in both countries.

Impact of Online News Media on Public Perception

Internet news is such a key factor in the public's perspective. With the transition from traditional media to digital media, availability has increased, but so has the risk of false information. 64% of Americans think that false news has made them unsure of what is happening in today's world (Barthel et al., 2018). 83% of Europeans also worry about the proliferation of false information (European Commission, 2018).

With the emergence of the online media in developing countries like India and Bangladesh, it has allowed for new outlets of public discussion. But the danger of disinformation still exists, because the internet in both countries continues to grow. Prothom Alo and the Hindu are good examples of newspapers that report the facts in a biased way, but Kaler Kantho and Zee News are more sensationalist and their provocative headlines and emotional appeals would only add to the public's warped perception.

Framing and the News Ecosystem in Bangladesh and India

Framing (Entman, 1993) is a very important concept to know when trying to understand how the media can distort the news by highlighting different parts of the story. Framing can not only determine what is reported, but how it is reported, thus swaying public opinion and discussion. This paper uses framing as a tool to analyze the way that media in Bangladesh and India portray political economic and social issues.

In Bangladesh, the media landscape is characterized by a mix of independent and state-associated ownerships. The country's leading independent publications include The Daily Star and bdnews24.com, highly acclaimed for their incisive reportage on issues relating to governance and the environment. These organizations tend to move toward investigations and accountability of the people at the helm of affairs, with a view toward strengthening democratic debate (Rahman, 2020). In contrast, media outlets such as Kaler

Kantho frequently embrace a sensationalist and populist approach, often emphasizing entertainment value and striking headlines to captivate a wider audience. This strategy is indicative of the competitive landscape within the media sector of a nation where sensationalism has the potential to enhance both viewership and readership (Ullah, 2019).

Government influences on media can be overwhelming at times, as the regulatory frameworks occasionally stifle opposition views. Despite all these hurdles, digital platforms and social media have become important spaces for alternative narratives and citizen journalism, leading to a more active flow of information (Hossain, 2018).

The Indian media depicts substantial diversity, represented mainly by several news organizations serving different social groups. One of the notable newspapers, The Hindu, offers comprehensive political analysis and adheres to responsible journalism. Its independence in editorial policy has allowed it to address the most important issues of the day, providing in-depth coverage of national and international events (Kumar, 2021). In contrast, Zee News has a tendency toward an agenda that is more entertainment-oriented; it often sensationalizes news stories to increase viewership. This reflects the broader trend of media commodification in India, where business interests may impact editorial content, as noted by Raghavan (2020). Furthermore, digital media have heralded a sea change in India's news ecosystem, with social media emerging as a source of alternative news. This again reflects a change in consumption patterns and an increasing demand for different perspectives, which in turn creates a more dynamic public sphere (Sharma 2022).

Agenda Setting Theory

The Agenda Setting Theory explains how media shapes public perceptions by emphasizing certain issues (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). This theory helps us understand the media's influence on public discourse and opinion (McCombs, 2014; Weaver, 2007). According to this theory, the media's choice and emphasis on topics significantly impact how the public views their importance (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Media organizations have the power to shape public debate by selecting which stories to cover and how prominently to feature them (McCombs & Shaw, 1993). This study applies the Agenda Setting Theory to online news media from different cultures, showing how news coverage can reflect and reinforce cultural norms, potentially leading to intercultural misunderstandings.

Cross-cultural Differences in Online News Media

Cultural values play a very significant role in the way news is portrayed and received in both Bangladesh and India. Granted, both are similar in their news ecologies, with both shifting more and more to digital, but culturally, it's a different story. Many of the news outlets in Bangladesh tend to highlight those communal social values, writing about economic inequality and other ecological problems. In India, the news media explore a broader range of topics, including religious harmony, economic growth, and social justice.

These variances are a result of the cultural values of each country and how it affects not only the content but also the style and tone of the news. Cultural Studies Theory (Hall, 1980) provides a framework for understanding these variations, emphasizing the role of media in reflecting and shaping cultural identities.

Cultural Studies Theory

Cultural Studies Theory examines how cultural and social factors influence the production and consumption of online news media (Hall, 1980). It highlights the importance of cultural context and sees media as a complex space where power struggles occur (Hall, 1980). By applying this theory, the study shows how media practices reflect and shape cultural identity, societal norms, and political beliefs. It also explores whether media ownership and control impact news production and consumption across different cultures (Hall, 1980).

