



## The Role of Peace Journalism in Mitigating Violence in Afghanistan: A Journalist's Perspective

Khairuddin Rahmani\*<sup>1</sup>, Abdul Qahar Jawad<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kabul University, Faculty of Communication & Journalism, Department of Journalism

<sup>2</sup> Kabul University, Faculty of Communication & Journalism, Department of Public Relations

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### Keywords

- Afghanistan
- Cultural
- Direct violence
- Journalism
- Peace
- Structural Violence
- Violence

**Abstract:** This research explores the role of peace journalism in mitigating violence in Afghanistan by examining the perspectives of Kabul's Journalists. The study has two main objectives: to understand how peace journalism can help mitigate various forms of violence (structural, cultural, direct, ethnic, and religious) in Afghanistan and to assess the level of familiarity among journalists in Kabul with the concept of peace journalism. The study framework incorporates the theories of agenda-setting, gatekeeping, and Galtung's peace journalism model. A survey method was employed for the research, and data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to 287 journalists working in Kabul's media selected through a multi-stage cluster sampling method. According to statistics provided by media support organizations, are 1,011 journalists actively working in Kabul. Using Cochran's formula, the required sample size was determined to be 278; thus, this number of questionnaires was distributed and successfully collected. The research findings indicated that employing peace journalism in media reporting can reduce violence in Afghanistan. However, the study reveals that journalists in Kabul have limited familiarity with peace journalism. Additionally, there is a significant positive relationship between journalists' educational levels, work experience, and familiarity with peace journalism. The research further highlights that peace journalism can reduce structural, cultural, and direct violence in Afghanistan. However, it has little to no impact on mitigating ethnic and religious violence in the country.

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## INTRODUCTION

Large and small wars mark the history of humanity, and peace has often seemed elusive. Even during brief pauses from conflict, such interludes have frequently been involuntary or merely opportunities for regrouping. Consequently, a significant portion of media coverage is devoted to war and violence, to the extent that "conflict" is recognized as one of journalism's core news values. This value highlights events and situations involving clashes among

✉ Corresponding author E-mail: [Khairuddin.rahmnai@ku.edu.af](mailto:Khairuddin.rahmnai@ku.edu.af)

individuals, groups, or nations. In their book on modern journalism, Badiei and Qandi (2016) elaborate on the news value of "conflicts and confrontations," stating that confrontation can be physical, intellectual, or ideological. If anyone doubts the importance of this news aspect, they only need to glance at newspapers. Daily, dozens of reports reflecting this news aspect (alone or in combination with other news values) are published. The significance of this news value lies in the fact that confrontations always pose a risk to societal balance, affecting individuals' material and spiritual security. Confrontation can be positive, as in sports competitions or the clash of ideas and opinions, or negative, such as wars and brawls (Badiei & Qandi, 2016).

Mass communication tools are often seen as one of the pillars for the dissemination of violence worldwide. Despite humanity's advancements, combating violence persists (Ali-Abadi, 2014). In an increasingly mediated world, journalism requires a specific behavioral model that enables journalists—particularly those practicing peace journalism—to succeed. Peace journalism is a crucial need of society, as it fosters a calmer environment for audiences amidst the various orientations of the journalism profession, especially war journalism. Professor Johan Galtung first introduced the concept of peace journalism as a conscious and practical approach for journalists covering wars and conflicts (Galtung, 2017).

Although peace journalism has existed globally for a long time, it has received limited attention from journalists. The discussion of peace often implies the presence of conflict or war. Thus, the need for this form of journalism becomes evident whenever violence is prevalent in society. Ottosen (2010), a professor at the University of Oslo, defines peace journalism by quoting Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick as follows: When journalists, editors, and news reporters determine what and how to report in ways that provide opportunities for society to consider and value nonviolent responses, peace journalism utilizes conflict analysis perspectives. It seeks to redefine the concepts of balance, fairness, and accuracy in reporting while offering a new roadmap for the relationships between journalists, their sources, and the consequences of events.

Peace journalists adopt a defensive and interpretive approach, emphasizing stories that highlight the drivers of peace, reduce ethnic and religious differences, prevent further conflicts, and focus on societal structures. They employ conflict resolution, reconstruction, and reconciliation frameworks to foster empathy and mutual understanding among all parties involved (Zabulizada, 2014). Given Afghanistan's current post-conflict situation, the role of peace journalism in fostering empathy and reconciliation is a crucial need for the media in this country.

