
Role of Peace Journalism in Current Global Scenario: An Analysis of Russia-Ukraine War Reporting

Abstract

Peace journalism does not say that media should not report instances of war and conflict or should hide something. Still, it expects journalists to use a positive and solution-oriented approach while writing. In the 21st century, the media is not merely disseminating information but also telling and teaching people how they should act in a situation. In conflict and war, the power of media increases drastically. The media audience unknowingly believes and then acts according to the media reports. This study was conducted to determine how the media reported the Russia-Ukraine war using a peace or war journalism approach. Quantitative Content analysis was performed on online news reports of five different countries (America, Britain, India, Russia & Ukraine). It was found that in all the five countries, the media uses a war journalism approach while reporting the current Russia-Ukraine conflict. Such practice creates panic in society and hampers development. This study recommends that to bring peace journalism into practice among journalists; media intuitions should start training on peace journalism; along with this, media houses should take initiatives to train their journalists in peace journalism.

Keywords- Peace journalism, War Journalism, Russia-Ukraine war, Peace, Conflict, War.

Introduction

Peace journalism has the potential to change the complete picture in case of a conflict or war; it makes people understand the causes and consequences of a conflict or war. This kind of journalism highlights the motivations behind any conflict so that timely action can be taken. Peace journalism offers people a solution, truth and a people-oriented approach based on which they can take an informed decision and help reduce the tension. In its trustworthy sense, peace journalism uses a people-oriented approach; in case of a war or conflict, this kind of journalism focuses on the victims and their suffering. Johan Galtung coined the term Peace journalism in the 1960s.

Peace journalism uses a win-win approach, whereas, in the case of war journalism, one party wins, and another party has to suffer defeat along with its long-lasting consequences. This kind of

journalism focuses not only on the visible aspects of violence but also on the invisible effects like trauma, glory and damage to the culture. Peace journalism focuses on solving problems; on the other hand, war journalism focuses on victory (Galtung, 2003). Peace journalism has a unique quality as it not only reports the happenings around us but also suggests a possible solution for them. The solution has a non-violent approach to solving any conflict.

War journalism uses an entirely different approach from peace journalism. War journalism uses military language and overemphasizes human casualties and other damage caused by war; it focuses more on the visible aspects of a war or conflict. This approach of journalism relies on elite sources for news (Perdomo, Harlow & Brown, 2022). War journalism is victory-oriented; it does not focus on the solution of the conflict or war. The war journalists expose only their truths, and they also help in covering up.

A peace-oriented reporting approach includes positively framing the issue, having a positive perception, and creating empathy and understanding (Ersoy & Miller, 2022). These qualities in a news report make it the voice of people in a true sense and also help to solve the problem. Most research has found that media and journalists use war principles and language to report a conflict (Perdomo, Harlow & Brown, 2022). In peace journalism, approach journalists make conflict transparent; on the other hand task of war journalism is war secrets (Galtung, 2000).

Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022, after months of tensions between the two; Russia called it a special military operation. As per America's Associated Press, (2022) news report of June 3 officials have reported over 21,000 civilian deaths in Mariupol alone. According to the mayor, Sievierodonetsk is a city in Luhansk, Russia, with approximately 1,500 casualties. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that more than 30,000 Russian servicemen have died.

Literature review

To understand the practice of peace journalism studies is conducted worldwide, highlighting some key findings discussed in this section. A study conducted on Turkish newspapers to check the practices of peace journalism concludes that journalists do not want to become a part of the solution because they think there is a loss of trustworthiness. Adding on to its findings, it says that newspapers rely more upon elite sources (Aluc & Ersoy, 2016). And both the approaches do not fit in the category of peace journalism.

A study by Ersoy & Dambo (2021) on the coverage of Covid-19 from the peace journalism approach concludes that the media used peace and conflict-oriented approaches while covering the pandemic. The news stories they analysed were based more on non-elite sources than elite ones. Ersoy & Dambo also found that the media also used a conflict-oriented approach by paying more attention to Covid-19 cases, deaths and the use of insensitive language.