After reviewing the literature, several research gaps need further exploration. There is a need to study how cultural settings affect online news media's language, tone, and presentation style, especially in Bangladesh and India. Research should focus on the differences in user interface and characteristics of online news platforms across various cultural environments. Previous studies have not sufficiently examined how online news platforms from different cultural backgrounds address and prioritize subjects and issues, nor how they adapt to audience interests and sensitivities. More research is needed on how societal factors (political, economic, environmental, entertainment, and social) influence news production in different cultural contexts, particularly in Bangladesh and India. It is crucial to explore how global news trends intersect with regional cultural norms, shaping news production and consumption behaviors in Bangladesh and India. Understanding how news content adapts to these dynamics is essential.

Following literature gaps, the present study asks the following research questions for a comparative, cross-cultural analysis of online news media:

RQ1: How do online news media use language, tone, and presentation style to influence audience perceptions in different cultural settings? How do user interfaces and characteristics differ across cultures?

RQ2: How do online news platforms from different cultures and regions address various subjects and issues?

RQ3: How do political, economic, environmental, entertainment, and social issues influence news content and framing in different cultures?

RQ4: How do global news trends and regional cultural norms impact online news media and alter news content and framing across cultures?

Methodology

This study used thematic content analysis to examine the digital environments in India and Bangladesh. It focused on the editorial processes and decision-making of reputable online news organizations in both countries. Content analysis is commonly used to understand media content, providing standardized measurement and objective data interpretation (Boettger & Palmer, 2010; Karlsson & Sjøvaag, 2016). It reveals underlying perspectives and themes by analyzing news language, tone, and narrative structure (Sun, 2020; Riffe & Freitag, 1997).

Researchers selected online news portals based on regional recognition, prominence, Alexa ranking, audience geography, unique visitors, and influence. In Bangladesh, the chosen portals were Daily Star, Prothom Alo, Kaler Kantho, bdnews24.com, and jagonews24.com. In India, they were The Hindu, Zee News, India Today, The Times of India, and NDTV.

The study period from November 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, was chosen for its strategic significance and optimal duration. This timeframe allowed for the investigation of seasonal fluctuations in news coverage, particularly on ecological issues in South Asia. It also included notable global events such as international summits, climate conferences, and geopolitical developments, which are significant for both countries and can influence editorial choices.

A two-month sample period ensured the reliability and consistency of the results, reducing the impact of short-term fluctuations in news coverage. The study analyzed 200 news articles in total (100 from each country) drawn equally from the five selected online news media. Articles were chosen based on the homepage visibility, thematic relevance, tone, approach and presentation style. The selection process prioritized channels available in English to enhance the readability of the study's findings for a broader audience. Content

analysis was conducted in coding, categorization and comparison phases.

Findings and Discussions

The outcomes and discussions from a comparative, cross-cultural analysis of online news media would be contingent on the research questions and methodology employed. Nonetheless, this discourse presents several possible results from such an inquiry.

How do online news media use language, tone, and presentation style to influence audience perceptions in different cultural settings? How do user interfaces and characteristics differ across cultures?

Language and intended audience: Bangladeshi outlets like Prothom Alo, Kaler Kantho, Bdnews24.com, and jagonews24.com mainly use Bengali, targeting a broad audience, and have English versions. The Daily Star targets English speakers but recently added a Bangla version (see Table 1). Indian outlets The Hindu and The Times of India target English speakers, while Zee News and NDTV offer content in multiple languages, including Hindi and English (see Table 2). One of the ways to framing news narratives is through the diversity of languages; at the same time, the language used forms an important relation to problem perception or understanding by various groups of people.