This research topic is "The Role of Peace Journalism in Mitigating Violence in Afghanistan from Journalists' Perspective." The primary research question focuses on how peace journalism can contribute to mitigating violence in Afghanistan, a country ravaged by decades of war. The research aims to present practical solutions for the future, leveraging the insights of experts and stakeholders in journalism to underscore the importance of reconciliation-

promoting content. This primary research explores how peace journalism can contribute to mitigating violence in Afghanistan, a country plagued by decades of conflict. This study also aims to present actionable solutions that can inform future media practices while highlighting the intangible consequences of violence—such as emotional trauma and the erosion of social cohesion.

In this research, the independent variable is peace journalism in Afghanistan, while the dependent variable is the violence through this form of journalism. The study seeks to explore the relationship between the portrayal of war news in the media and the perpetuation of violence in Afghanistan's war-torn society. It also investigates the need for peace journalism in the country. Ultimately, this research aims to determine the function and role of peace journalism in mitigating violence and clarify whether media emphasis on peace journalism can contribute to fostering a less violence-affected society.

Accordingly, the research is based on the following hypotheses:

**H1:** The current situation in Afghanistan necessitates greater emphasis on peace journalism, which can effectively reduce violence in the country.

**H2:** Engaging in peace journalism leads to a reduction in structural violence in Afghanistan.

**H3:** Peace journalism contributes to the reduction of cultural violence in Afghanistan.

**H4:** Peace journalism results in a decrease in direct violence in Afghanistan.

**H5:** Peace journalism helps reduce ethnic violence in Afghanistan.

**H6:** Peace journalism diminishes religious violence in Afghanistan.

### ***THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK***

This research is grounded in Johan Galtung's peace journalism model, which offers an alternative framework to traditional conflict reporting. Unlike conventional war journalism, which often escalates tensions, peace journalism promotes understanding, reduces conflict, and contributes to reconciliation. Galtung identifies four essential characteristics of peace journalism: solution-orientedness, truth-seeking, process-orientation, and people-centeredness (Shaker, 2009; Galtung, 2017).

Peace journalism is part of a broader communication philosophy emphasizing civic engagement and social justice. It believes individual dignity and social harmony can only be realized within inclusive and empathetic communities. Galtung's model encourages journalists to give voice to all parties involved in a conflict, explore their objectives, examine the roots and evolution of the conflict, and highlight both visible and invisible consequences such as psychological trauma (Galtung, 1990).

The model incorporates three main components:

1. **Realism:** It seeks to uncover all falsehoods, wrongful acts, and hidden agendas of conflicting parties;

2. **Populism:** It amplifies the suffering of victims, voices of the silenced, and peace advocates;
3. **Solutionism:** It promotes initiatives to resolve conflicts, endorses win-win outcomes, and stresses the common ground between adversaries (Enferadi, 2009).

The framework also contextualizes conflict as a process whereby actors pursue incompatible goals. Conflicts emerge under resource scarcity, poor communication, mistrust, historical grievances, and unequal power structures (McGoldrick & Lynch, 2000).

Galtung further classifies violence into three categories:

- **Direct Violence:** Physical harm including assault, bombing, or kidnapping;
- **Cultural Violence:** Symbolic expressions that legitimize violence, such as hate speech or glorifying war heroes;
- **Structural Violence:** Institutionalized injustice embedded in systems that create inequality, poverty, racism, or marginalization (McGoldrick & Lynch, 2000).

This theoretical foundation allows the study to explore the potential of peace journalism to inform and actively engage in reducing societal harm through constructive reporting and inclusive narratives.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilized a quantitative approach to investigate how Peace Journalism reduces violence in Afghanistan. The quantitative approach was selected because it allows for a structured and systematic examination of relationships between variables (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019).

To collect data, the research employed a survey strategy using a questionnaire designed by the researcher to ensure alignment with the study's objectives. This method enabled the collection of numerical data from respondents for statistical analysis.

Convenience sampling was used to select participants, ensuring accessibility and efficiency in the data collection (Bryman, 2016). Participants were invited to complete an online self-administered questionnaire distributed through social media and e-mails.

In compliance with ethical guidelines, participants were provided with clear information about the purpose of the study and their rights, including anonymity and voluntary participation. Consent was obtained before respondents proceeded with the survey, and no personal identification data was collected.

