

The Framing and Partisan Bias: A Systematic Analysis of News Reports on Bangladesh's Student Movement in 2024

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Declaration

I, Rakibul Hasan Bhuiyan, bearing ID:203-10-681, BA in English (Language & Literature) program, hereby affirm that I have reviewed all the research paper guidelines thoroughly provided by the department of English, Daffodil International University. I am sincere towards all the rules and regulations and ethics of research. I declare that the presented thesis entitled “The Framing and Partisan Bias: A Systematic Analysis of News Reports on Bangladesh’s Student Movement of 2024” is my work and, it is distinctively prepared by me after reviewing and analysing a significant number of papers and articles. I cited and referred all the resources competently.

The research paper is conducted during the Fall-2024 semester under the supervision of Ms. Fatema Begum Laboni, Assistant Professor, Department of English, as a part of the requirement for my Graduation Program. I declare that this thesis has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification and not been published to any journal or publication.

I shall bear the responsibility for the work’s authenticity and ethics.

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Certification of the Academic Supervisor

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “The Framing and Partisan Bias: A Systematic Analysis of News Reports on Bangladesh’s Student Movement of 2024” by Rakibul Hasan Bhuiyan (203-10-681) of Fall 2020 has been reviewed and accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) in English. Rakibul Hasan Bhuiyan has shown commendable dedication and scholarly insight in his research.



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Acknowledgement

I dedicate the success of this thesis to everyone who played a significant role in this incredible and special journey of learning. First and foremost, I convey my deepest gratitude to the almighty for guiding me through this journey with boundless blessings. I would like to convey my earnest gratitude to my supervisor and teacher Ms. Fatema Begum Laboni for all of her advice and instruction throughout the research project. She has been an inspiration which helped to excel in the project. I also acknowledge all of my teachers and friends, who believed in me and supported me to come all this way.

Abstract

In August 2024, Bangladesh witnessed an unprecedented event of a forceful fall of 15 years long reigning political power led by Sheikh Hasina, as a consequence to the massive student movement. Shortly after, a wave of discussion and news coverage surfaced from the media India and Bangladesh regarding the fall of the government and the prime minister's asylum in India. Several news was alleged to be in favour of the fallen party by the netizens. This study will investigate the framing and partisan bias in the reports on the student movement of Bangladesh in 2024, by an Indian news channel, Republic Bangla. The previous papers on bias and framing studied the tone of news delivery, selection of the contents, highlighting specific story or party in order to prove the presence of framing and bias in a news content. Accordingly, a content analysis was performed to count the number of stories, statements, accusations or praise, in order to determine how the channel is being supportive or critical towards the stakeholders of the movement, which also determines the bias. Following this, the type of contents was analysed in order to find any framing or propaganda the channel is frequently working on. Lastly, a comparative study was done in accordance with other sources, to find out the political leanings and ideology. The findings confirm the presence of framing and bias as well as the political leanings of the channel. These findings suggest that the media was indeed biased about the student movement. The findings and procedures can be implied for further research in the field.

Table of Contents

DECLARATION.....	I
CERTIFICATION OF THE ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR.....	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	III
ABSTRACT.....	IV
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND & CONTEXT	1
1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION.....	2
1.4 SIGNIFICANCE & OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	3
1.5 SCOPE & DELIMITATIONS	3
1.6 DEFINITION OF THE KEY TERMS	3
1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER	4
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	5
2.1 INTRODUCTION	5
2.2 RELATED STUDY.....	5
2.3 RESEARCH GAP	6
2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	6
2.5 CONCLUSION	9
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY & PROCEDURE	10
3.1 SELECTION	10
3.2 ANALYSIS PROCEDURES	12

CHAPTER FOUR: CONTENT ANALYSIS	14
4.1 NEWS CHANNEL	14
4.1 BIAS ANALYSIS.....	14
4.2 COVERAGE ANALYSIS.....	18
4.3 LANGUAGE ANALYSIS	18
4.4 PROBABLE LEANINGS OR IDEOLOGY	22
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION & FINDINGS.....	23
5.1 BIAS	23
5.2 FRAMING & PROPAGANDA	24
5.3 IDEOLOGY AND LEANINGS.....	26
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION.....	29
REFERENCE/BIBLIOGRAPHY	30

List of Tables

Table 1	11
Table 2	14
Table 3	16

List of Figures

Figure 1	15
Figure 2	15
Figure 3	17
Figure 4	17

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

What is news bias and framing, and to what degree these phenomena affect the selection, delivery and the language of a news? This is a growing concern in the news media sector, as well as to the news consumers throughout the world in contemporary times. The news media are the primary source of information for most people, but they are also deeply embedded in a system of power and influence, where their content is shaped by political, economic and social forces. This means the news media often reflect certain biases that serve as the interest of powerful (Herman, E.S., & Chomsky, N. 1988, p.51-58). This indicates to the strong possibility for the presence of bias in news delivery. However, During the Bangladesh's student movement in 2024, a provincial news channel 'Republic Bangla' was a topic of criticism among the netizens of Bangladesh due to their news coverage. Several news went viral on the social media promptly after the success of the student movement.

News media has the power to influence and manipulate the public opinion. It becomes crucial with regard to a national crisis like a mass movement. Therefore, in this study, I aim to explore Republic Bangla's news coverage on 'Bangladesh's Student Movement in 2024' through a content analysis of news of a particular time period, in order to find out any possible bias or framing, and pattern of their news.

1.2 Background & Context

As previously mentioned, in July-August of 2024, Bangladesh went through a mass student movement, also known as the 'Bangladesh Quota Reform Movement 2024'. Throughout the movement, the contribution of the media is unequivocal. From July 14 to August 5, the internet was completely banned for more than five days, effectively disconnecting the country from the

rest of the world. Even many social media platforms were blocked during this time. (Hasan, 2024). People were completely dependent on YouTube and television-based news media. As a result, this situation created a favourable opportunity for the media outlets where it was possible to actually influence the public opinion by publishing selective or partial news when the consumers had no other options to redirect their choice. Eventually, the Bangladeshi viewers started some uproar on social media about the biased news outlets (Open letter urges Indian media to stop disinformation about Bangladesh's student uprising, 2024). According to The Daily Star journalists, it occurred right after the student-led mass uprising overthrew the previous government of Bangladesh, the Indian media created an alternate reality of what was not seen on the streets of Bangladesh. An incessant flow of misinformation and largely disinformation flooded social media platforms (Rob & Ghosh, 2024).