Perdomo, Harlow & Brown (2022) conducted a study on framing the Colombian Peace Process and found that the media used more war frames than peace frames even during the coverage of peace negotiation. Another important finding of this research shows that social media audiences amplified more war frames than peace frames. The study also found that more war frames were used in Colombian media compared to foreign media.

A study by Lee and Maslog (2006) on Asian regional conflicts involving India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and the Philippines is framed as war journalism or peace journalism. Their finding shows that the coverage was dominated by war journalism. The results of this study highlight a severe concern, and media practitioners & academicians should pay attention to this; the practice of war journalism in case of a conflict or war can make the situation more complicated and harmful. And journalists should keep this in mind while reporting a conflict or war.

Shaheen & Tarique (2022) found in their study that news stories in English are practising more war journalism than stories published in local languages. Galtung (2000) noted that violence is the only thing that sells to insult humanity. Further, he stated that it is not valid for women; they want to listen to the reality and like to see some solution to the problem. It may be true for many males between 18 to 55 years of age. Jake and Annabel (2013) found in their study that the viewers of peace journalism were less likely to blame one side of the news; they were more likely to think of cooperative solutions to the problem.

Role of peace journalism

Journalism is not merely a representation of current happenings in society but guides people's future actions. Galtung (2015), in his study titled Peace Journalism and Reporting on the United States, noted that the role of Journalism is not only to report about the world but also to make states, capital and people transparent to each other. This transparency brings trust in the people's minds for its government, and it fosters the development process of a nation.

Peace journalism itself cannot solve a conflict or war, but it has the potential to create a favourable environment to solve them. It educates people not only about the current happenings around them but also about how they should behave responsibly. In peace journalism, facts are not exaggerated like war journalism besides in this approach of journalism facts of all sides are presented.

Media must give voice to the voiceless, and in conflict or war this becomes a necessity. Ordinary people have to suffer the most due to disputes between two communities, groups or nations; in such situations, the media should portray their sufferings. Relying entirely on officials' sources for news in a conflict does not depict an accurate picture and makes it harder to solve the problem.

Aim and objectives of the study

The study aimed to explore in the current global scenario which kind of journalism (Peace or war journalism) is practised and to what extent.

Research Methodology

This study has gone under quantitative content analysis to examine how the media portrays the Russia-Ukraine war from a peace journalism or war journalism approach. The online news content published from America, Britain, India, Russia, and Ukraine was examined. The rationale for including America and Britain was to see how media houses in developed countries are portraying war and India to see the portrayal of a developing country, and Russia and Ukraine (which are deeply affected by the current war) were specially included to see their portrayal of war by the media. From each country, leading English language newspapers were selected; Wall street journal from America, The Guardian from Britain, The Times of India from India, The Moscow times from Russia and Kyiv Post from Ukraine. Media reports published in May 2022 were selected to bring the factor of recency; five online news reports were randomly selected from each country's newspaper. Quantitative content analysis was conducted on 25 news reports from the selected newspapers.

The researcher searched the 'Russia Ukraine War Peace' keyword in the search box of each newspaper's website and set the period from May 1 to May 31, 2022. Five news reports were selected randomly from each newspaper's website from the search result. The researcher examined each report to check which approach of journalism (Peace or war journalism) newspapers have followed in news reports. The researcher quantified words which are associated with peace and war journalism. The researcher found war, invasion, fight, battle, attack, conflict, military operation, and offensive words in the news reports associated with war journalism. Further, the researcher

examined the reports to identify terms related to the peace journalism approach and identified peace, peaceful talks, and security terms in the reports. The researcher analyzed how many words with the two approaches are used in selected newspapers' online news reports.

The sample size for content analysis

Table 1: These five newspapers are included in this study.