### *Participants*

The statistical population of this research consists of journalists and reporters working in the media of Kabul. Based on the Afghanistan Journalists Center (AFJC) information, there are (1,011) journalists and reporters active in Kabul in 2021.

### **Sampling**

In this study, Cochran's formula has been used to estimate the sample size. Based on this, a total of 278 was calculated. (n) Sample size (N) Population size (d) Margin of error (commonly set at 0.05) (Z) for a 95% confidence level, it is equal to 1.96. (p) Proportion possessing the characteristic of interest (e.g., male population) (1-p) = q proportion not possessing the characteristic of interest (e.g., female population). Typically, p and q are considered to be 0.5.

The sampling method of this research is cluster sampling. Considering the study's intrinsic nature and methodology, probabilistic sampling of the cluster type has been utilized in this research. Due to the online nature of the questionnaire, samples were controlled in coordination with reporters so that journalists and reporters working in active media in Kabul could enter the online questionnaire and complete it. Therefore, efforts were made to apply the necessary control over the samples through this approach.

### **Data Collection**

This research is of a survey type; the data was also collected using a questionnaire. The Questionnaire is structured into two main sections. The first section collects the respondents' demographic and professional background information, including age, gender, education level, media type, field of work, academic background, and years of experience.

The second section comprises 36 items measured on a five-point Likert scale (ranging from "Very Low" to "Very High"), focusing on key dimensions of peace journalism as conceptualized in Johan Galtung's model.

### **Data Analysis**

This study used non-parametric tests such as the Chi-square test to analyze relationships between categorical demographic variables. Meanwhile, the Pearson correlation coefficient, a parametric test, was applied to examine the research hypotheses involving continuous variables. Both tests were used based on the level of measurement and distribution characteristics of the variables involved, ensuring appropriate and accurate statistical analysis.

The results obtained or the data output is presented as one-dimensional and two-dimensional frequency tables, accompanied by an examination of the Chi-square test and Pearson correlation coefficient.

### **Validity**

In this research, the researcher aimed to ensure that the measurement instrument used in the study (the questionnaire) is effective and valid for addressing the objectives and measuring the research variables. To achieve this, the researcher employed face validity. As stated, "face validity means consulting experts to identify the validity of the indicators and measures of the research" (Saroukhani, 2014). To ensure face validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by academic experts and professional journalists familiar with peace journalism and

media studies in the Afghan context. Their feedback confirmed that the items appear, on the surface, to effectively measure the intended concepts related to the role of peace journalism in reducing violence. Furthermore, a pilot test was conducted with a small sample of respondents to confirm that the questions were clear, understandable, and relevant to the research objectives. As a result, the target audience found the questionnaire appropriate and easily comprehensible, supporting its face validity.

### **Reliability Check**

In this research, the researcher has utilized Cronbach's alpha to determine the extent to which the questionnaire items are correlated and whether all questions in the measurement tool assess a single construct. This coefficient is used not only for calculating the internal consistency of the questionnaire items but also for assessing the reliability of a questionnaire designed using a Likert scale (Jahān-bakhsh, 1388, p. 43).

At first, they distributed 30 questionnaires among 30 respondents, and after collecting the questionnaires, Cronbach's alpha was calculated separately for the indicators measuring each component using SPSS software. Accordingly, the Cronbach's alpha for the indicators (1-9) related to peace journalism, which considered the necessity of this type of journalism and the journalists' familiarity with these indicators, was (0.78). The indicators (10-15) concerning structural violence had an alpha of (0.73), indicators (16-19) regarding cultural violence had an alpha of (0.75), indicators (20-24) related to direct violence had an alpha of (0.74), indicators (25-31) for measuring ethnic violence had an alpha of (0.81), and indicators (32-35) for measuring religious violence had an alpha of (0.70). This indicates a high level of reliability; all alpha values related to the variables regarding journalists' familiarity with peace journalism and the necessity of this type of journalism, as well as the variables related to aspects of violence, signify that this questionnaire has acceptable reliability. The overall reliability of the variables in this research questionnaire is (0.90), indicating excellent reliability. The results of the reliability calculation are shown in the table below.