Republic Bangla, a West Bengal based news channel of India, was one of such news outlets that was being criticised in social media during the movement and afterwards. Several news coverages in the YouTube channel of the news agency went viral and became the centre of attention and discussion for a while. After observing this, it is decided to analyse the news and find out what went wrong and if there is any actual bias lied beneath the news deliveries.

1.3 Research Question

After deciding the subject matter of the research, the study tend to find the answers for the respective research question below.

- i. Is there any bias or framing present revolving around Bangladesh's student movement in 2024 in the news covered by Republic Bangla?
- ii. What is the pattern in their news including the type of news being selected and the language being used?

1.4 Significance & Objectives of the Study

The previous research on media bias studied the partisan delivery of news, biasness and framing on different issues around the world. Most of the studies mainly focused on the major broadcast companies from the Western or Middle Eastern nations. However, this paper aims to focus on the student movement of 2024 in Bangladesh in order to find out the research questions. It will also look for any other leads in order to find out if there is any different phenomenon working within the news delivery, word choice, or the selection of the news content.

1.5 Scope & Delimitations

Regardless the completion of this research project, there is more scope to do further research on the subject matter as follows. Firstly, the content analysis was conducted with a selective amount of news by employing several filters which made the number of contents very limited. However, in order to find out the basic pattern of the news, investigating more news can be a better choice. With proper time in hand, news from a week or even a month can be examined in order to get a better understanding of the pattern of the news outlet that what kind of news they usually select to broadcast. Secondly, more theoretical studies can be possible for the specification of the type of bias. There is always another opportunity to be more precise about the study. Lastly, there can be more studies done in regards to the framing from the ideological perspective of the news outlet or its owner.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

Different terms and jargons (Journalism & Media) used in the study are briefly defined below.

- i. Bias: Inclination or prejudice against someone or a group, in an unfair way.
- ii. Framing: Action of framing something on someone or a group.
- iii. Propaganda: Information, specially biassed in nature, used to promote a political cause.

- iv. Viral: It is used to describe something that quickly becomes very popular or well known by being published on the internet or sent from person to person by email, phone, etc (Cambridge University Press, n.d.)
- v. BAL: Bangladesh Awami League (Ruling party during the movement)
- vi. BNP: Bangladesh Nationalist Party (Opposition political party)
- vii. Jamaat-e-Islami: Bangladesh's Islamist opposition party.
- viii. BJP: Bharatiya Janata Party (Ruling party in India)
- ix. Spike: News that are rejected by the editorial panel.
- x. Caption: Title of a news.
- xi. Soundbite: Video clips that news channels broadcast from an even.
- xii. Remote Guest: Guest over phone in a show.
- xiii. Field Interview: Interview from the spot.

1.7 Structure of the Paper

In the paper, it would follow the structure as outlined below. Initially, it will provide a comprehensible theoretical mapping of the news bias and framing, depending on the type of analysis to be conducted. Following this, it will explain the methodology and the analysis of the news content including the figures and tables. Afterwards, it will define the findings along with the discussion. Finally, I the paper will conclude with an overview of the paper and some scope for further studies.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The 21st century is the millennium of information, also known as the era of explosion of information output and information sources (Olayode et al., 2022), where media is one of the key contributors in management of the information. Therefore, maintaining the integrity of the information is of a big concern while publishing news, because, media has the power to circulate information and also the power to manipulate it. The news manipulation can happen depending on the bias they hold. Their bias, later on, can drive to framing, propaganda or other forms of bias. This writing will explore the media bias, in order to make an overview of the theoretical and methodological extent on the subject matter from different research articles.

2.2 Related Study

Bias is defined as the action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, because of personal opinions to influence your judgement, by the Cambridge dictionary. It happens when a person's or institution's personal preference or opinion influences the news delivery. The question of media bias is moot in the absence of certain properties of that bias: It must be volitional, or wilful (D'Alessio and Allen, 2000). Bias may occur in four ways. (1) Selection Bias, (2) Coverage Bias, (3) Tone Bias & (4) Gatekeeping Bias (McQuail, 2010). There is another type of bias known as (5) ideology bias, also known as stance or framing bias. It occurs when the issuer presents it in a partial way (Rodrigo-Ginés, 2023).

An important theory for analysing media bias is the propaganda theory by Noam Chomsky. Propaganda mostly involves framing issues in such a way that aligns with the media's intention and ambition, influencing how the audience would perceive the news (Entman, 1993). News framing also creates another pathway for bias.

Although bias and framing are not clearly related, however, bias can shape the frame that arises used in the news. Framing can be detected through some techniques. Firstly, news framing can follow a key theme on which the news media work on. By identifying the recurring theme in the news coverage, the frame can be discovered (D'Angelo, 2002). Secondly, the language and tone can be a medium to find framing in a news (Entman, 1993). Thirdly, the media can emphasise selective news, which is another indicator of framing (Scheufele, 1999).

2.3 Research Gap

The existing studies in media bias explored the field of bias vastly which includes the theories, types and other theoretical framework. However, in the case of the Bangladesh's student movement of 2024, which was one of the focal points of global discourse for that time period, there is a lack of sufficient study on this topic. My study will analyse the news contents on the event and look for any possible bias or framing lied within the news. It will also dive deeply to figure out any pattern in the selection of the contents or usage of language.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The required theories and terms are defined that are employed in the process of analysing the news contents. According to Denis McQuail in his McQuail's Mass Communication Theory (6th ed., 2010), the following classification of bias is presented.