Table 1: Online News Media in Bangladesh

Media Outlet	Language	Intended Audience	Tone & Editorial Approach	Presentation Style & Visual Elements
Prothom Alo	Bengali, English	Bengali-speaking viewers, English speakers	Balanced reporting, captivating storytelling	Content-focused, clear presentation
Kaler Kantho	Bengali	Bengali-speaking viewers	Sensationalist, opinionated, provocative headlines	Vibrant, striking designs, attention-grabbing headlines and photos
Bdnews24.com	Bengali, English	Bengali-speaking and English-speaking viewers	Thorough analysis, investigative reporting	Varied; prioritizes content over aesthetics
jagonews24.com	Bengali	Bengali-speaking viewers	Varied tone: Incorporates opinion pieces and diverse voices.	Vibrant, striking designs, attention-grabbing headlines and photos
The Daily Star	English, Bangla	English-speaking audience	Balanced, professional reporting and analysis	Clean and professional; Clear headings.

Table 2: Online News Media in India

Media Outlet	Language	Intended Audience	Tone & Editorial Approach	Presentation Style & Visual Elements
The Hindu	English	English-speaking, well-educated	Detailed reporting, analysis	Prioritizes detailed reporting over visual aesthetics
The Times of India	English	The English-speaking, varied population	Balanced reporting, lifestyle content	Visually striking layout, multimedia components
India Today	English	The English-speaking, varied population	Varies: Emotional connection with readers.	Engaging layouts; Multimedia elements.
Zee News	Hindi, Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, English	Multilingual, diverse audience	Sensationalist, opinionated, provocative headlines	Not specified
NDTV	Hindi, English	Hindi-speaking, English-speaking	Thorough analysis, investigative reporting	Structured layout; Emotive visuals.

Tone and Editorial Approach: Bangladeshi outlets The Daily Star and Prothom Alo, and Indian Outlets The Hindu and NDTV, focus on balanced, factual reporting. In contrast, Kaler Kantho and Zee News use sensationalist and opinionated styles, framing news in a manner that prioritizes engagement over accuracy. Bdnews24.com and NDTV emphasize in-depth analysis and investigative reporting, which frame complex issues within broader socio-political contexts (see Tables 1 and 2).

Presentation Style and Visual Elements: Bangladeshi sites like jagonews24.com and Kaler Kantho use bold visuals and designs to attract viewers framing content in a visually stimulating manner, while Prothom Alo uses a simpler presentation (see Table 1). In India, The Times of India is visually rich with multimedia content, whereas The Hindu and NDTV prioritize detailed reporting over visuals framing their content through a lens of seriousness and depth (see Table 2).

Multimediality: Bangladeshi outlets (The Daily Star, Prothom Alo, Kaler Kantho, bdnews24.com, jagonews24.com) utilize multimedia (photos, videos, interactive graphics) extensively, with bdnews24.com leading in diverse multimedia formats. Indian platforms (The Hindu, Zee News, The Times of India, NDTV) integrate multimedia (photos, videos, infographics, live TV) to enrich news delivery (see Tables 3 and 4).

Table 3: Interactivity of Online News Media in Bangladesh

Outlet	Reader Comments	News Feeds	Sharing Options	Email Alerts	Mobile News Alerts	Mobile Apps	Archives	Hypertextuality Description	User-Generated Blogs Description
Daily Star	Yes (Close)	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Maintain a conservative hypertextuality approach, featuring limited hyperlinks to relevant articles and external sources.	Features limited user-generated blogs, reflecting a more curated approach to content creation.
Prothom Alo	Yes (Open)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Integrates hyperlinks extensively, connecting readers to additional resources, background information, and related articles within its platform.	Embraces user-generated blogs to amplify reader voices and foster community participation.
Kaler Kantho	Yes (Open)	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Employs hypertextuality to enhance reader engagement, offering links to supplementary content and related news stories.	Maintains a relatively conservative approach to user blogs compared to other outlets.
bdnews24. com	Yes (Open)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Embraces hypertextuality as a core element of its online presence, seamlessly integrating hyperlinks to enrich articles with supplementary information and multimedia content.	Actively incorporates user-generated blogs, fostering a dynamic exchange of ideas and viewpoints among readers.
jagonews24.com	Yes (Open)	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Incorporates hypertextuality to facilitate navigation and exploration through embedded hyperlinks within its articles.	Features user blogs but may have a more restrained approach than other outlets.