**Table 1: Results of the Questionnaire Validation**

Factors Cronbach's Alpha	The Components
Peace Journalism	0/78
Structural Violence	0/73
Cultural Violence	0/75
Direct Violence	0/74
Ethnic Violence	0/81
Religious Violence	0/70
Overall Variables	0/75

## FINDINGS

This section presented the respondents' demographic details and addressed the testing of hypotheses and the measurement of relationships between contextual variables (educational level and work experience) and familiarity with peace journalism. Chi-square tests and Pearson correlation coefficients were used to confirm or reject the research hypotheses.

**Pearson correlation coefficient:** The Pearson correlation coefficient is used when the research variables are measured at the interval scale. This coefficient is made up of one independent variable and one dependent variable. The correlation value of this index ranges between positive one (+1) and negative one (-1) (Saei, 1388)

### *Descriptive findings*

This section mentions the descriptive study of the data, the most important variables of the research, and the statistical population. First, we describe the characteristics of the respondents.

**Table 2:** Gender of respondents

Gender	Frequency	percent	Cumulative percent
Man	203	73%	73%
Woman	75	27%	100%
Total	278	100%	

According to Table (No.2), out of the statistical sample (278), the most people in the statistical sample are (203) equal to (73) percent of men and (75 people) equal to (27) percent of women. Therefore, we can say that more men participated in this research than women, although this is proportional to the number of female employees in Kabul's media.

**Table 3:** Marital status of respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	percent	Cumulative percent
Single	160	57.6%	57.6%
Married	118	42.4%	100%
Total	278	100%	

According to Table (3), out of the statistical sample (278 people), most of the people in the statistical sample (160 people), equal (57.6) percent, are single, and (118 people) equal to (42.4) percent are married. The rest of the information related to the marital status variable is included in the table below.

**Table 4:** Age of respondents

Age	Frequency	percent	Cumulative percent
18-25	95	34.2%	34.2%
26-35	127	45.7%	79.9%
36-45	44	15.8%	95.7%
46-55	6	2.2%	97.8%
Above 55	6	2.2%	100%
Total	278	100	Average: 30

According to Table (4), from the statistical sample ( 278people), there are ( 95people) equal to (34.2) percent of respondents in the age group ( 25-18years old), there are ( 127 people) equivalent to (45.7) percent in the age group ( 35-26years old), in the number of ( 44 people) equivalent to (15.8) percent in the age group ( 45-36years old), in the number of ( 6 people) equal to (2.2) percent are in the age group ( 55-46years old) and the number of ( 6 people) equal to (2.2) percent are in the age group (above 55years old). The highest frequency percentage (45.7) is the percentage of journalists in the age group ( 35-26years old), and the lowest frequency percentage (%2.2) is in the age group above ( 55years). The average age of the participating journalists in this research is (30 years old). The rest of the information related to the age variable is included in the table below.

**Table 5: Education of respondents**

Education	Frequency	percent	Cumulative percent
Diploma (High school)	5	1.8%	1.8%
Baccalaureate	14	5%	6.8%
Bachelor	200	71.9%	78.8%
Master	54	19.4%	98.2%
Ph.D	5	1.8%	100%
Total	278	100	

According to Table (5), out of the total statistical sample ( 278people), there are ( 5 people) equivalent to (1.8) percent of journalists with a diploma (high school graduate) and ( 14people) equivalent to (5) percent. Journalists with post-graduate diplomas ( 14passes), in the number of ( 200people) equivalent to (71.9) percent of journalists with bachelor's degrees, in the number of ( 54people) equivalent to (19.4) percent of journalists with post-graduate degrees, and number ( 5people) equivalent to (1.8) percent of journalists have a doctorate. The highest percentage of journalists (71.9) have a bachelor's degree, and the lowest percentage (1.8) have a doctorate. In the table below, the profiles of journalists working in Kabul are listed according to their education level.

**Table 6: Media Type of Respondents**

Media	Frequency	percent	Cumulative percent
Radio	59	21.2%	21.2%
Television	59	21.2%	42.4%
News Paper	55	19.8%	62.2%
News Agency	40	14.4%	76.6%
other	65	23.4%	100%
Total	278	100	

According to Table (6), out of the statistical sample (278 people), there are (59) people, equivalent to (21.2) percent of them are busy working in radio networks, there are (59) people) equivalent to (21.2) percent of activity in television channels, to the number (55) people, equivalent to (19.8) percent of activity in newspapers, to the number of (40) people, equivalent to (14.4) percent of activity in news agencies, and the number of ( 65people), equal to (23.4) percent, are engaged in activities in other media (weekly, monthly, platform media.