Selection Bias

Selection bias refers to the tendency of publishing selective stories or events while neglecting the other by the media outlets. It may reflect their political affiliation, interest, or favouritism towards a political party. McQuail relates this class of bias with agenda-setting, where the media may influence or manipulate the public opinion regarding a political party or a significant event. As a result, they cover specific stories where they can highlight their favourable events in order to establish an agenda.

Coverage Bias

Coverage bias occurs when a media focuses their attention to a certain political party, community or an event. In this scenario, the respected party gets more coverage in the news while others are put to an unequal disadvantage. Moreover, the exaggerated coverage may result in creating an incomplete or far-fetched reality. The author connected this to the selection of the source of the news. He also added that coverage bias can also be used in the framing of news.

Tone Bias

It indicates the tone in which a story is presented. The tone of delivery for a story can determine how the audience would perceive it. According to the partiality, the tone can be negative or positive. However, McQuail adds that the tone can be sympathetic towards a party while being critical to the others.

Gatekeeping Bias

McQuail mentions that this bias is often related with the media control, censorship or media power. However, it occurs when the media outlet filters the news reports and selects which type of news will be covered. This is slightly similar to the selection bias, however, in this case, the news is filtered and the favourable news are published while the others are spiked.

Another type of bias is discussed by Rodrigo-Ginés in A systematic review on media bias detection (2003) is ideology bias.

Ideology Bias

News Media often has the tendency to support the ideology or outlook of a political party or community. As a result, the covered news by the respected agency may be framed, selective and commonly biased and affiliated with the group. This is known as the ideology bias. It later on can lead to the incomplete or exaggerated news about any social or national issue, and crisis

in such a manner that would help to establish an alternative reality in favour to the affiliated party or community.

Herman and Chomsky (1988) discussed the Propaganda theory, where they introduced the propaganda model. In this model, Herman and Chomsky (1988) mentioned 5 filters which directly or indirectly selects which news would be published. The five filters are as follows, (1) Ownership or Profit Orientation, (2) Advertising, (3) Sourcing, (4) Flak and (5) Anti-Communalism. Among these five filters, only the first filter is employed in this study.

Ownership or Profit Orientation

In recent days, news agencies are privatised, often owned by politicians, private companies or influential individuals affiliated or supported by companies or political parties. Depending on the ownership, the selection of news may get influenced as per the advantage of the owner. The ideology, political preference or affiliation, worldview of the owner has a strong influence on the news broadcasted by the news agency.

Framing & Framing Theory

Framing is "selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (Entman, 1993, p. 52). This means the way media manipulates or influences how the audience would perceive and interpret an information is referred as framing. While, framing theory is used to study the frame present in a news of information.

Framing can be classified in many types;

- (1) Conflict Frames: It frames the conflicts or disagreement between parties
- (2) Human Interest Frames: It highlights the personal interest such as emotion, sympathy etc.
- (3) Economic Frames: This emphasises the financial aspects.

(4) Morality Frames: It emphasises moral or ethical dimensions.

(5) Responsibility Frames: This frame focuses on the responsible party for an event.

The content analysis for this study may apply the mentioned terms and theories above fully or partially as per the necessity.

Propaganda Theory

It examines how information is disseminated and manipulated to influence public opinion and behaviour (Herman & Chomsky, 2002). Propaganda controls information that is broadcasted, often includes selective reporting, omission of facts, and distortion of information (Herman & Chomsky, 2002). Herman and Chomsky also present the propaganda model where they discuss the five filters that can alter a news (Herman & Chomsky, 2002). As for the technique of news presentation,

(1) Emotional appeal can be used; uses fear, hope, or provokes anger (Campbell, 2006)

(2) Repetition and simplification, repeating information and using simple language for better understanding (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012).

2.5 Conclusion

Media Bias surely does manipulate the news which polarises the opinion of the audience both on an individual and community stage. Besides, the propaganda and news framing can change and distort the information of the news and can present it in an alternate way. However, with the basic theories and techniques of this field, the study can be widened further for future contribution on the subject matter.

Chapter Three: Methodology & Procedure

3.1 Selection

News Platform

Once it has been decided to work with the ‘Student Movement of Bangladesh in 2024’, the focus was set to look for the type of news the paper should work with. It analysed the popularity of different platforms of news in Bangladesh and India, also considering the accessibility of the news. Among the media platforms, YouTube and Television are the most popular platforms for the news consumers in both the countries. In terms of the accessibility and availability, YouTube has the upper hand. Furthermore, according to some of the recent statistics, India has the largest YouTube audience in the world with a blasting 476 million active users (Grabon, 2024), where Indians hold the highest video consumption records of 88% with 6.1 trillion minutes on watching videos in 15 months (Unwalla, 2023). On the other hand, in Bangladesh, too, the consumption of YouTube is high. The country has a total of 33.60 million active users of YouTube which is 19.3% of the country’s total population. (DataReportal, 2024). As per this large consumption rate in both of the countries, it is easier to spread news among the audience. Hence, this platform definitely carries the power to manipulate the mass sentiment about the movement which is crucial for a mass movement like this anywhere in the world. Therefore, YouTube was chosen as the primary platform for the study.

News Outlet

The news outlet is selected depending on the couple of conditions. In the first place, it has looked for the news channels that confronted criticism from Bangladeshi audiences and netizens. Several news from Republic Bangla went viral in the social media during the movement. Next, any sort of mutuality is prioritised while choosing the outlet. Among the

outlets that faced backlash, Republic Bangla shares the similarity in language with the Bangladeshi audience. As a result, news from this outlet is more capable of reaching the audience than the ones using different languages. Consequently, Republic Bangla was finalised for the study.

Content Selection

While selecting the news contents, most viewed contents were examined first as the main reason for selecting the news outlet is the popularity it gained over social media. However, it is notable that, as per the update till October-November, 2024 (the data collection period), 10 out of the 15 most popular news on the YouTube channel of the news outlet was related to Bangladesh. The data may change later on as YouTube is a dynamic platform.

