

Visual Framing and the Construction of Terror: Photojournalistic Coverage in Print Media

Authors

Benjamin Mbatia Kinyanjui 

Author's email: benkinyam@gmail.com

Laikipia University, Kenya.

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Abstract

This study investigated the visual framing of the Westgate Mall terrorist attack in Nairobi, Kenya, on September 21, 2013. It assessed how photojournalists framed this incident in the *Daily Nation*, *Standard*, and *New York Times* by examining the types of frames used, compositional elements, and the framing's effect on public perception of the attack. The study employed a qualitative descriptive research method, using descriptive content analysis with MaxQDA software to assess photographs for patterns, themes, and visual framing. A sample of fifty (50) photographs from the first three pages of the *Daily Nation*, *The Standard*, and *The New York Times* published on September 21-24, 2013, was analysed. Purposive sampling was used to select nine (9) media professionals for interviews. Semiology was utilised to derive meanings from the images using Rodriguez and Dimitrova's four-tiered model, and the focus was on denotative, stylistic-semiotic, connotative, and ideological representations. The findings revealed that media frequently prioritises sensational images to boost viewership, and this influences audience perceptions through fear and inspiration. The study contributes to the communication field by promoting visual literacy and empowering audiences to critically analyse media content and become discerning consumers of news.

Key terms: Audience, photojournalism, print media, media influence, visual framing.

INTRODUCTION

The visual reporting of past terrorism incidents by mass media, especially through photojournalism, has long raised concerns due to its power to shape public opinion. Terrorists often seek to spread fear. By publishing visually framed images of attacks, media outlets may inadvertently amplify their impact. While previous studies have not fully examined how visual framing influences public perceptions of terrorism, Kenya has remained a frequent target, and despite the rapid change in communication that has significantly transformed society in the last three decades, the reporting of terrorism-related violence has remained sensational. Therefore, this study examined how the *Daily Nation*, *The Standard*, and *The New York Times* visually framed the Westgate Mall terrorist attack.

The role of the media, both print and electronic, is to inform, educate, and shape public awareness and attitude (Bullock, 2001). The media, sometimes referred to as the fourth estate, is vested with the task of making available, fair, balanced, and timely information to the public to allow them to make informed decisions. It is noted, however, that circumstances such as distance, time, media ownership, and political affiliation have limited the effectiveness of journalists' ability to inform objectively. Such limitations have necessitated that the media frame news content by selecting, excluding, and emphasising specific areas of the story.

Various media outlets frame terrorism news differently, depending on the culture and the political ideologies held by the owners and targeted audience. For instance, most newspapers in the United States tend to make more episodic frames compared to United Kingdom papers, which cover terrorism and terrorist-related events more thematically (Papacharissi & Oliveira, 2008). In the case of a lack of authoritative local voices on terrorism, there is a heightened reliance of local media on foreign analysts. Unfortunately, such analysts have a limited understanding of the security situation in the involved country. When the international media sets the news agenda, terrorist events are likely to be framed in terms of Western preoccupations rather than national and local realities (Glazzard & Reed, 2021). Consequently, news coverage may be biased toward ideologies that do not accurately reflect the

perspectives of terrorism victims.

An example is *The New York Times*, which frames terrorist events by Western values. In such cases, the local perspectives are ignored (DNS Africa Resource Center, 2024). The implication is that there are differences in framing in terms of accuracy, objectivity, and depth of reporting. Generally, the news reporting may even skew the understanding of violent attacks since different media outlets may over-emphasise their ideological and transnational aspects while excluding the local realities and perspectives. However, print media outlets such as *The New York Times* offer a broader narrative when framing terror by incorporating images of both the immediate violence and its long-term effects. On the other hand, framing by local newspapers such as the *Daily Nation* focuses on the human impact and emotional aftermath, highlighting victims and communities affected by terrorism to elicit empathy. *The Standard* tends to capture scenes that emphasise the chaos and disruption caused, using stark, dramatic imagery that highlights the severity of the attacks.