Country	Newspaper website	No. of news reports
America	The Wall Street Journal	5
Britain	The Guardian	5
India	The Times of India	5
Russia	The Moscow Times	5
Ukraine	Kyiv Post	5
	Total Sample size	25

Data Analysis and Interpretation

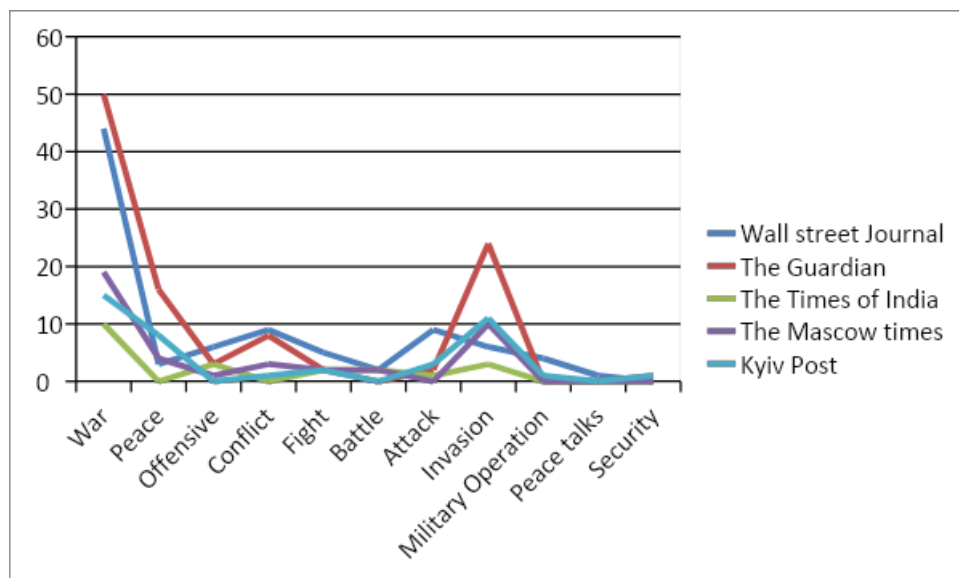


Figure 1: Frequency of war & peace journalism-related words in five newspapers.

America's Wall Street Journal

America's leading newspaper, The Wall Street Journal, used more words which the researcher associated with war journalism. In five selected online news reports, newspapers used war forty-four times, conflict nine times, attack nine times, offensive six times, invasion six times, fight five times, military operation four times, battle two times, peace three times, peace talks one time.

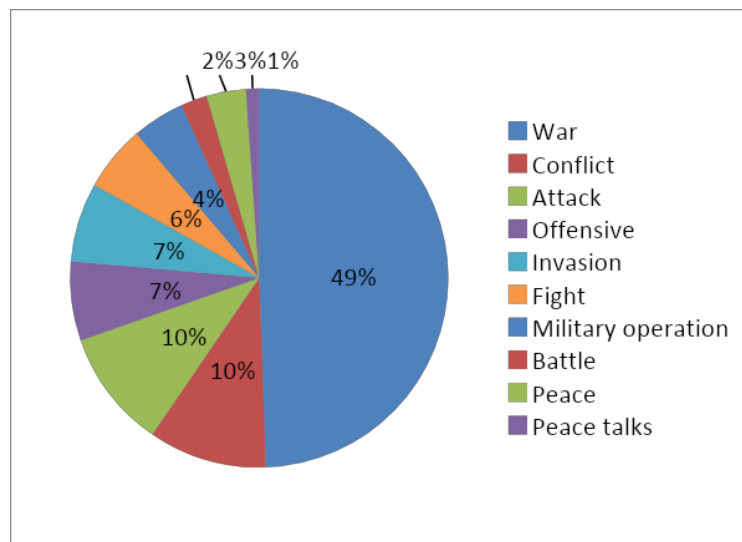


Figure 2:Percentage of war & peace journalism-related words in Wall Street Journal Newspaper.

Britain's The Guardian

Britain's leading newspaper, The Guardian, used more terms related to war journalism. The five selected online news reports newspapers used war fifty times, invasion twenty-four times, peace sixteen times, conflict eight times, offensive three times, fight twice, attack twice, and security one time.