Table 1

The Ranking of News Contents (Sorted by Popularity)

Date	Caption	Rank in YouTube Channel	Rank in BD Related News	Viewers
July 26 th , 2024	Letter from Bangladesh, embarrassment for India. Mamata 'meddling' too much?	1st	1st	16 M
August 5 th , 2024	Sheikh Hasina on her way to London via Delhi. Which way is Sheikh Hasina's flight. Exclusive information only on Republic	2nd	2nd	14 M
August 6 th , 2024	'Bangladesh can go out of Hindu population, if BNP-Jamaat holds the power', informs Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy	3rd	3rd	7.3 M
August 8 th , 2024	'Mujibkanya' is currently staying in India. Where will the former prime minister of Bangladesh go this time?	4th	4th	7.1 M
July 23 rd , 2024	BNP-Jamat's intense wave of envy, handled by 'Mujibkanya'. Seizing the opportunity? The conspirators failed to do so.	5th	5th	6.8 M
August 8 th , 2024	In which country ultimately will be Sheikh Hasina's last resort? – The son of Hasina, exclusive on the Republic.	6th	6th	5.8 M
August 5 th , 2024	'1 crore Hindu refugees coming to Bengal, be prepared': Suwendu Adhikari	10th	7th	3.6 M
August 6 th , 2024	The army is demolishing the statue of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman! See what's happening in Bangladesh...	11th	8th	3.6 M
August 10 th , 2024	'Rahul Gandhi met Khaleda Zia's son Tarique Rahman' - Salauddin Shoaib Chowdhury	13th	9th	3.5 M
August 7 th , 2024	Freedom or Taliban brutality? What patriotism in killing Hindus?	15th	10th	3.3 M

(e.g., Since the channel is based on Bengali language, the captions are translated to English in order to make a better understanding for the non-native Bengali speakers.)

Among the 10 news that are related to Bangladesh, all of those are from the time period of July 23rd to August 10th of 2024, which are during the timeline of the student movement. Aljazeera marks the movement timeline from June 5th to August 5th of 2024 (Chughtai, A., Ali, M. 2024). Due to the lack of proper investigation data, all of the 10 news cannot be analysed. As a result, the paper will work with the coverage of 5th and 6th August, 2024, which can provide instant reaction from the news outlet. In consequence, 4 news items are found from the designated dates. In order to make the mention of news easier, the 4 news will be addressed as news, A, B, C, D.

- News A: Sheikh Hasina on her way to London via Delhi. Which way is Sheikh Hasina's flight. Exclusive information only on Republic
- News B: 'Bangladesh can go out of Hindu population, if BNP-Jamaat holds the power', informs Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy
- News C: '1 crore Hindu refugees coming to Bengal, be prepared': Suvendu Adhikari
- News D: The army is demolishing the statue of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman!
See what's happening in Bangladesh...

3.2 Analysis Procedures

In the analysis section, it will mainly deal with the news contents, events or stories that are covered by the news outlet. With the aim of doing so, three stakeholders of this movement were distinguished as the ruling party, the oppositions and the students. At the beginning, the study will look for any kind of supporting or criticising statements or news in the delivered news. In this way, the presence and the level of bias can be ensured, as it will show the outlet's take on the three parties. This study will be done in two sections. Firstly, the hosts and correspondents who are connected with the channel. Secondly, the guests the media chose to invite over phone

or in a video conference, and the field interviews of the victims and soundbites of any event, they chose to cover.

Following this, the study will analyse the news contents and look for any common stories within the selected contents. It will also search for what kind of content or coverage appears mostly in the news. This would determine the pattern of their news coverage which will help to find the type of bias and possible framing.

At the end, the language that was used in the news will be studied. Choice of word and language can identify any subjective bias of the host or even the news outlet itself. Any personal statement or accusation made on the parties will be considered in this part. The probable ideology of the news agency can also be included with enough evidence to support any probable ideology or leanings. However, for ideology analysis, Noam Chomsky's propaganda theory will be employed. The investigation of ownership and funding may excavate the possible ideology or leanings of the news agency.

Chapter Four: Content Analysis

4.1 News Channel

Channel Name: Republic Bangla

Owner: Republic Media Network, Arnab Goswami (Media Ownership Monitor India, 2018)

4.1 Bias Analysis

Table 2

Bias Analysis (Host/Correspondent)

No.	News Title	Date of Publishing	BAL/PM		BNP/Jamaat		Student/Army/Student Government/Movement	
			Support	Criticism	Support	Criticism	Support	Criticism
1	News A	August 5 th , 2024	1	0	0	3	0	3
2	News B	August 6 th , 2024	5	0	0	3	0	1
3	News C	August 5 th , 2024	3	0	0	10	1	8
4	News D	August 6 th , 2024	5	0	0	8	0	8

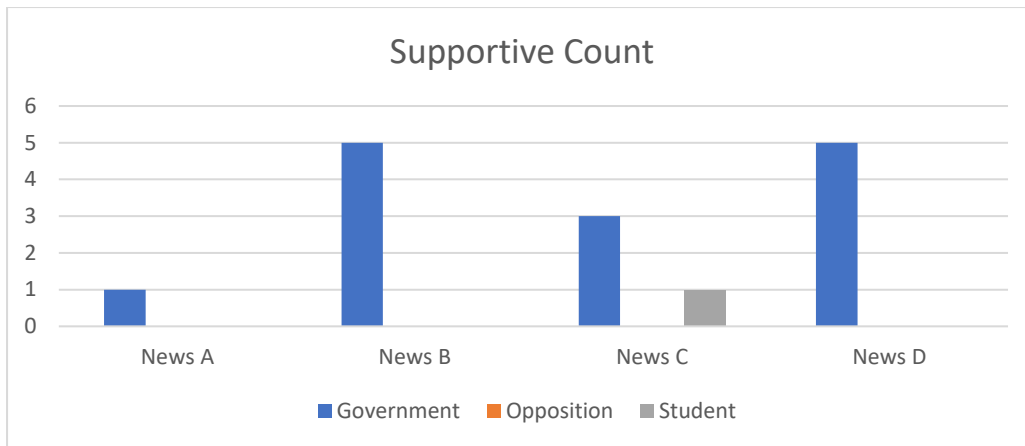


Figure 1

Supportive Count Chart (Host/Correspondent)

News A, C and D are 100% supportive of the government with 0% supportive of other parties. Whereas, News C is 25% supportive for the students and 75% for the government, and 0% supportive for the opposition parties, which made the support bar for opposition parties almost invisible.