Media outlets play a critical role in informing and shaping public perception. However, their effectiveness may be compromised by biases stemming from ownership, political affiliations, and cultural contexts. It is noted that international media, such as *The New York Times*, often frames terrorism through Western perspectives, overshadowing local realities and potentially skewing public understanding of such events. Conversely, local outlets like the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* may focus on human impact and community responses, providing a different, more localised perspective. These differing approaches highlight the complex dynamics of news framing. Therefore, there is a need to critically evaluate the media's portrayal of terrorism to ensure a more balanced understanding. This way, the limitations and biases inherent in media reporting can be identified, and a more inclusive approach to global and local narratives adopted.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Code of Conduct and Guidelines for News Coverage

Visual framing in media coverage, particularly during crises, is significantly shaped by codes of conduct and guidelines established by regulatory authorities, such

as the Kenya Film Classification Board (KFCB) and the Media Council of Kenya (Oranga & Situma, 2023). These frameworks are designed to ensure that media outlets adhere to ethical standards, prioritising accuracy, sensitivity, and responsibility in their reporting. For instance, during a crisis, such as a natural disaster or a terrorist attack, regulatory guidelines may dictate how graphic images should be presented or which aspects of the event should be highlighted to avoid sensationalism. This ensures that the portrayal of such events does not contribute to public panic or misinterpretation and maintains a level of respect for the victims and affected communities.

The influence of these set codes of conduct and guidelines requires strict compliance. The reason is that such requirements shape the visual narratives constructed by media outlets (Media Council of Kenya, 2020). The regulatory frameworks help define what is considered appropriate or otherwise in visual storytelling. Therefore, the authorities influence decisions about which images to use, how to frame them, and the accompanying narratives. Consequently, visual framing is a collaborative effort between media professionals and regulatory bodies. It is expected that the images broadcasted resonate with ethical considerations and public interest.

Terrorism Photography in the *Daily Nation*, *The Standard*, and *The New York Times*

The *Daily Nation*, is among Kenya's leading newspapers. The newspaper usually uses photography to highlight the human side of terrorism. Therefore, the daily's photojournalists and editors focus on victims and rescue efforts when publishing images covering incidents. In the *Daily Nation's* coverage of events such as terror attacks like the Westgate Mall attack and the DusitD2 siege, the editors tended to prioritise clearly visible shots of victims and emergency responders. Usually, the editors ensure the front pages of the newspaper editions focus on the critical event of the day (Mwaura, 2022). In addition to informing, the images aim to evoke empathy and a personal connection to the tragedies. The journalists seek to humanise the victims and show the heroism of responders in such incidents. However, the paper's heavy use of emotionally charged images is criticised for risking sensationalising the event rather than informing readers in a balanced way. The *Daily Nation's*

editorial decisions are designed to evoke public outrage and unity. The goal is attained by using imagery that places the viewer emotionally in the scene of the tragedy.

On the other hand, *The Standard* newspaper, another major Kenyan publication, approaches terrorism photography with a slightly more restrained and contextual approach. In its reporting of the Westgate and DusitD2 attacks, the newspaper often used wider-angle shots, capturing the broader context of the locations and the security operations. The approach aligns with the newspaper's strategy of ensuring the published photographs are iconic in nature, though it is criticised as a tactic that benefits terrorists (Ndavula & Mwangi, 2022). However, *The Standard's* preference for iconic images provides readers with a more detached view. The strategy allows the public to comprehend the scale and logistical aspects of the events without being overwhelmed by the immediate emotional impact. The newspaper's strategy is often perceived as focusing more on the overall narrative of terrorism and its socio-political implications rather than individual stories.

Finally, *The New York Times* usually covers incidents in Kenya, particularly terror attacks. The newspaper's approach usually sparks controversy for publishing graphic images of victims. The paper faced criticism in Kenya for its use of explicit, close-up images of bodies, which many saw as disrespectful and insensitive to the victims and their families (Takenaga, 2019). While the *Times* defended its editorial choices by arguing the images served a journalistic purpose of showing the brutal reality of terrorism, critics argued that these images crossed ethical boundaries, prioritising shock value over respectful reporting. *The New York Times* tends to use a more globalised perspective. The imagery used captures immediate emotional impact through close-ups and the broader geopolitical implications with wider shots.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided through the lenses of framing theory and multimodality theory. Framing theory guided the research to determine how salience was applied in photographs that were published by the three newspapers, while multimodality theory helped the research to determine the manner in which

photojournalists utilised various compositional techniques to frame published photographs.

Framing Theory

The study aimed to examine the types of frames used in photographs depicting the Westgate Mall terrorist attack, explore the compositional elements of this photographic coverage, and assess the role that framing played in shaping audience perceptions. This focus aligns with Goffman's (1974) framing theory, which emphasizes how the context and organization of a message affect audience interpretation. Later, Entman (1991) proposed two levels of the framing theory: information stored in the brain by the audience of a specific news genre, which he termed the 'audience frame,' and the visible characteristics of the particular news itself, which he termed the 'news frame.' The audience frame encompasses the mental frameworks and cultural contexts that influence how people perceive and make sense of a particular news genre. Entman (1991) indicated that the news frame will always be present to influence audience perceptions of the meaning of a particular communication genre. Therefore, building on Entman's (1991) distinction between 'audience frames' and 'news frames,' the research intended to contribute to a deeper understanding of how visual frames specifically influence perceptions of such a traumatic event.