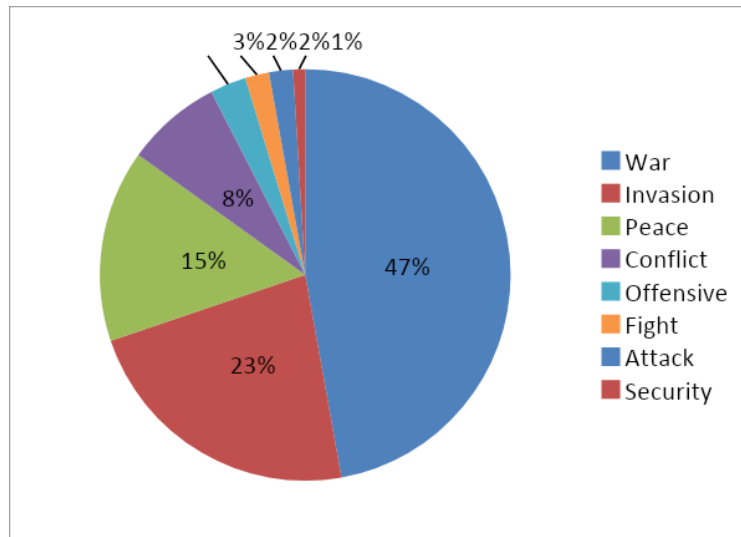


Figure 3:Percentage of war & peace journalism-related words in The Guardian Newspaper.

India's The Times of India Newspaper

India's leading newspaper, The Times of India also used a war journalism approach while reporting the Russia-Ukraine war. In the five randomly selected online news reports, newspapers used war ten times, offensive three times, invasion three times, battle twice, fight twice, and attack one time.

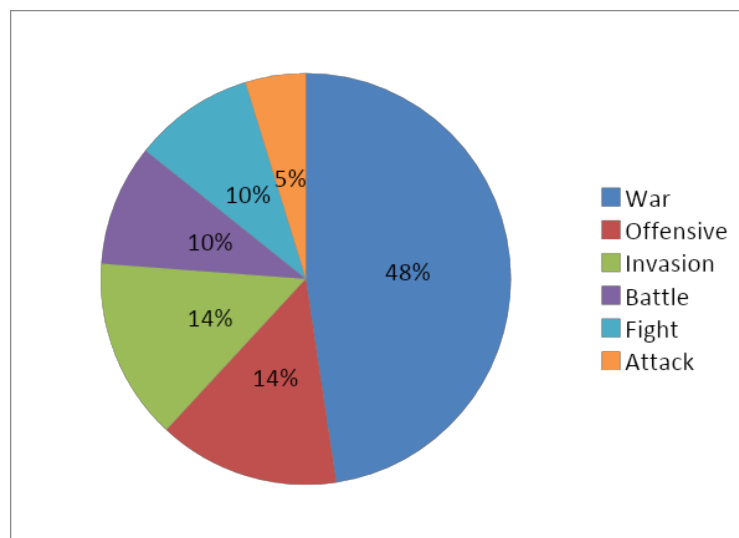


Figure 4: Percentage of war & peace journalism-related words in The Time of India Newspaper.

Data analysis of Russia's The Moscow Times

Russia's leading newspaper, The Moscow Times also used a war journalism approach while reporting the Russia-Ukraine war. The five selected news reports newspaper used war nineteen times, invasion ten times, peace four times, conflict three times, battle twice, fight twice, attack twice, and offensive one time.