The highest percentage (23.4) of journalists work on social media platforms, weekly, monthly, and yearbook, and the lowest (14.4) work in news agencies active in Kabul. The details of the journalists participating in this research, based on their activities in the media, are listed in the table below.

**Table 7: Field of respondents**

Field	Frequency	percent	Cumulative percent
Journalism	173	62.2%	62.2%
Literature	32	11.5%	73.7%
Law	20	7.2%	80.9%
Political sciences	24	8.6%	89.6%
other	29	10.4%	100%
Total	278	100	

According to Table (7), out of the statistical sample ( 278people) of journalists participating in this research, there are ( 173people) equivalent to (62.2) percent of the field of journalism, there are ( 32people) equivalent (11.5) percent from the field of literature, 20 people equal to (7.2) percent from the law field, 24people equal to (8.6) percent from the political science field and as many ( 29people) equivalent (10.4) percent have graduated from other fields.

The highest percentage of journalists participating in this research (62.2) are journalism graduates, and the lowest (7.2) are law graduates. The rest of the information related to the variables in the respondents' field of study is included in the table below.

**Table 8: Job Experience of Respondents**

Experience	Frequency	percent	Cumulative percent
Less than 3 years	96	34.5%	34.5%
3-6 years	96	34.5%	69%
6-9 years	49	17.6%	86.6%
9-12 years	22	7.9%	94.5%
Above 12 years	15	5.5%	100%
Total	278	100	

According to Table (8), out of the total ( 278people) in the statistical sample, there are ( 96people) equivalent to (34.5) percent who have work experience (less than 3years), there are ( 96people) equivalent to (5. 34) The percentage with work experience ( 3-6years), as many as ( 49people) equal to (17.6) percent with work experience ( 6-9years), as many as ( 22 people) equal to (7.9) percent with experience Curry ( 9to 12years) and the number of ( 15 people) equivalent to (5.4) percent have work experience (more than 12years). The highest percentage of frequency (34.5) is the percentage of journalists with work experience (less than 3 years) and 3 to 6 years), and the lowest percentage of frequency (5.4) is the percentage of journalists who have (above 12) years) have work experience, they are The average working experience of the participating journalists in this research is 5 years. The rest of the information related to the respondents' work history variable is included in the table below.

### The main variable of the research test with related contextual variables

**Table 9:** The relationship between the level of familiarity with peace journalism and the level of education of the respondents

		Education					Total
		High School	Baccalaureate	Bachelor	Master	PHD	
Familiarity with peace Journalism	veryLess	3 12.5%	1 4.2%	15 62.5%	4 16.7%	1 4.2%	24 100.0%
	Less	0 0.0%	2 3.9%	38 74.5%	10 19.6%	1 2.0%	51 100.0%
	Medium	2 1.5%	10 7.3%	104 75.9%	20 14.6%	1 0.7%	137 100.0%
	Much	0 0.0%	1 1.8%	36 65.5%	16 29.1%	2 3.6%	55 100.0%
	very	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	7 63.6%	4 36.4%	0 0.0%	11 100.0%
	Much	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	7 63.6%	4 36.4%	0 0.0%	11 100.0%
	Total	5 1.8%	14 5.0%	200 71.9%	54 19.4%	5 1.8%	278 100.0%

Based on Table (9), out of a total of 278 participants, the majority (71.9%) hold a bachelor's degree, followed by master's degree holders (19.4%), baccalaureate (5%), and smaller proportions with high school (1.8%) and PhD (1.8%) education levels. The data shows that familiarity with peace journalism increases with higher education levels. Most respondents across all categories reported a *medium* level of familiarity, especially among those with bachelor's and master's degrees. However, only a small number across all levels reported *familiarity very much*, indicating a potential gap in deep knowledge of peace journalism, even among higher-educated participants.

**Table 10:** Chi-square test

Chi-square Test			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.649 <sup>a</sup>	16	.001
Likelihood Ratio	24.243	16	.084
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.449	1	.020
N of Valid Cases	278		

a. 16 cells (24.0%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .10.

According to Table (10), the result of the Chi-square test is (30.649), with degrees of freedom (16) and a significance level of (.001) at a 5% error rate and 95% confidence, indicating a relationship between the education level of journalists and their familiarity with peace journalism. Considering that the significance level is less than (0.5), there is a significant relationship between the education level of journalists and their familiarity with peace journalism. This means journalists with higher education are more familiar with peace journalism.

