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A FRAMING ANALYSIS OF THE UVALDE SCHOOL SHOOTING IN TWO NATIONAL
NEWSPAPERS

A Thesis
presented in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
in the School of Journalism and New Media
The University of Mississippi

by

S M SHAMS RAHMAN

May 2026

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the media framing of the May 24, 2022, shooting at the Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, by comparing the coverage of two national newspapers, The Washington Post and The New York Times. Using the spatial-temporal scheme provided by Chyi & McCombs (2004), this study conducted a quantitative content analysis of 241 samples from a month's coverage of the event in the two newspapers. The study attempted to identify whether there was any difference in the use of spatial, temporal, and spatial-temporal combination frames between the two newspapers, and whether there were any significant frame-changing patterns in the coverage across three 10-day periods. Chi-Square Analysis revealed a significant difference between the two newspapers' implementation of the spatial frame, as both newspapers predominantly used the societal frame, but The Washington Post used the Individual frame more, compared to The New York Times' more utilization of the community frame. However, there was no such difference in terms of the usage of temporal frames, as the present frame was used significantly more compared to the other temporal frames. There were some differences in terms of the use of spatial-temporal combination frames; although, it was not statistically significant enough to conclude that there was a distinct difference between their utilization in the two newspapers whose samples were analyzed. There was also no significant spatial or temporal frame-changing over the 30 days, although there were some, which led to spatial-temporal combinations yielding results that there was no significant frame-changing output. This study contributes to the field of media research by employing empirical research

methods and finding that two elite newspapers implemented different spatial frames during their coverage of this particular incident.

Keywords: Media framing, Frame-changing, Content analysis, School shootings, Uvalde, Spatial-temporal frames, National newspapers

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to everyone who helped and guided me through worrying periods of stress. In particular, I would like to thank my parents and my sister for making sure that I worked on time, and my friends for making sure that I stayed calm throughout the process.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

TWP The Washington Post

NYT The New York Times

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

On May 24, 2022, 18-year-old Salvador Ramos, after shooting his grandmother at home, walked into Robb Elementary School in Uvalde wearing tactical gear and carrying a rifle, killing 19 students and two teachers. (Hernández, Slater, Barrett, & Foster-Frau, 2022)

The shooting, during which the shooter was holed up inside a classroom with students for 77 minutes, saw the firing and resignation of several law enforcement officers, as a special Texas House committee report stated that some deaths, which were not immediate from gunshot wounds, could have been prevented if there had been no delay; although the same report had exempted the police officers at the location, mentioning that the issue was systemic; however, training regimes for police officers had no immediate changes. (Sandoval, 2023)

School shootings are one of the biggest recurring issues regarding child safety in the United States, and from the start of 2021 until October 27, 2025, there have been 383 school shootings in the country, with 26 deaths and over 100 injuries in 2025 alone. (Matthews, O’Kruk, & Choi, 2025) According to the K-12 School Shooting Database, which monitors anytime a firearm has been discharged on school property, there have been 2,981 incidents of school shootings since 1966, with 855 victims being killed. However, the number of violent acts on school properties has increased manyfold since the turn of the century, with the Uvalde shooting being the fourth school shooting incident with more than 10 victims in the 21st century, compared to only one in the previous 34 years. (Riedman, 2025) Only the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in

Newtown, Connecticut, in 2012 was deadlier than Uvalde, with 20 children and six teachers murdered. (Reuters, 2025) According to Riedman (2025), it had the largest victim count in the case of a deadly school shooting, with 39, including 18 injured.

Following the shooting, NBA team Golden State Warriors coach Steve Kerr, a gun violence prevention activist whose father was assassinated by two gunmen in 1984, said,

When are we going to do something? I'm tired. I am so tired of getting up here and offering condolences to the devastated families that are out there. I am so tired of the excuse, I am sorry, I am tired of the moments of silence. Enough! (Andrews, 2022)

The Uvalde shooting, expectedly, garnered substantial coverage from national and regional media outlets due to the significance of the loss. It caused some policy change as President Joe Biden signed into law a bill that enhanced background checks for potential gun buyers under the age of 21, requiring, for the first time, that authorities have time to examine juvenile records, including mental health records, beginning at age 16 (Cochrane, 2022). However, a federal ban on assault rifles, the one used in the shooting at Robb Elementary School, passed Congress, but not the Senate (Sandoval, 2023).