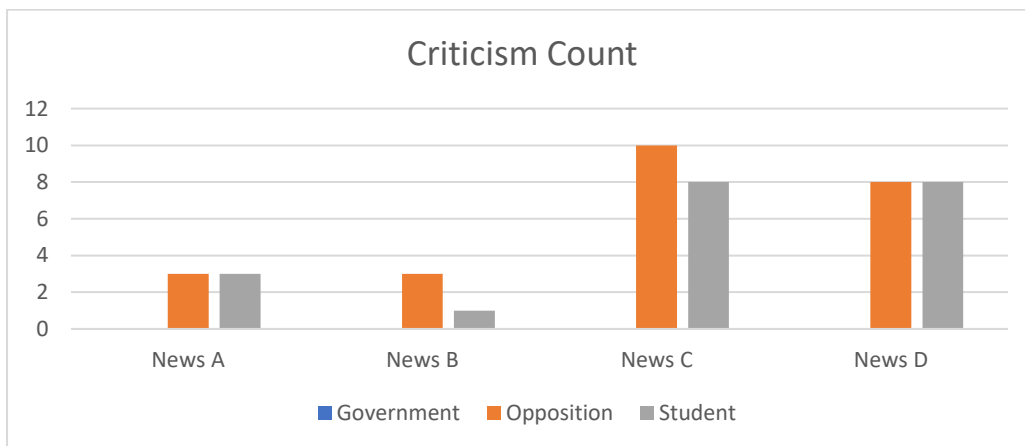


Figure 2

Criticism Count Chart (Host/Correspondent)

News A is 50% critical for each student and opposition. On the other hand, News B criticises the opposition more than the students with the percentage of 75% and 25%. News C carries more criticism for both the students and opposition where students hold 44.45% criticism and the opposition parties hold 55.55%. Like News A, News D is also 50% critical for both students

and opposition. In all the news, the hold never became critical of the government. Consequently, the criticism rate for the government is at 0% making the critical bar for the government invisible.

Table 3

Bias Analysis (Soundbite, Field Interview, Remote Guest)

No.	News Title	Date of Publishing	BAL/PM		BNP/Jamaat		Student/Army/ Student Government	
1	News A	August 5 th , 2024	Absent		Absent		Absent	
2	News B	August 6 th , 2024						
3	News C	August 5 th , 2024						
4	News D	August 6 th , 2024						
			Support	Criticism	Support	Criticism	Support	Criticism
			9	0	0	6	0	12
			3	0	0	3	0	1
			0	0	0	3	0	1

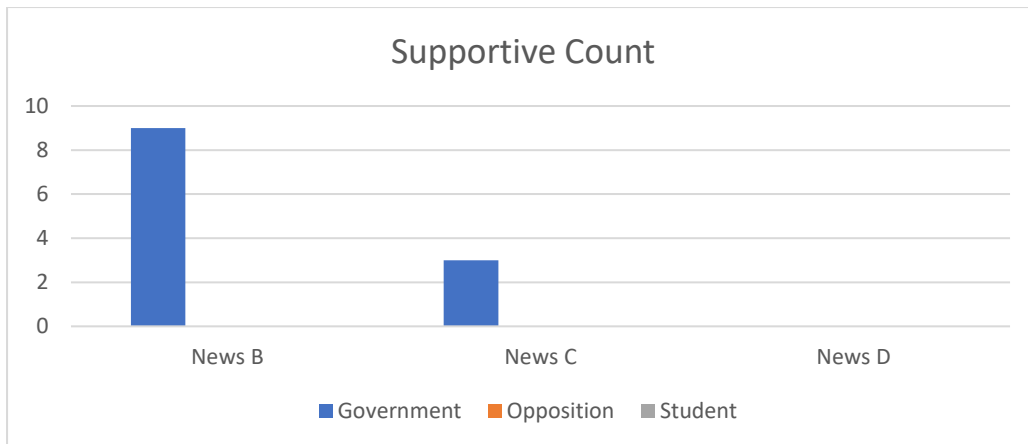


Figure 3

Supportive Count Chart (Guest/Soundbites/Field Interview)

As News A does not cover any guest or field interview, it is removed from this graph. However, News B and C are 100% supportive for the government with a 0% support for the other stakeholders. News D is an exception with 0% support for all three contributors of the movement making the bar invisible for them again. News D shows no bar as there was no mention of the government in the report.

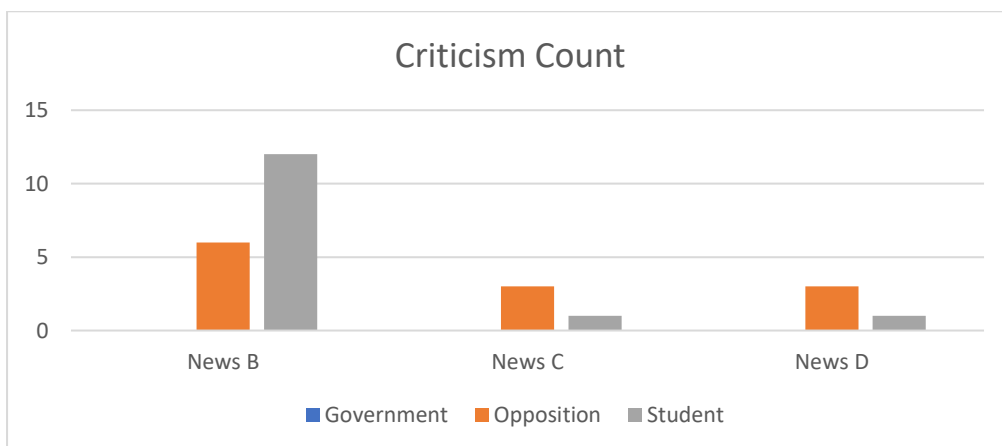


Figure 4

Criticism Count Chart (Guest/Soundbites/Field Interview)

Repeatedly, News A is not included in this graph as well for not having the requirement fulfilled. Nevertheless, News B heavily criticised both the students and opposition. Students hold 66.66% criticism where opposition faces 33.34%. On the other hand, News C and D has

a similar count of criticism of students and opposition. Where the students endure 75% of criticism and the opposition takes on 25%. In all three news contents, no criticism for the government is noticed, which makes the percentage low as 0%. Repetitively, it makes the critical bar for the government invisible with zero count in the graph.