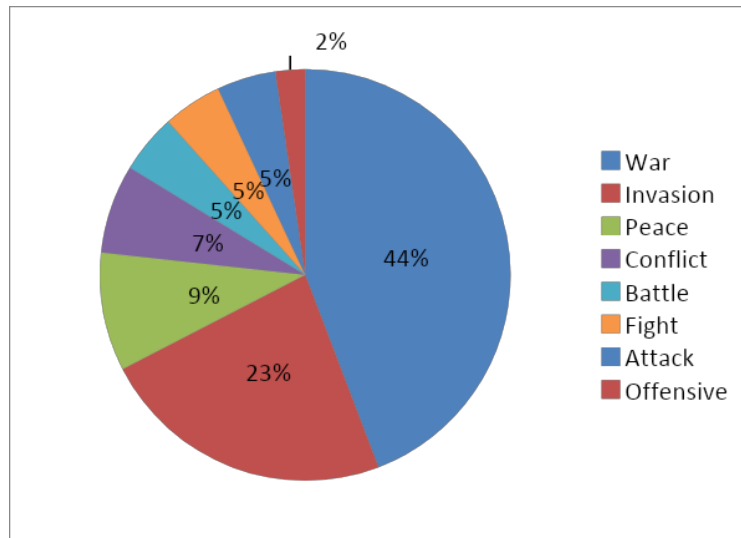
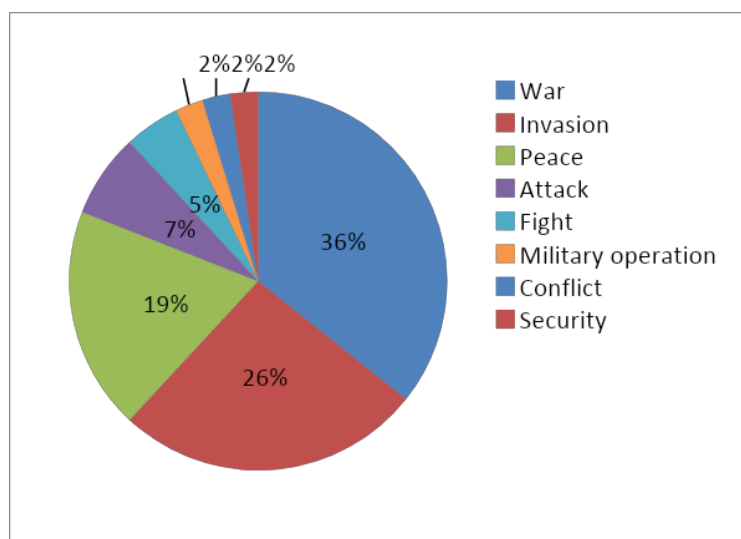


Figure 5:Percentage of war & peace journalism-related words in The Moscow Times Newspaper.

Data analysis of Ukraine's Kyiv Post

Ukraine's leading newspaper Kyiv Post also used the war journalism approach in its online news reports selected by the researcher. The five news reports newspaper used war fifteen times, invasion eleven times, peace eight times, attack three times, fight twice, military operation one time, conflict one time, and security one time.



Results and discussion

Five countries and five newspapers, but the findings are almost identical; in the Russia-Ukraine war, all five newspapers in their reports have used more words which were associated with war journalism by the researcher. It is a clear indication that nowadays, most newspapers are practising war journalism, which is a matter of concern for the media industry and society. Media and Journalists not only inform society but also teach them how to act in a particular situation, conveying this through their words. If their words are based on the war journalism approach in a conflict or war, it will worsen the problem rather than solve it.

Researchers tried to study the impact of the peace and war journalism approach on the audience. They found those people who watch peace journalism were more hopeful and empathetic, less angry and fearful than those who watch war journalism (Perdomo, Harlow & Brown, 2022). This finding highlights the need to practice peace journalism; it is journalists' responsibility to work for society's welfare. It is a matter of concern for the society that even during peace talks and processes, the media uses more war journalism approach, making peace making process more difficult.

In the current global scenario, the media audience needs to pay attention to how media is reporting the Russia-Ukraine war; for commercial benefits (through increased Television Rating Point (TRP) and more circulation), media relies more upon the practice of war journalism. But this practice is very harmful to humans. War journalism is slowly building a culture of violence in society. The media should take notice of the prevalence of war journalism and be self-regulatory in its conduct before any external agency interferes with correcting this practice. The practice of exaggerating the facts for TRP and circulation will affect the trustworthiness of the media, which is considered its lifeblood.

Recommendations

Peace journalism is a well-known phenomenon in journalism, but studies on it highlight that it is not practised much, and the current research also verifies this fact. There is an urgent need to put it into practice to create a peaceful and prosperous world. Journalists should be given proper training to bring peace journalism into practice; this training can be provided inside or outside the media houses. Media institutes can start short-term training courses on peace journalism. Media houses can also run such programs to train journalists who are supposed to cover conflict or war.

While using the peace journalism approach, journalists should keep this fact in mind; having a positive approach does not mean they have the right to distort the fact just to give it a positive outlook; they should tell the truth to the people but with a positive expression.

Future studies can explore the mindset of media houses behind practising war journalism, what editors and owners of media houses think, and why this practice of journalism is prominently prevalent in conflict or war situations.