**Table 11:** The relationship between the level of familiarity with peace journalism and experience

		Work experience					Total
		Less than 3 years	3-6 years	6-9 years	9-12 years	More than 12	
Level of familiarity with peace journalism	Very less	12 12.5%	7 7.3%	3 6.1%	2 9.1%	0 .0%	24 8.6%
	less	20 20.8%	20 20.8%	6 12.2%	4 18.2%	1 6.7%	51 18.3%
	somewhat	51 53.1%	46 47.9%	26 53.1%	8 36.4%	6 40.0%	137 49.3%
	Much	10 10.4%	18 18.8%	13 26.5%	7 31.8%	7 46.7%	55 19.8%
	very much	3 3.1%	5 5.2%	1 2.0%	1 4.5%	1 6.7%	11 4.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b> 34.5%	<b>96</b> 34.5%	<b>49</b> 17.6%	<b>22</b> 7.9%	<b>15</b> 5.4%	<b>278</b> % 100,0

Out of the 278 participants, the largest proportion (34.5%) have less than 3 years or 3–6 years of experience, while only 5.4% have more than 12 years of experience. Across all experience levels, the majority reported being *somewhat* familiar with peace journalism (49.3% overall). Notably, familiarity tends to increase with experience: those with more than 9 years of experience reported higher percentages in the *much* and *very much* categories. In contrast, participants with less than 6 years of experience showed higher percentages in the *very less* and *less* categories, indicating that deeper familiarity with peace journalism is generally associated with greater professional experience.

**Table 12:** Chi-Square test

Chi-square test Result	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.886a	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	35.270	16	.004
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.674	1	.055
N of Valid Cases	278		

a. 8 cells (12.0%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.24.

Based on Table (12), the result of the Chi-Square test is (30.886), with degrees of freedom (16) and a significance level (000) at a 5% error rate and 95% confidence. This indicates a relationship between work experience variables and familiarity with peace journalism. Given that the significance level is less than (0.5), there is a significant relationship between journalists' work experience and their familiarity with peace journalism. Based on the frequency reported in this table, it can be said that journalists with more work experience have greater familiarity with peace journalism.

### Testing Research Hypotheses

In testing the research hypotheses, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used to demonstrate the nature of the relationship between the research variables.

**H1: The current situation in Afghanistan necessitates greater emphasis on peace journalism, which can effectively reduce violence in the country.**

*Table 13: Pearson correlation coefficient of violence and peace journalism variables*

		Peace journalism	Violence
Peace journalism	Pearson coefficient	1	-0.183
	Significance level		002
	Number	278	278
Violence	Pearson coefficient	-0.183	1
	Significance level	002	
	Number	278	278

**\*\*.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to Table, the Pearson correlation coefficient results in (-0.183) with a significance level of (0.002). Based on this table, the significance level is less than (0.5), and the Pearson correlation coefficient is negative. Given the negative correlation coefficient, it can be said that there is an inverse correlation between the two variables of violence and peace journalism, with a 5% error margin and 95% confidence. A negative and indirect relationship exists between the increase in violence and peace journalism. This means that as the use of peace journalism increases, violence decreases. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the research hypothesis that peace journalism plays a role in reducing violence in Afghanistan is supported by this table.

**H2: Engaging in peace journalism leads to a reduction in structural violence in Afghanistan.**

*Table 14: correlation between Peace journalism and structural violence*

		Peace journalism	Structural violence
Peace journalism	Pearson coefficient	1	-0.219
	Significance level		000
	Number	278	278
Structural violence	Pearson coefficient	-0.219	1
	Significance level	000	
	Number	278	278

**\*\*.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to Table, the results of the Pearson correlation test show a coefficient of -0.219 and a significance level of 0.000. Based on this table, the significance level is less than 0.05, and the Pearson correlation coefficient is negative. Given the negative correlation coefficient, it can be stated that there is an inverse correlation between the two variables of peace journalism and structural violence (poverty, deprivation, social inequalities, and discrimination) with a 5% error margin and 95% confidence. There is a negative and indirect relationship between peace journalism and the level of structural violence. This means that

as the use of peace journalism by journalists and media increases, the level of structural violence in Afghanistan decreases. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the second hypothesis is confirmed based on this table.