Table 4: Interactivity of Online News Media in India

Outlet	Reader Comments	News Feeds	Sharing Options	Email Alerts	Mobile News Alerts	Mobile Apps	Archives	Hypertextuality Description	User-Generated Blogs Description
The Hindu	Yes (Open)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Integrates hyperlinks strategically within its articles, offering readers access to additional context, background information, and related stories.	Features user blogs as a prominent component, providing readers a platform to share insights and opinions.
The Times of India	Yes (Open)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	It uses hypertextuality to enrich articles and facilitate exploration, offering hyperlinks to relevant sources, background information, and related coverage.	Utilizes user-generated blogs to provide readers with opportunities to contribute viewpoints and engage with the community.
Zee News	Yes (Open)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Leverages hypertextuality to enrich content, providing hyperlinks to relevant sources, multimedia content, and supplementary articles.	Incorporates user-generated blogs to complement news coverage and enhance reader interaction.
NDTV	Yes (Open)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	It employs hypertextuality to augment the richness of its content, offering readers access to a wealth of additional resources and related coverage.	Embraces user-generated blogs as a valuable addition to its content offerings, enriching coverage with diverse perspectives.
India Today	Yes (Open)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Utilizes hypertextuality to enhance content by providing hyperlinks to relevant sources, multimedia content, and supplementary articles.	Features user-generated blogs to provide readers a platform to contribute viewpoints and engage with the community.

The differences in multimedia features between Bangladeshi and Indian online news platforms reflect disparities in technology infrastructure, audience preferences, and editorial priorities. It is the strategic use of multimedia that has commandeered the attention of a reader to frame the narratives in a more commanding light, shifting to adapt to technological advancement with expectations of an audience in the digital era.

Interactivity: Interactivity is crucial for engaging audiences in online news media. According to Table 3, Bangladeshi sites vary: The Daily Star has basic features; Prothom Alo offers robust options; Kaler Kantho provides moderate engagement; Bdnews24.com excels with extensive tools; Jagonews24.com offers basic features. Indian sites, as shown in Table 4, like The Hindu, Zee News, The Times of India, and NDTV, prioritize reader engagement with various interactive tools. Bangladeshi sites emphasize user engagement, while Indian sites focus on enhancing user experience and community participation through interactive features like comment sections, news feeds, notifications, emails, and sharing tools across platforms. This emphasis on interactivity frames the user experience, fostering a sense of community participation and enhancing the overall engagement with news content.

Through hypertext: Hypertextuality is a crucial feature of online news media today, influencing how information is connected and providing readers access to various perspectives and sources. It enhances the richness and breadth of content, helping users navigate and explore the digital news ecosystem more easily.

In Bangladesh, online news sources show varying levels of hypertextuality. The Daily Star uses hyperlinks to connect to related stories and external sources but generally follows a conservative approach. Prothom Alo heavily incorporates hyperlinks, connecting readers to additional resources, background information, and related articles, thereby framing content in a broader context. Kaler Kantho uses hyperlinks to increase reader engagement by linking to further content and related news stories. Bdnews24.com integrates hyperlinks thoroughly to enhance articles with additional material, multimedia content, and relevant sources, providing readers with comprehensive insights. Jagonews24.com uses hyperlinks to a lesser degree but still allows readers to navigate and explore through embedded links within its articles (see Table 3).

In India, online news sources also demonstrate various approaches to hypertextuality. The Hindu carefully incorporates hyperlinks to provide context, background information, and related topics. Zee News and The Times of India use hyperlinks to enhance their content with related sources, multimedia information, and more articles. NDTV uses hyperlinks to provide depth by linking to supplementary resources and related material, focusing on investigative journalism and detailed analysis. These links enable easy browsing and exploration, allowing readers to delve deeper into the topics that interest them most (see Table 4).

Blogging: Bangladeshi online news media have diverse approaches to user-generated blogs. The Daily Star offers a curated selection of user blogs for reader involvement. Prothom Alo enhances reader engagement by encouraging community contributions through user-generated blogs. Kaler Kantho, with a cautious approach, prioritizes traditional journalism but provides some reader interaction opportunities. Bdnews24.com, a leader in digital journalism in Bangladesh, actively integrates user-generated blogs to promote lively exchanges of ideas and perspectives. Jagonews24.com takes a more conservative approach, focusing on news reporting while offering limited reader participation through blogs (see Table 3).