Previous studies have predominantly concentrated on textual analysis (Rodriguez, 2011). However, this investigation sought to fill a critical gap by analysing the visual components of news photography, as highlighted by Messaris and Abraham (2001). The scholars emphasize that visuals can significantly impact audience perception, yet studies on visual framing remain limited. Scholars in visual communication differ on the method of analysis. While some focus on themes as the basis for analysis (Borah & Bulla, 2005), others pay attention to ideological strands that emerge as a result of visual presentation (Griffin, 2004a; Griffin & Lee, 2002). Griffin (2004a) argues that studies on visual framing lack a proper methodological and conceptual framework. On the contrary, recent studies have proved that visuals, similar to text, are capable of creating frames, especially when they make use of specific visual compositional elements such as angle of view, shot

proximity, and depth of field, while the textual frame relies on aspects such as symbols and rhetorical devices such as metaphors (Rodriguez, 2011). Welch (2014) argues that visuals are key objects of propaganda research, and in the recent past, media framing studies have focused on the significance of visual analysis (Coleman, 2010; Dimitrova, 2011).

The research applied Messaris and Abraham's (2001) principles that guide visual framing. These principles were crucial in analysing the photographs published in the aftermath of the Westgate Mall terrorist attack. The research first considered the analogical framing principle to determine whether the relationship between the photographs and the meanings derived from them was based on analogy. This principle helped to explore how the images conveyed broader ideas and themes through visual metaphors and comparisons. Next, the indexicality principle of framing was utilised to assess the level of terror depicted in the published photographs. The theory's assumptions aligned with the objective, which was to examine the types of frames employed in these images. This could shed light on how the images portrayed the event. The approach also aligned with the objective of the study that assessed the role of framing in the photographs that were published after the Westgate Mall terrorist attack. This principle focuses on the photographs' ability to present reality by capturing actual events and their inherent emotional impact. Through this lens, the research aimed to understand how the images conveyed the severity and reality of the terror attack to the viewers.

Multimodality Theory

Multimodality theory is a contemporary framework in mass communication, prominently developed by Gunther Kress and others. It emphasizes the diverse modes humans utilise for communication in various contexts, highlighting the interplay between these modes. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) and Barthes (1977), communication is not limited to written or spoken language; instead, it encompasses a range of modalities. These modalities, which include visual elements, colours, and layouts, interact to create meaning. The theory suggests that meanings are socially constructed, reflecting the values and beliefs of different groups. Multimodality theory has offered a novel approach for visual analysis and digital

data management (Bezemer & `Mavers 2011). The reason is that this approach provides a critical approach to understanding how communication functions within society.

The roots of multimodality theory trace back to Halliday's (1978) meta-function approach, which expanded the understanding of communication beyond traditional text. Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) seminal work, "*Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*," further developed this framework by focusing on visual texts. They argued that visual elements convey significant meaning and should be considered alongside linguistic modes. Over time, the theory has adapted to include digital texts, expanding the definition of "text" to encompass various forms such as videos, social media posts, and newspaper layouts (Ruefman, 2011). This historical evolution highlights the increasing complexity of communication in a media-saturated environment. As a result, multimodality theory has become essential for analysing contemporary forms of communication.

Multimodality theory has four foundational assumptions that guide its application. First, all forms of communication are inherently multimodal, drawing from various resources shaped by cultural contexts (Van Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001; Adami, 2016). Second, relying solely on language for meaning is insufficient, as deeper interpretations require considering non-verbal cues and contextual factors (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001). The third assumption posits that resources for meaning evolve from specific social formations over time, becoming finely articulated through repeated use. Lastly, the interactions between different modes contribute to a comprehensive understanding of communication, allowing for meanings that may be complementary or contradictory (Bok, 2008). These assumptions emphasize the complexity and richness of meaning-making processes in communication.