### H3: Peace journalism contributes to the reduction of cultural violence in Afghanistan.

**Table 15:** correlation between peace journalism and cultural violence

		Peace journalism	Cultural violence
Peace journalism	Pearson coefficient	1	-0.206
	Significance level		001
	Number	278	278
Cultural violence	Pearson coefficient	-0.206	1
	Significance level	001	
	Number	278	278

**\*\*.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the above Table, the Pearson correlation test results show a coefficient of -0.206 and a significance level of 0.001. According to this table, the significance level is less than 0.5, and the Pearson correlation coefficient is negative. Given the negative correlation coefficient, it can be stated that there is an inverse correlation between the two variables of peace journalism and cultural violence (xenophobia, hate speech, and the mythologizing of war heroes) with a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence. There is a negative and indirect relationship between peace journalism and the level of cultural violence. This means that as the use of peace journalism by journalists and media increases, the level of cultural violence in Afghanistan decreases. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the third hypothesis is confirmed based on this table—

### H4: Peace journalism results in decreasing direct violence in Afghanistan.

**Table 16:** correlation between Peace Journalism and Direct Violence

		Peace journalism	Direct violence
Peace journalism	Pearson coefficient	1	-0.249
	Significance level		000
	Number	278	278
Direct violence	Pearson coefficient	-0.249	1
	Significance level	000	
	Number	278	278

**\*\*.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 16, the results of the Pearson correlation test show a coefficient of -0.249 and a significance level of 0.000. According to this table, the significance level is less than 0.5, and the Pearson correlation coefficient is negative. Given the negative correlation coefficient, it can be stated that there is an inverse correlation between the two variables of peace journalism and direct violence (tension, biased perceptions, and distrust) with a 5% error margin and 95% confidence. There is a negative and indirect relationship between peace journalism and the level of direct violence. This means that as the use of peace journalism by journalists and media increases, the level of direct violence among the conflicting parties in

Afghanistan decreases. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the fourth hypothesis is confirmed based on this table.

#### H5: Peace journalism helps reduce ethnic violence in Afghanistan.

**Table 17:** correlation between Peace Journalism and Ethnic violence

		Peace journalism	Ethnic violence
<b>Peace journalism</b>	Pearson coefficient	<b>1</b>	0.393
	Significance level		<b>000</b>
	Number	<b>278</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>Ethnic violence</b>	Pearson coefficient	0.393	<b>1</b>
	Significance level	<b>000</b>	
	Number	<b>278</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</b>			

According to the above table, the Pearson correlation test results show a coefficient of (0.393) and a significance level of (000). Based on this table, the significance level is less than (0.5), and the correlation coefficient is positive. Given the positive correlation coefficient, it can be said that there is a positive correlation between the two variables of ethnic violence and peace journalism, with a 5% error margin and 95% confidence. Therefore, considering this result, the relationship between these two variables is positive and still significant. Consequently, we can state that the null hypothesis is confirmed here, and the fifth hypothesis regarding the role of peace journalism in reducing ethnic violence is rejected.

#### H6: Peace journalism diminishes religious violence in Afghanistan

**Table 18:** Correlation between Peace Journalism and Religious violence

		Peace journalism	Religious violence
<b>Peace journalism</b>	Pearson coefficient	<b>1</b>	0.192
	Significance level		<b>000</b>
	Number	<b>278</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>Ethnic violence</b>	Pearson coefficient	0.192	<b>1</b>
	Significance level	<b>000</b>	
	Number	<b>278</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</b>			

According to the above Table, the Pearson correlation test results show a coefficient of (0.192) and a significance level of (0.000). Based on this table, the significance level is less than (0.5), and the correlation coefficient is positive. Given the positive correlation coefficient, it can be stated that there is a positive correlation between the two variables of religious violence and peace journalism, with a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence. Therefore, considering this result, the relationship between these two variables is positively significant, indicating that the second variable also increases as one variable increases. Consequently, we can affirm the null hypothesis and reject the sixth hypothesis regarding the role of peace journalism in reducing religious violence.

## DISCUSSION

This research sought to explore the potential role of peace journalism in mitigating various forms of violence in Afghanistan, employing a survey approach with responses from 287 journalists working in Kabul media outlets. The study highlights significant insights into the challenges and opportunities of incorporating peace journalism into Afghan media practices. This section discusses the findings concerning the research questions and previous studies and their broader implications.