4.2 Coverage Analysis

Several common and repeated news items have been found in the four news contents. Some of them are presented below with the indication of presence in the news in the brackets.

- Sheikh Hasina's whereabouts and praise of her rule. (A, B, C)
- Conspiracy behind BAL's fall. (A, B, C)
- Humiliation of Sheikh Family & Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (B, D)
- Anarchy by the students and opposition. (A, B, C, D)
- Attack on BAL leaders and former minister. (A, B)
- Attack on Hindu minorities. (B, C, D)
- Terrorism of Jamat (A, B, C, D)
- Bangladesh Army's action in the crisis moment. (A, C, D)

4.3 Language Analysis

The language analysis will study the tone, used words and any statement or accusation without further verification in news.

News A

In this news, the live reporter mainly focuses on the destination and whereabouts of Sheikh Hasina's flight after she left the Bangabhaban. Afterwards, the report comes to the dire situation the BAL leaders and former ministers are facing after the fall of the government. The anarchy and attacks by the opposition and protesters are highlighted in this news. Lastly, the reporter provides a hint on the conspiracy that was working behind "in the name of student movement"

(Ghosh, 2024, as translated by Bhuiyan, 2024), which resulted in the resignation of the prime minister. (Ghosh, 2024).

- Tone: Neutral on BAL, and negative towards the movement.
- Accusation/ Personal Opinion: Accused the movement as a hidden conspiracy against the government.

News B

This news covers an interview of Sajeeb Wazed Joy, son of Sheikh Hasina, over an online platform. The only guest on the show was an active and important member of the fallen government, and a family member of the head of the government. At the initial phase of the interview, the emphasis was set on the tragedy that befall on the Sheikh family in 1975 in comparison to the contribution Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had in establishing a new country, Bangladesh. Following this, the tragedies of 2024 on Sheikh family and BAL were related; how Sheikh family's house was burnt, how the leaders and members were attacked. Next, the attacks on Hindu minorities were mentioned. Joy added how BNP-Jamat wants to demolish the entire Hindu population from Bangladesh. After this, the Sheikh family's situation is highlighted again by the host, how they have to leave the country within a single notice. The statement was supported with bringing the PM's good intention about the quota system on surface. They also bring up the security issue of the former PM during the movement. At the end, they discuss the conspiracy behind the fall of the government with a backing of the ongoing anarchy in the country without Hasina as the PM. (Ghosh, 2024)

- Tone: The tone is sympathetic toward the PM and her family. On the oppositions, the tone is suspicious and negative.
- Accusation/Personal Opinion: BNP-Jamat is accused of demolishing the entire Hindu population of Bangladesh. America and Pakistan were accused of having a hand in the conspiracy against BAL.

News C

The news presents a soundbite where a BJP leader predicts 1 crore Hindu refugees will go to India from Bangladesh. Two hosts of the show discuss the matter afterwards. They agree with the leader's statements by mentioning the events of attacking Hindus. Secondly, they address the movement as terrorism. The host also mentions Jamat's terrorism training like Kashmir and Taliban, also their plan to seize power. Thirdly, they call a remote guest, an intellectual named Rajagopal, to discuss the concurrent situation of Bangladesh. The guest also focuses on the anarchy created by the protesters (students) and the opposition parties, and Bangladesh army's next step towards the situation. Lastly, they mention the PM's disparate attempt to bring back peace but ended with the prediction of the PM's resignation and army chief's action. (Sarkar, 2024)

- Tone: The tone is aggressive and completely negative towards Jamaat-e-Islami and the protesters.
- Accusation/Personal Opinion: Jamat is accused of terrorism and also training and spreading terrorism. The movement has also been accused of not being a student movement anymore, indicating the students are receiving terrorist training.

News D

First of all, the news starts by abusing Jamaat-e-Islami and addressing them as fundamentalist. Then shows a video of army the breaking Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's statue, in order to calm the enraged protesters. The video was taken after the fall of the government in Bangladesh when the protesters were celebrating their victory by demolishing statue which carries the pride of BAL. The host gets surprised why the army is not firing at the protesters saying, "Where the army should have hold AK47 and fire at the extremist, there they are demolishing the statue themselves." (Ghosh, 2024, translated by Bhuiyan, 2024). He compares the situation with some other war-torn countries like Syria, Afghanistan and many more. The show presents videos of

protesters celebrating victories in taboo ways and breaking and humiliating Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's statue. These scenarios are backed by loads of personal opinion on the protesters and the Jamaat-e-Islami with a comparison with the Indian citizens where the host adds, "They are killing their father of nation in multiple angles. The way Taliban destroyed Bamiyan statue, the same way they are demolishing the statue of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. This is called Taliban brutality. The exact things are happening in Bangladesh what happened in Afghanistan. Have you ever thought regardless of what terrorist movement occurs in India, would the Indians ever disgrace the Netaji and Gandhi statue?" (Ghosh, 2024, translated by Bhuiyan, 2024). (Ghosh, 2024)

- **Tone:** The tone is highly aggressive and negative towards the Jamaat-e-Islami and the celebrating student protesters. However, a protective and upsetting tone can also be found for the humiliation of the statues of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the way the host is surprised and upset about the matter.
- **Accusation/ Personal Opinion:** Starts by abusing Jamaat-e-Islami, and compares them with terrorist organisations like Taliban. The host suggests the army open fire at the protesters and gets surprised when the scenario was opposite. The movement was named as "Taliban Brutality" and "Freedom of Obscenity". The scenario of Bangladesh was compared with some war-torn countries like Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. He addresses Jamaat-e-Islami as a fundamentalist terrorist organisation. He gets shocked at the fact that they can roam around freely in Bangladesh when they need to get shot by the army. The party was also accused of trying to turn Bangladesh into Afghanistan. The host insisted that a slogan is chanted by Jamat, "Bangla would be Afghan, we will be Taliban".