Multimodality theory has two basic weaknesses. The first problem of this theory is associated with the compositional aspects of the modes, while the second dilemma has to do with their reception (Bucher, 2017). With respect to the compositional problem, the pertinent issue questions how each individual mode contributes to the overall meaning of a specific discourse. This question is based on the assumption

that the overall meaning generated from a multimodal discourse is more paramount than the sum of its parts (Bucher, 2017). The second problem questions the manner in which the recipients of the messages incorporate the various modes presented in a genre to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the multimodal discourse. While multimodality theory has certain weaknesses, it remains a valuable framework for analysis.

The study leveraged multimodality theory to investigate the photographs published following the Westgate Mall terrorist attack. The theory aligned with the study, which was to explore the compositional elements of the photographic coverage, which included the arrangement and visual techniques used. By assessing the listed aspects, the research sought to understand how different modes, both visual and textual, contributed to readers' interpretations. Multimodality theory provided a holistic framework for this analysis, considering how various elements interact to create meaning. Ultimately, this approach enhanced the understanding of how media representations shape perceptions of significant events.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to examine media representations of the Westgate terrorist attack through visual content. The primary approach combined descriptive content analysis and semiology to systematically analyze photographs and their associated captions. Data were collected from photographs published in three newspapers: Kenya's *Daily Nation* and *The Standard*; selected as the country's oldest, most widely read, and trusted outlets and *The New York Times*, chosen for its prestige and comprehensive international coverage. The analysis focused on images and captions appearing on the front three pages of selected editions related to the attack.

A total of 50 photographs were examined: 21 from *Daily Nation*, 19 from *The Standard*, and 10 from *The New York Times*, drawn from 21 newspaper pages overall. The unit of analysis was a "figure," defined as a single newspaper page containing one or more relevant images (sub-figures). In addition, purposive sampling was used to select nine key informants

professional journalists and photojournalists for in-depth interviews. These interviews provided contextual insights into image selection and framing practices.

A pilot study was conducted to test and refine the data collection procedures and coding instrument, enabling the identification and correction of potential technical issues before the main study. Data analysis followed the four-level visual framing framework proposed by Rodriguez and Dimitrova (2011): (1) visuals as denotative systems (literal description), (2) visuals as stylistic-semiotic systems, (3) visuals as connotative systems (implied meanings), and (4) visuals as ideological representations. Semiology further supported the analysis by deconstructing images to uncover broader denotative and connotative relationships, as well as latent meanings (Chandler, 2007). Ethical considerations included obtaining informed consent from all informants, securing research clearance from Laikipia University's Graduate School and NACOSTI, respecting participant autonomy, and safeguarding sensitive data to prevent retraumatization associated with the terrorism incident.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the types of frames used by newspapers in reporting the Westgate Mall terrorist attack revealed that the *Daily Nation*, *The Standard*, and *The New York Times* used various frames. The pain and misery frame showcases the intense suffering of victims through graphic images depicting injuries and emotional distress, aiming to evoke sympathy and fear among audiences. In contrast, the heroic rescuers frame emphasises the bravery of armed civilians and security personnel, portraying their efforts to evacuate victims and combat the attackers, which shapes public perception positively and fosters admiration for these rescuers. However, the balance in coverage is crucial to avoid overshadowing the victims' experiences, ensuring a nuanced narrative that respects both their suffering and the heroism displayed during the crisis.

On the other hand, the survivors' vulnerability frame depicted individuals, especially women and children, as emotionally and physically fragile in the aftermath of the event. On the other hand, the humanitarianism

frame emphasised collective efforts to provide aid and support to victims, highlighting compassion and resilience in the face of adversity. The destruction of property frame illustrated the extensive damage inflicted during the attack, using powerful imagery of smoke and wreckage to convey the scale of the disaster. Together, these frames shape public perception, reinforcing themes of vulnerability, humanitarian response, and the physical and emotional toll of terrorism.

The survivor's grief and despair frame illustrates the profound emotional pain and sorrow experienced by survivors following the attack. Photographs highlight individuals in distress, mourning loved ones, and experiencing helplessness. For example, images from the *Daily Nation* and *The New York Times* depict wounded victims and grieving individuals, evoking empathy and emphasising the human cost of the tragedy. However, such portrayals can sensationalise the event and potentially violate the dignity of survivors. Similarly, the survivors' dread frame shows fright among the victims through facial expressions and postures of survivors. Characterised by frowning faces and open mouths, images showcase the fear and shock experienced during the attack. Multiple photographs across various publications convey a sense of urgency and panic among individuals escaping the scene. These depictions serve to heighten public emotional response, reinforcing the impact of the terror attack while also presenting the media's role in shaping perceptions of fear and vulnerability.