The findings reveal a low familiarity with peace journalism among journalists in Kabul, coupled with limited training provided by media outlets. This aligns with the observations of Sumava Mitra (2017), who emphasized the lack of education and awareness of peace journalism among Afghan journalists. The lack of institutional support and training may hinder the practical implementation of peace journalism principles. This underscores the need for capacity-building programs tailored to educate journalists on the fundamentals and applications of peace journalism, particularly in conflict-ridden contexts like Afghanistan.

The research highlights the positive correlation between peace journalism and structural, cultural, and direct violence reduction. For example, the study indicates that institutionalized inequalities and societal prohibitions can be addressed through peace journalism, a finding supported by Sapi (2019), who identified the impact of media framing on peace narratives. Similarly, the reduction of cultural violence aligns with Attosen (2010), who argued that Johan Galtung's peace journalism framework provides a theoretical foundation for conflict resolution.

However, the study's finding that peace journalism contributes to reducing direct violence is particularly significant, given Afghanistan's history of prolonged conflict. The role of solution-oriented, people-centered journalism in countering direct violence is a critical takeaway, as it highlights the transformative potential of media in fostering dialogue and reconciliation.

Interestingly, the study finds a positive correlation between peace journalism and ethnic and religious violence, leading to the rejection of the corresponding hypotheses. This paradox may reflect the deep-seated and complex nature of ethnic and religious divisions in Afghanistan. Hanisch (2006) cautioned against overestimating the media's capacity to resolve conflicts, noting that societal factors often outweigh media influence. Similarly, Ahoo (2004) highlighted the limitations of media in peacebuilding, emphasizing that structural and political interventions are crucial.

These findings suggest that while peace journalism can contribute to reducing certain forms of violence, its efficacy in addressing deeply entrenched ethnic and religious conflicts may be limited without concurrent efforts from policymakers, civil society, and international organizations.

This research contributes to the growing literature on peace journalism by demonstrating its relevance in the Afghan context. The findings are consistent with studies such as Mitra (2017) and Aho (2004), which underscore the necessity of constructively equipping journalists with tools to address conflicts. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of institutional support, as emphasized by Attosen (2010) and Sapi (2019), in fostering a culture of peace journalism.

The rejection of hypotheses related to ethnic and religious violence, however, calls for a nuanced approach to peace journalism. As Hanisch (2006) argued, media alone cannot resolve conflicts, but they can support broader peacebuilding efforts. This reinforces the need for a multi-stakeholder approach integrating media initiatives with political, social, and educational reforms.

## CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the role of peace journalism in mitigating various forms of violence in Afghanistan, with a focus on structural, cultural, direct, ethnic, and religious violence. Through a survey of 287 journalists working in Kabul media outlets, several key findings emerged that offer important insights into the potential and limitations of peace journalism in the Afghan context.

First, the research revealed that journalists in Kabul have limited familiarity with peace journalism, and media outlets offer minimal training in this field. This gap in knowledge and institutional support hampers the widespread adoption of peace journalism practices. These findings underscore the need for targeted capacity-building programs that educate journalists on peace journalism principles, particularly in a conflict-ridden society like Afghanistan.

The study also found a positive correlation between peace journalism and reducing structural, cultural, and direct violence. Peace journalism was shown to help address institutionalized inequalities and societal prohibitions, supporting the notion that media can play a role in promoting peace by challenging entrenched societal divisions. Moreover, the application of peace journalism, which emphasizes solution-oriented and people-centered approaches, was effective in reducing direct violence—an essential contribution in a country deeply affected by decades of conflict.

However, the study's findings regarding ethnic and religious violence were more complex. Contrary to the hypothesis, a positive correlation between peace journalism and ethnic and religious violence was observed, leading to the rejection of these hypotheses. This paradox highlights the deeply entrenched nature of ethnic and religious divisions in Afghanistan, suggesting that peace journalism alone may not be sufficient to address these issues. These findings align with existing research that cautions against overestimating the media's capacity to resolve deeply rooted societal conflicts, emphasizing that structural and political interventions are necessary alongside media efforts.



In light of these findings, this research contributes to the broader literature on peace journalism by demonstrating its relevance in the Afghan context. However, it also calls for a more nuanced approach to peace journalism, recognizing that media can support broader peace-building efforts but cannot resolve conflicts on its own. As such, the findings suggest the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach that combines media initiatives with political, social, and educational reforms to effectively address the complex and multifaceted nature of violence in Afghanistan.

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