In India, online news media also incorporate user-generated blogs in various ways. The Hindu prominently features user blogs, allowing readers to express their views and opinions. Zee News and The Times of India use user blogs to enhance news coverage and foster community engagement. NDTV values user-generated blogs as a supplement to its content, encouraging readers to share their experiences and ideas, thereby enriching its coverage with diverse voices and viewpoints (see Table 4).

How do online news platforms from different cultures and regions address various subjects and issues?

Political news coverage on online platforms reflects cultural studies theory, highlighting how media representations are shaped by cultural, social, and political contexts. The Daily Star in Bangladesh focuses on government policies promoting economic growth, reflecting cultural values of progress and expansion. Prothom Alo takes a critical stance, addressing income disparity issues that resonate with societal concerns about social justice (see Table 5).

In India, The Times of India emphasizes economic development policies, emphasizing growth and prosperity, while The Hindu provides detailed legal and ethical analyses within the Indian context (see Table 6).

Table 5: Addressing Different Issues in Bangladeshi Online News Media

Political News Subjects	*The Daily Star*	*Prothom Alo*	*Kaler Kantho*	*bdnews24.com*	*jagonews24.com*
Government Issues and Policies	Emphasizes positive impact on job creation and economic growth.	Critical perspective, focusing on potential income inequality issues.	Political implications and analysis of power dynamics.	In-depth analysis of environmental consequences.	Coverage of public reactions and diverse perspectives.
Election issues & Coverage	Highlights key candidates and their agendas, providing insights into political dynamics.	Features stories of voters and their expectations, focusing on social issues.	Analyzes political strategies and potential outcomes with an eye on upcoming elections.	Examines the electoral process and potential irregularities.	Reflects public sentiment through coverage of rallies and interviews.
Crime & Corruption	Promises transparent investigation into alleged corruption, emphasizing government accountability.	Highlights socio-economic disparities exposed by the scandal.	Demands accountability from opposition parties amidst scandal revelations.	Investigates the environmental impact of corruption.	It covers public outcry and calls for reform in the wake of the scandal.

Table 6: Addressing Different Issues in Indian Online News Media

Political News Subjects	*The Times of India*	*India Today*	*The Hindu*	*Zee News*	*NDTV*
Government Issues and Policies	Portrays policies as drivers of economic growth and development.	Human-interest approach, featuring stories of individuals impacted by policy changes.	Critically analyzes policies, exploring legal ramifications.	It provides a satirical take on policies, adding a humorous perspective.	Focuses on implications for marginalized communities and social justice.
Election issues & Coverage	Predicts a landslide victory for the incumbent party, highlighting electoral trends.	Focuses on human stories from the campaign trail, emphasizing the personal side of politics.	Analyzes legal challenges and electoral strategy, providing in-depth insights.	Satirical take on election follies and campaign antics.	Emphasizes inclusivity and minority representation in election reporting.
Crime & Corruption	Promises transparent investigation into corruption allegations, emphasizing government accountability.	Exposes socio-economic disparities through coverage of corruption scandals.	Demands accountability from political figures amidst scandal revelations.	Satirical take on corruption follies, adding a humorous perspective.	Focuses on social justice and reform amid corruption scandals.

During elections, bdnews24.com in Bangladesh and India Today adopt different strategies: bdnews24.com focuses on major candidates' agendas, highlighting their impact on the political landscape, while India Today explores human-interest stories from the campaign trail, reflecting cultural interest in personal narratives (see Table 5).

Addressing crime and corruption, Kaler Kantho in Bangladesh demands accountability from political figures during scandals, reflecting cultural values of transparency and integrity (see Table 5). In contrast, Zee News in India employs satire, aligning with cultural practices of using humor for commentary and critique (see Table 6).

By applying cultural studies theory, we gain insights into how online news platforms across cultures shape and reflect public discourse on political issues. Understanding these dynamics helps media consumers critically analyze political news and assists policymakers in navigating the complex interplay between media portrayal and cultural values. Embracing diverse perspectives from online news platforms fosters a more informed and inclusive public debate on political matters across different cultural contexts and geographical locations.

How do political, economic, environmental, entertainment, and social issues influence news content and framing in different cultures?

The impact of political, economic, environmental, entertainment, and social factors on news production in Bangladesh and Indian online news media is profound, reflecting each country's unique cultural and socioeconomic dynamics. Media agenda-setting theory helps analyze how these factors shape news content and framing on online platforms in both nations, highlighting the priorities and agendas of these outlets.