The combat prowess frame focuses on the skill and bravery exhibited by security forces during the Westgate Mall attack, highlighting their tactical abilities and courage under pressure. It emphasises the heroic actions taken by military personnel and law enforcement, showcasing their efforts to regain control and rescue hostages through images of armed officers in action. Photographs featuring this frame were published by the *Daily Nation* and *Standard* newspapers. The images depicted scenes that evoke patriotism and instil public confidence in the government's ability to protect citizens. In contrast, the survivors' grief frame captures the profound emotional pain of those affected by the attack, illustrating moments of mourning and loss and

ultimately shifting focus from combat success to the human toll of terrorism.

Analysis of the compositional elements of the images published by *The Standard*, the *Daily Nation*, and *The New York Times*' photojournalists during the Westgate Mall terror attack period revealed that angle of view, shot proximity, and image size play an important role in framing the event. It has been demonstrated that camera angle refers to the camera's physical position in relation to the subject during exposure. The position of the photograph significantly affects how the viewer perceives the scene. A photojournalist can choose various types of camera angles when composing a shot. The choice of camera angle is determined either by the actual proximal angle of the photojournalist from the subject or by the self-positioning of the photojournalist based on the perspective they intend to convey. This study mainly focused on three major camera angles, categorised as high, middle/eye-level, and low-camera angles. The angle of view refers to how much of the scene is captured.

In this case, the editors of the three newspapers managed to strike a balance between high, low, and eye-level angles when positing their photographs. Each image successfully portrays the message and evokes the intended emotions. Low-angle images made the readers appreciate the superiority and capability of the photographed subjects. Eye-level shots also invoked trust and other appropriate feelings in the reader. Most of the photographs had been taken from an eye-level angle. According to Merkt and Sochatzy (2015), camera angles are used in specific contexts to facilitate political communication and propagate propaganda, where applicable.

In terms of image size, it was established that large images were often used on the front pages of newspapers to facilitate the creation of the intended visual appeal. On the other hand, medium and small images were published on other pages to create additional visual and informational content within a limited space. The analysis revealed that large images were prominent on the front pages. Such photographs covered substantial portions of the pages where they were published. All sizes of images were used to depict scenes of rescue operations, victims in pain, security forces in action, and the aftermath of the

attacks. However, the medium-sized images seemed inclined towards emotion creation because they depicted survivors, security forces, and victims seeking safety. Numerous small-sized images were published because they occupy smaller space. Nevertheless, the small images contributed to the overall storytelling by depicting injured individuals being helped and frightened people running for safety. Therefore, it was asserted that the three newspapers strategically used various image sizes to attract readership and convey emotional impact.

Regarding shot proximity, the journalists used different shots to take images, depending on what they wanted the reader to understand and the emotions they wanted to create. For instance, extremely wide shots were applied to take photographs that were supposed to depict a detailed scene. Other shots, such as medium shots, medium-wide shots, and wide shots, were utilised accordingly. In addition, the photographers used medium-close-up camera proximity to frame some of these images. The combination of the medium close-up camera distance and the eye-level camera angles by a photographer draws the viewer closer to the visual elements depicted in the scene. Close-up images were sparingly used because they invoked sombre emotions. Moreover, depicting suffering people in print media may indirectly help the terrorists spread fear. Therefore, close-up photographs, especially the ones showing the subjects' facial expressions, were limited in the publications.

The findings affirm the pivotal role of visual framing, which encompasses the creation of denotative meanings, connotative meanings, and ideological representations. In this case, visual framing was used to shape perceptions about the Westgate Mall terrorist attack. Photojournalists captured and conveyed events in real-time by utilising images as a powerful tool for visual storytelling. The authenticity of published images was paramount in this case because visual framing significantly influenced the emotional engagement levels of the audience. However, it should be noted that while photojournalists may strive for objectivity in their compositional techniques, readers' subjective interpretations can sometimes perceive the images as inadvertently sensationalised.