4.4 Probable Leanings or Ideology

It is hard to be absolutely certain about a news agency's ideology and political leanings. However, analysing ownership, funding, reporting key concepts that support any political party's campaign, or supporting something that is affiliated with the preferred political party, can help to determine any possible leanings or ideology.

Chapter Five: Discussion & Findings

5.1 Bias

In the bias analysis, the supportive and critical statements by both the host and the guest or interview were counted for three stakeholders of the movement, government, opposition and the protesters or students. In the government section, the government, the party in power - BAL, the prime minister, and anything related to the prime minister or her party were counted. On the other side, the opposition section included anything about the major opposition parties Jamaat-e-Islami and BNP. As for the student section, students and any party that is directly related to the students, army, student leaders. However, the analysis shows a huge difference among the government and rest of the two stakeholders (opposition and students), when it comes to supportive or critical counts in news contents.

The supportive count for the government is 100% for both guest and the host in the news, except for News C where the army gets 1 supportive backing from the host. Except for News C, no supportive content or claims were not found for the other two criteria in any of the news. While on the other hand, both the host and guests become highly critical of students and opposition parties. The government's criticism quota is as low as 0%. There was no story or any sort of claims that goes against the party in power during the movement. Why does such a gap exist between the government and the other parties? Is it that there is nothing to be critical about the government?

By studying the other sources in order to find the government's role in the movement, we find that they "were attacked by individuals armed with rods, sticks and clubs with a few even brandishing revolvers. Within hours, a pattern emerged across the country with similar attacks coordinated by people believed to be members of the Bangladesh Chatra League (BCL), a group affiliated with the ruling Awami League (AL), against student protesters." (Corea, H.,

Erum, N., 2024). Nearly 10,000 people have reportedly been detained since the authorities began their crackdown on the protests (Drury, F., Anbarasan, E., 2024). In comparison to other sources, it is noticeable that the channel spiked the contents which go against the government.

This tendency of only focusing on criticising students and opponents, and being supportive to the ruling party can be categorised as selection bias where selective news is broadcasted. It can also be addressed as coverage bias, where the focus remains on exaggerating coverage in a specific party's favour.

5.2 Framing & Propaganda

The presence of coverage bias is an indication of the presence of framing. In order to find framing and propaganda, the type of contents that the channel covers commonly or repetitively was analysed. A basic pattern of news coverage is discovered. As per the data analysis, the channel mainly focused on the anarchy created by the protesters during the movement, terrorism by Jamaat-e-Islami, attack on Hindu minorities, conspiracy behind government's fall, hard situation of BAL leaders-members, glorifying Sheikh family and BAL's past. This kind of coverage selection is definitely in favour of the government, while creating a bad reputation for the other two parties in the field.

In News A, the news shows how the prime minister had to leave her country with the following statement of student-opposition conspiracy against the government. The statement is also made without showing any concrete evidence to back the accusation. However, this creates a scenario where the government is shown as victim which is not the case according to the other sources. Two students were shot dead in the clash between police (2 students shot dead in clash with police in Narsingdi on Thursday , 19 July, 2024), Police have fired tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse students , authorities deployed units of the paramilitary Border Guard force alongside riot police outside the University of Dhaka campus, Police fired tear gas and rubber bullets and lobbed sound grenades at the students as they marched in processions carrying

coffins in solidarity with those killed, Nahid Islam, the coordinator of the anti-quota protests (Police fire tear gas as Bangladesh protests against job quotas rage, 2024). In News B, a family member of the PM was selected to clarify the situation in Bangladesh, which definitely has the risk of being one sided. It is noticed in the stories they covered throughout the interview. The guest talks about how the BAL activists and leaders were attacked and robbed. The conspiracy was discussed again. News C also includes a fair share of support from the government. The host also adds how the PM tried to bring back peace till the end. All of these contents establish the government's good intentions about the students, and how they became the victim. While the opposition and students are framed to be the ones with the blame.

Another framing can be found associating Jamaat-e-Islami. In News-B, BNP-Jamat was accused of oppressing Hindu people in Bangladesh. The host also addresses the parties using a fierce animalistic metaphor of having fangs and claws. In News C's soundbite, the BJP leader implies that the power is going to fundamentalist Jamat in Bangladesh. As a result, Hindus are not safe in the country. The hosts agree with the situation and adds that Jamat is leading a terrorist movement in the name of the student movement. She also adds some unverified allegation that Jamat is providing terrorist training to the students in the movement. Jamat's being a terrorist organisation is confirmed several times by the host. The claim becomes severe in News D, where the host is also noticed using abusive words. Besides addressing Jamat as terrorist, he also expected the Bangladesh army to kill the Jamaat-e-Islami activist. This is the way the channel portrayed Jamat in the news. The other news outlets show different scenarios of Jamat. Activists of Jamaat and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir were seen guarding temples across the country to prevent further violence against the minority Hindu community (Jamaat Ameer visits Dhakeshwari Temple, 2024). Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami president Dr. Shafiqur Rahman in a press conference directed his supporters to "play the role of guardians in protecting the properties of the people of all religions." (Fayisa, C. A. 2024). While the other

Bangladeshi, Indian and international news agencies were broadcasting Jamat saving the temple, Republic accused the party of being a terrorist and anti-Hindu organisation. Moreover, the host's personal opinions and vague allegations fall under subjective bias, where according to SPJ code of ethics, a journalist should take responsibility and verify any information before publishing, and identify the sources clearly (SPJ code of ethics, 2014). This action of accusing and being harshly aggressive is a clear violation of ethics in journalism. Jamat is getting framed of being terrorist. The channel takes the advantage of the Indian Hindu majority who are the target audience of their channel, and creates an emotional appeal showing the hardship of Hindu minority of Bangladesh. This phenomenon ensures the presence of propaganda within the news.