References

Agence France-Presse. (2022, May 23). Russia's war against Ukraine: Day 89, May 23 – Update No. 1. Kyiv Post. <https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/russias-war-against-ukraine-day-89-may-23-update-no-1.html>

Agence France-Presse. (2022, May 3). Pope says he wants to meet Putin in Moscow. Kyiv Post. <https://www.kyivpost.com/world/pope-says-he-wants-to-meet-putin-in-moscow.html>

Agencies. (2022, May 12). Ukraine cuts Russia gas at one hub, underlining risk to supply. The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/rest-of-world/ukraine-cuts-russia-gas-at-one-hub-underlining-risk-to-supply/articleshow/91504290.cms>

Atay, A. D., & İrvan, S. (2021). An analysis of the representation of the 'Solution Process' in the Turkish press. *Turkish Studies*, 22(1), 98-119.

Chao-Fong, L., Aratani, L., & Singh, S. (2022, May 18). Russia-Ukraine war: what we know on day 84 of the invasion. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/18/russia-ukraine-war-what-we-know-on-day-84-of-the-invasion>

Ersoy, M., & Dambo, T. H. (2021). Covering the Covid-19 pandemic using peace journalism approach. *Journalism Practice*, 1-18.

Ersoy, M., & Miller, L. M. (2020). Peace journalism strategy for creating a public value sphere. *International Peacekeeping*, 27(3), 395-416.

Fidler, S. (2022, May 19). Can Ukraine Win? Five Scenarios for the War's Next Phase. The Wall Street Journal. https://www.wsj.com/articles/ukraine-russia-war-end-11652967707?mod=Searchresults_pos4&page=2-

Galtung, J. (2000). The task of peace journalism. *Ethical perspectives*, 7(2).

Galtung, J. (2015). Peace journalism and reporting on the United States. *Brown J. World Aff.*, 22, 321.

García-Perdomo, V., Harlow, S., & Brown, D. K. (2022). Framing the Colombian Peace Process: Between Peace and War Journalism. *Journalism Practice*, 1-24.

Keaten, J., & Karmanau, Y. (2022, June 3). Explainer: At 100 days, Russia-Ukraine war by the numbers. *The Associated Press*.
<https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-moscow-government-and-politics-7c1d0e4a3795919c56cabdb0dd51d61c>

Lee, S. T., Maslog, C. C., & Kim, H. S. (2006). Asian conflicts and the Iraq war: A comparative framing analysis. *International Communication Gazette*, 68(5-6), 499-518.

Lock, S., & Canon, G. (2022, May 7). Russia-Ukraine war: what we know on day 73 of the invasion. *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/may/07/russia-ukraine-war-what-we-know-on-day-73-of-the-invasion>

Lock, S., Singh, M., Walters, J., Chao-Fong, L., & Belam, M. (2022, May 11). Russia-Ukraine war updates: peace talks harder 'with each new Bucha', says Zelenskiy - as it happened. *The Guardian*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/may/11/russia-ukraine-war-zelenskiy-says-ukrainian-forces-gradually-pushing-occupiers-away-from-kharkiv-live>

Lynch, J., & McGoldrick, A. (2013). Responses to peace journalism. *Journalism*, 14(8), 1041-1058.

Mineeva, Y. (2022, May 11). Russians in London Protest Ukraine War, Kremlin Crackdown. *The Moscow Times*.
<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/05/09/russians-in-london-protest-ukraine-war-kremlin-crackdown-a77622>

Plantive, C., & Stout, D. (2022, May 26). Zelensky Rebukes West as Russia Closes in on Key Ukraine City. *The Moscow Times*.
<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/05/26/zelensky-rebukes-west-as-russia-closes-in-on-key-ukraine-city-a77805>

Psaropoulos, J. (2022, June 3). Timeline: The first 100 days of Russia's war in Ukraine. *Al Jazeera*.
<https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/6/3/timeline-the-first-100-days-of-russias-war-in-ukraine>