Economic Issues: Online newspapers like bdnews24.com in Bangladesh and NDTV and The Hindustan Times in India cover a wide range of economic issues, setting the agenda through critical analysis of economic policies and diverse perspectives (see Tables 7 and 8).

Social Issues: Prothom Alo in Bangladesh and The Hindu in India influence the social agenda with comprehensive reporting on societal transformations and justice issues, reflecting cultural values and community perspectives (see Tables 7 and 8).

Environmental Issues: Bangladeshi media focus on local environmental challenges like deforestation and rising sea levels, while Indian media cover a broader spectrum including pollution and climate change, promoting environmental conservation (see Tables 7 and 8).

Entertainment: Both Indian and Bangladeshi media shape public discourse on cultural issues through coverage of celebrity news and cultural events, reflecting their respective cultural landscapes.

These findings underscore how media agenda-setting theory helps understand the complex interaction between media portrayal, cultural context, and societal concerns in shaping public opinion and discourse across different domains in Bangladesh and India (see Tables 7 and 8).

Table 7: Factors Affecting News Content and Framing in Bangladeshi Online News Media

Aspect	*The Daily Star*	*Prothom Alo*	*Kaler Kantho*	*bdnews24.com*	*jagonews24.com*
Political Issues	Emphasizes objectivity in political reporting; Provides analysis on government policies and decisions.	Offers diverse perspectives on political events; In-depth coverage of political discourse.	Prioritizes political analysis, often with a leaning towards current government policies.	Balances political reporting with a focus on governance issues; Provides critical analysis.	Captures public reactions to political events; Highlights diverse political opinions.
Economic Issues	Covers economic policies and their impact; Emphasizes business and economic growth.	Highlights socio-economic implications of policies; Focuses on income inequality and economic disparities.	Analyzes economic policies with a political lens; Covers economic issues with a political context.	Examines economic policies and environmental impact; Provides comprehensive economic coverage.	Presents diverse economic perspectives; Explores economic issues affecting the public.
Social Issues	Reports on social policies and their effects; Highlights cultural events.	Prioritizes social justice issues; Covers human-interest stories and societal concerns.	Touches on societal impacts of political decisions; Covers social issues with a political angle.	Incorporates social justice themes; Provides analysis on societal shifts.	Captures public sentiment on social issues; Presents diverse social perspectives.
Environmental Matters	Urgent call for action on rising sea levels	In-depth investigation of deforestation and biodiversity loss	Analysis of balancing growth and ecology through environmental policies	Spotlight on renewable energy for sustainable solutions	Showcasing local environmental initiatives with community-led conservation
Cultural Values	Climate change's impact on cultural heritage	Exploration of cultural respect for nature through traditional ecological wisdom	Advocacy for environmental education, preserving nature for future generations	Promotion of eco-friendly living through traditional practices	Highlighting unity in conservation, emphasizing the role of community traditions
Entertainment	Local film festivals and cultural events	Exclusive interviews with rising stars	Coverage of popular cultural events	Weekly roundup of entertainment news	Exploration of folk arts and contemporary entertainment
Cultural Values	Recognizing contributions to the arts	Focus on celebrities as social influencers	Emphasis on traditions in entertainment	Exploring the social impact of film and music	Balancing tradition and modernity in entertainment trends