5.3 Ideology and Leanings

A channel follows the ideology of its owners, or the ideology of the community or party who funds them. In some cases, the editorial panel's ideology is also reflected on the channel and its contents. Whatsoever, Republic Bangla is owned by Arnab Goswami and his Republic Media Network. Goswami is the key person in the ownership of Republic Media Network.

Arnab Goswami comes from a political family. His father, Manoranjan Goswami, contested polls in 1998 as a candidate of Bharatiya Janata Party-BJP (Manoranjan Goswami Passes Away, 2010). While founding Republic Media Network, Arnab received fundings from Rajeev Chandrashekhar, a member of parliament of BJP. He had shares in the Republic Media Network, which was bought back by Arnab in 2018 (Arnab Goswami personally owns over 82 pc of Republic TV, 2020).

For the funding, the media primarily dependent on the Chandrashekhar's company Jupiter Capital, but he reigns from the director board after the allegation of BJP's funding came in surface. However, a study of 2020 where they concluded with, "Republic TV's debates have been consistently biased in favour of the Modi government and its policies, as well as the

ideology of the BJP. What's worse, these debates have rarely featured some of the most pressing issues that impact Indians, such as the state of the economy, education or health. Instead, they have consisted mostly of attacks against the Opposition as well as any groups or persons that oppose the ruling government's ideology." (Jaffrelot, C., Jumle, V., 2020). This hints to the channel's funding though it is not fully confirmed. Besides, Arnab's family's political background, taking BJP's MP as co-founder, the study on the channel's ideological similarity and favours towards BJP, all indicates their ideology to be similar with BJP. However, what has BJP ideology has to do with the framing on the student movements and?

The BJP's central political philosophy is cantering Hindu nationalism (Malji, A. 2018). Hindutva, a term is popularised by BJP which seeks to found a Hindu nation. However, this process became a threat to the other religions in India as BJP is an electoral front for the "Sangh Parivar"- a nationalist group based on Hindutva ideology which seeks a homeland for Hindus. This is guided by RSS-Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. This is "a right-wing Hindu nationalist paramilitary volunteer organisation founded in 1925—has exacerbated the vulnerabilities of religious minorities. Founding members of the RSS, like Madhav Sadashivrao Golwalkar and Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, drew inspiration from the ideologies of Mussolini and Hitler, advocating the supremacy of their respective races through the annihilation of "other" impure races and cultures. They referred to Christians and Muslims as "internal threats"." (Khan, S., 2023). Consequently, all of these resulted in hatred for the 'others' which includes Islam and Christianity.

On the other hand, although Hindu population in Bangladesh is only 9%, the Indian government always attached the highest priority to the political leanings of the Hindus. Moreover, BAL has always been the chosen party for the Hindu population of Bangladesh for the gradual decline of the Pakistan National Congress and for the contribution in war with Pakistan in 1971. (Ahmed, H.U., 2024). This is another reason for BJP's leaning toward BAL,

which is shown in great deal during the student movement of Bangladesh. The resignation of Hasina was a shock to the BJP. Despite all the accusation, India fully backed Hasina during her tenure, often ignoring the concerns of other stakeholders and the people in Bangladesh. (Singh, S., 2024). The BJP's Hindutva ideology can be present in Republic Bangla's propaganda, which revolves around the Hindu population of Bangladesh. It can also be the core reason for framing the Islamist party and the students who have overthrown BJP's favourite party from power. Therefore, the finding confirms the presence of selection and coverage bias in the news by Republic Bangla. It also finds the framing of students and opposition for the fall of the government. With the possible leanings with BJP's Hindutva ideology, the propaganda on 'Anti Hinduism' is fuelled up against the student protesters and the opposition party in Bangladesh. Furthermore, Hasina's government has maintained a strong relationship with New Delhi in her 15 years of reign. The fall of the government is definitely an unexpected term for India. During her rule, many diplomatic ties were established and a close relationship is noticed between the two countries. Modi highlighted the 10 times visit of the Bangladeshi prime minister in a consecutive year. (Why experts are calling Sheikh Hasina's fall a big setback for India and Modi govt, 2024). During the BAL government's rule, Bangladesh built bridges, the road to link Kolkata and Agartala with Dhaka, facilitated easy access in cargo ships in Brahmaputra and many more which created Hasina's government a close companion for Modi's government (Kapoor, 2024). Considering all the situation and the close tie with the Sheikh Hasina government, the chance of the channel's possessing BJP ideology is reinforced more.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

This research aimed to study the framing and partisan bias of news in the context of Republic Bangla's take on Bangladesh's student movement of 2024. Hence, the news from Republic Bangla on Bangladesh's Student Movement of 2024 was studied. The study ensures the presence of selection and coverage bias and framing in the news. Additionally, the propaganda and probable political leanings and ideology were also studied which also came to be affirmative. The findings of the study answer the question if there was any bias and framing in the news related to the student movement. It also provides a justification for all the criticism the channel was facing from the netizens. However, the findings of this study can be implied to detect such phenomena within a news delivery. Besides, the study can also be helpful for explaining how bias works typically within the news. Whatsoever, the research findings could be more elaborated if more contents were studied, which was not possible in a limited time period. Studying more content from the channel has the better chance of explaining what kind of stories the channel usually selects to cover. The ideological aspects can be studied more, with some field studies if possible as the audience is the key to everything the media do. It is important to know how the audience receives any news. Media bias is a vast field of study which can be found even in the commercials, news, film and more versions of media. The audience should be aware of how to perceive any media content regardless of the genre, and only more studies in this field can help the audience to know further in the subject matter.

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