R.M. (2022, May 3). Zelensky Says 'Russia Has Forgotten All the Lessons of World War II' Regarding Anti-Semitism. *Kyiv Post*.
<https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/zelensky-says-russia-has-forgotten-all-the-lessons-of-world-war-ii-regarding-anti-semitism.html>

Raczkiwycz, M. (2022, May 1). Explosions Damage Infrastructure in Two Russian Regions Neighboring Ukraine's border. *Kyiv Post*.
<https://www.kyivpost.com/ukraine-politics/explosions-in-two-russian-regions-neighboring-ukraines-border-damage-infrastructure.html>

Reuters. (2022, May 15). Britain says Russia has lost a third of its forces in Ukraine. The Times of India.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/europe/britain-says-russia-has-lost-a-third-of-its-forces-in-ukraine/articleshow/91574894.cms>

Reuters. (2022, May 19). World Bank to offer \$30 billion as Ukraine war threatens food security. The Times of India.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/rest-of-world/world-bank-to-offer-30-billion-as-ukraine-war-threatens-food-security/articleshow/91654330.cms>

Salama, V., & Gershkovich, E. (2022, May 22). Russia Says It Has Taken Complete Control of Mariupol After Surrender of Last Defenders. The Wall Street Journal.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/russia-says-it-has-taken-complete-control-of-mariupol-after-surrender-of-last-defenders-11653125925?mod=Searchresults_pos1&page=2

Schechner, S., Chernova, Y., & Hagey, K. (2022, May 3). Russia's Independent Media, Battling for Survival, Defies Kremlin Crackdown. The Wall Street Journal.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/russias-independent-media-battling-for-survival-defies-kremlin-crackdown-11651570206?mod=Searchresults_pos14&page=3-

Shaheen, L., & Tarique, M. (2022). The Searching Peace through War: The Presentation of Pakistan Govt Talks with Therik Taliban Pakistan in National Press. *Information & Media*, 93, 108-123.

Simmons, A.M. (2022, May 9). Putin Uses Russia's Victory Day Parade to Justify Invasion of Ukraine. The Wall Street Journal.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/putin-uses-russias-victory-day-parade-to-justify-invasion-of-ukraine-11652093244?mod=Searchresults_pos2&page=3-

Singh, M., Aratani, L., Chao-Fong, L., Belam, M., & Livingstone, H. (2022, May 17). Questions over future of evacuated Azovstal fighters – as it happened. The Guardian.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/may/17/russia-ukraine-war-bloodiest-battle-ends-as-ukrainian-fighters-evacuated-from-mariupol-steel-plant-live>

Stout, D., & Zaks, D. (2022, May 30). Russia Advances in East Ukraine as EU Meets on Oil Ban. The Moscow Times.

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/05/30/russia-advances-in-east-ukraine-as-eu-meets-on-oil-ban-a77837>

The Associated Press. (2022, May 16). Ukraine says Russia strikes at Donetsk sites. The Times of India.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/europe/ukraine-says-russia-strikes-at-donetsk-sites/article-show/91592582.cms>

The Associated Press. (2022, May 19). Mariupol battle draws to close; fighting in Donbas continues. The Times of India.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/europe/mariupol-battle-draws-to-close-fighting-in-donbas-continues/articleshow/91659440.cms>

Wallace, J. (2022, May 24). Ukraine-Russia War Is Fueling Triple Crisis in Poor Nations. The Wall Street Journal. https://www.wsj.com/articles/russian-ukraine-war-precipitates-a-triple-crisis-in-poor-nations-11653406985?mod=Searchresults_pos12&page=1

Zubrin, R. (2022, May 10). How Germany finances Putin's war machine and why this has to be stopped. Kyiv Post. <https://www.kyivpost.com/article/opinion/op-ed/how-germany-f finances-putins-war-machine-and-why-this-has-to-be-stopped.html>

Annapurna Sharma
PhD scholar,
Department of Mass Communication and Media Studies,
Central University of Punjab, Bathinda, Punjab 151001, India.
Email Id- theannapurnasharma@gmail.com,

Dr Mahesh Kumar Meena
Assistant Professor,
Department of Mass Communication and Media Studies,
Central University of Punjab, Bathinda, Punjab 151001, India.
Email Id- mahesh.kumar@cup.edu.in,