Table 8: Factors Affecting News Content and Framing in Indian Online News Media

Aspect	The Times of India	India Today	The Hindu	Zee News	NDTV
Political Issues	Varied political coverage; Often leans towards a pro-establishment stance.	Balances political news with human-interest stories; Presents political narratives with an emotional touch.	Focuses on political analysis and legal implications; Offers comprehensive political reporting.	Satirical take on political events; Presents politics with humor and satire.	Balances political coverage with a focus on social justice issues.
Economic Issues	Emphasizes economic growth and development; Provides business-focused analysis.	Presents economic news with a human touch; Highlights individual stories in financial contexts.	Analyzes economic policies and financial trends; Offers in-depth economic reporting.	Adds humor to economic reporting; Covers economic issues with a light-hearted tone.	Highlights economic policies with a focus on social impact.
Social Issues	Reports on societal changes and cultural events; Provides coverage on social policies.	Prioritizes human-interest stories and social justice issues; Engages readers emotionally on societal concerns.	Provides in-depth coverage of societal shifts; Analyzes social issues with a focus on justice.	Infuses humor into social reporting; Presents societal changes in a satirical manner.	Focuses on social justice issues and societal concerns; Captures diverse social perspectives.
Environmental Matters	Delhi's ongoing battle against pollution	India Today's campaign for sustainable lifestyles	In-depth analysis of diverse environmental challenges	Presenting varied perspectives on critical environmental issues	Global environmental series focusing on climate change
Cultural Values	Exploration of India's eco-spiritual practices	Bollywood's impact on environmental awareness	Cultural exploration of India's relationship with water, focusing on sacred rivers	Exploring traditional cultural perspectives on conservation	Advocacy for inclusivity in climate justice, emphasizing environmental justice
Entertainment	Exclusive coverage of Bollywood premieres	Behind-the-scenes look at star lives	Exploration of artistic traditions in Indian films	Quick bites on the latest film and music releases	Features on celebrities advocating for social causes
Cultural Values	Bollywood's cultural impact worldwide	Celebrity activism and engagement in social causes	Emphasis on narrative and artistic merit in cinema	Examining changing cultural preferences in entertainment	Coverage of philanthropic initiatives by celebrities

How do global news trends and regional cultural norms impact online news media and alter news content and framing across cultures?

The study investigates how global news trends and regional cultural norms influence online news media, using agenda-setting theory and cultural studies. Agenda-setting theory suggests that media prioritize topics to shape public opinion, while cultural studies theory examines how cultural contexts impact media content.

Online news platforms strategically frame news to align with global trends and regional norms (see Table 9). For example, The Hindu emphasizes economic analysis, while Zee News incorporates humor to engage audiences effectively.

Cultural studies theory complements agenda-setting by highlighting how cultural contexts influence news production and consumption. The Times of India celebrates cultural diversity, and The Hindu explores religious harmony (see Table 10).

This interdisciplinary approach enhances understanding of how global trends and cultural norms shape online news media in Bangladesh and India. The study contributes insights into factors influencing news production and consumption across diverse cultural settings.

Table 9: Global News Trends and Regional Cultural Norms in Bangladeshi Online News Media

Aspect	*The Daily Star*	*Prothom Alo*	*Kaler Kantho*	*bdnews24.com*	*jagonews24.com*
International News Trends	Bangladesh's role in environmental policies at the Global Climate Summit	International collaboration and challenges in the COVID-19 Vaccination Race	Impact of global economic shifts on Bangladesh's trade and industries	Bangladesh's position in the worldwide tech landscape in Tech Trends 2023	Impact of global cultural exchange on Bangladesh's art and entertainment
Cultural Norms	Celebration of traditional festivals as the cultural heritage of Bangladesh	Socio-cultural commentary addressing taboos and breaking stereotypes	Exploration of cultural identities at the intersection of tradition and modernity	Analysis of youth culture and changing trends in society	Examination of language and identity and the impact of cultural diversity on society

Table 10: Global News Trends and Regional Cultural Norms in Indian Online News Media

Aspect	*The Times of India*	*India Today*	*The Hindu*	*Zee News*	*NDTV*
International News Trends	Tech-centric perspective	Diplomatic focus	Economic Insights	Humor-oriented approach	Platform for global voices
Cultural Norms	Celebrating cultural diversity	Emphasizing Bollywood's global influence	Exploring religious harmony and diverse spiritual traditions	Presenting light-hearted cultural commentary	Focusing on diversity and social harmony

Conclusion

Comparing online news media in Bangladesh and India reveals how cultural and societal norms shape news coverage in politics, entertainment, and visual representation. Understanding these nuances is crucial for effective communication and engagement with diverse audiences. The study emphasizes the influence of social media on news consumption habits and cultural values, suggesting areas for future research. It underscores the need for culturally sensitive news coverage that resonates appropriately across different contexts. Media professionals can use these insights to refine content strategies and enhance audience engagement, while policymakers can support media diversity and freedom of speech through informed policies. Future research could explore social media's evolving role in news consumption and compare online news dynamics across South Asia and globally, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration for deeper insights.

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