Moreover, the study findings reveal instances where the photojournalists' framing objectives conflicted with the perspectives of readers, influenced by cognitive biases and cultural norms. Negative emotions such as fear, racism, and grief often overshadowed the intended messages of hope or humanity, exacerbating confirmation bias in the audience's interpretation of the images. Despite the inherent challenges, photojournalists are tasked with striking a delicate balance between reporting events faithfully and mitigating potential psychological harm to the public, especially concerning sensitive subjects like terrorism. Furthermore, the visual elements of images, including colours, composition, and context, exert a profound impact on the audience's interpretation, eliciting specific emotions and reinforcing societal stereotypes. In adherence to ethical guidelines, it is essential that photojournalists exercise caution in framing images, particularly those depicting the aftermath of terrorism. Each photographer bears the responsibility of understanding the potential repercussions of their work and navigating the sensitivities of diverse audiences, underscoring the complexity of visual storytelling and the importance of rigorous review processes prior to publication.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: The media undoubtedly plays a crucial role in shaping public understanding and awareness of terrorism. However, the challenge lies in achieving a delicate balance between providing truthful representation of the horrors of terrorism and avoiding the inadvertent amplification of terrorists' objectives. Through the lens of framing theory, it becomes evident that the way media constructs narratives around terrorism can significantly influence public perception, societal memory, and collective responses to such events. Framing theory suggests that the media's selection of certain aspects of an event, and the emphasis or exclusion of others, can shape the audience's interpretation of that event. Positive frames, such as those emphasizing humanitarianism, heroism, and national resilience, serve as vital tools in fostering unity, solidarity, and strength in the aftermath of terrorist attacks. These frames serve to reassure the public, reduce fear, and encourage communal healing by shifting the focus

from the terror inflicted to the resilience demonstrated by survivors and communities.

Conversely, negative frames that focus on survivors' grief, trauma, and the devastation caused by terrorism are equally essential, yet pose certain risks. While these frames provide a necessary acknowledgment of the human cost of terrorism, they can also perpetuate feelings of fear, helplessness, and vulnerability. Additionally, such narratives may unwittingly provide terrorists with the visibility and attention they seek, as the emphasis on destruction and suffering aligns with their objectives of instilling fear and gaining widespread recognition. These negative frames, if not carefully managed, can lead to the amplification of terrorist ideologies and messages, furthering their reach and impact. In the context of events such as the Westgate Mall attack, media framing has broader implications for societal memory and collective trauma. The ways in which media outlets choose to report on these attacks can shape how such events are remembered and integrated into the social fabric. The framing of the Westgate Mall attack, for example, not only contributed to how the event was understood at the time but also influences ongoing narratives about terrorism, national security, and public fear. The media's role in constructing a societal memory of traumatic events is, therefore, a double-edged sword. It can either help build resilience by highlighting stories of courage and recovery, or it can entrench fear and anxiety by overemphasising the brutality and destruction of the attack.

Therefore, the study of media framing around terrorism provides critical insights into the power dynamics at play in the representation of terrorist attacks. It highlights the responsibility of media outlets to balance the truthful reporting of terror's realities with a measured approach that avoids amplifying terrorists' messages. By carefully selecting frames that emphasize resilience and recovery while not neglecting the gravity of the violence and loss, the media can play a pivotal role in promoting a narrative of collective strength rather than one of fear and defeat. Through this balanced approach, the media can help foster a more informed, resilient, and united public response to the ongoing threat of terrorism.

Recommendations: Following the conclusions and implications of the study discussed, the research recommends that it is essential for photojournalists to assess the context of every photograph before they publish it. This way, they will likely present images in the right context where viewers will correctly interpret such visual representations. Therefore, other than news values, photojournalists may have to consider both the subject and audience of their work. Such an approach would facilitate a deeper understanding of visual framing in media coverage of terrorism. This will be beneficial, particularly in the context of the shift from text-based to visually dominated media in the 21st century.

Secondly, while reporting, photojournalists need to consider the technical aspects of visual framing and its emotional and psychological impact on the audience during times of crisis. Therefore, it would be important to portray images in a manner that balances professional ethical requirements and media's right to inform the public the truth about occurrences. Seeking knowledge on framing in news, sensationalism, and the relationship between media and terrorism would be beneficial in achieving this endeavour. Consequently, objective photojournalism, especially

during tragedies such as terrorism, would be embraced.

Thirdly, photojournalists should undergo regular training on the ethical challenges and implications of visual framing, especially in the context of sensitive issues like terrorism. These programs should emphasise not only technical skills but also the psychological and societal effects of the images they produce. By integrating continuous professional development, journalists can remain updated on best practices, ensuring that their work aligns with ethical standards and minimises harm while still fulfilling their responsibility to inform the public.

Last but not least, news organisations should encourage collaboration between photojournalists and experts in psychology, trauma, and crisis communication. By consulting with these professionals, photojournalists can better understand how images of traumatic events, like terrorism, affect different segments of the audience. This collaboration can guide them in selecting images that inform without triggering unnecessary distress or perpetuating fear, thereby fostering a more thoughtful and humane approach to covering crises.

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