Given the detailed coverage of the shooting across the country, especially in the immediate aftermath, it is critical to conduct empirical research on the reporting, especially how it was framed and which frames were used. Frames are a critical part of news analysis in research as it allows researchers to create a framework from the existing data, and while the definitions of framing have varied among scholars since the idea existed, it continues to be important, especially while analyzing individual events (Entman, 1993).

The Uvalde shooting was reported differently by each media organization, especially due to the severity of the incident and the various other entangled issues, as the reporting spanned from the immediate effect of the shooting to the affected community to gun rights. The existence of such a varied dataset makes the necessity of in-depth research much more relevant, as it is crucial to analyze and dissect the material to expand and add to the scholarship of understanding the media coverage.

However, it is important to notice that after a certain time period, coverage of an incident slows down, or simply builds up on the existing ones (Chyi & McCombs, 2004). Hence, it is impossible to fully conduct a research project on an incident, as it might be reported again at any point in time, depending on new developments or relevant incidents. Thus, any project undertaking the task of analyzing the coverage of the event needs to define a fixed time frame it will analyze, and will include all kinds of reporting during that phase. For this paper, the decided time frame is one month from the day of the incident, meaning all news reports from May 25, 2022, to June 23, 2022, will be analyzed. A month-long coverage analysis provides the research with significant data to build a hypothesis by analyzing its frames, as the dataset will include not only the immediate reporting of the incident, but also second-level reporting, which would cover related issues, alongside insight and details into the incident and the people affected by it (Schildkraut & Muschert, 2014).

It is also important to account for the size of the media industry in the US. According to the Pew Research Center (2023), despite being down 8 to 10% from its previous year, newspaper circulation in the country was 20.9 million, combining print and digital. The shooting at Robb Elementary School, being a significant issue due to the severity of the event, means that it garnered significant interest from media outlets across the country, making data collection quite an

impossible task, because it would result in a sample that would not only be from several regions and of different magnitudes, but also of thousands of different editorial policies. The coverage, in itself, would be severely varied and distorted across such a vast range, thus making developing a hypothesis by analyzing the use of frames extremely difficult, if possible at all.

This is why the analysis needs to be conducted within a defined environment with a pre-defined sample size. Choosing an unrandomized dataset creates an opportunity to develop a better understanding of the coverage, and it allows the data to dictate the framework, instead of having to look for one in an enormous sample.

The prior discussion has already provided context regarding this paper, as it will focus on the frames used in coverage of the Uvalde school shooting. However, there are several methods through which the use of frames can be analyzed, especially in terms of news coverage. This paper will embark on analyzing and comparing the coverage of two national newspapers to find whether there are differences in the coverage of the issue.

This paper takes on this path because of prior research on similar events, finding that there have been differences in the coverage between local and national newspapers. Holody & Daniel (2017) stated in their analysis of local and national newspapers of the Aurora shootings that each type of newspaper used frames and attributes in different manners, while Hawdon, Agnich, & Ryan (2014) discussed Pennebaker and Harber's (1993) Social Coping Model, which states that local media are more likely to publish stories about the community around the mass shooting more than broader issues, and also that they would continue to publish stories regarding the incident for longer compared to national newspapers. Using that model, LaRose, Torres, & Barton (2022) found that local newspapers published more articles than national ones across the three phases.

While this paper will not conduct a study for a duration long enough to focus on the Social Coping Model, previous studies, such as Schildkraut & Muschert (2014), provide it with a strong argument for comparing two national newspapers to analyze the variance in coverage, which it will pursue in the case of the Uvalde shooting.

For this analysis, the paper will use two national newspapers – The New York Times and The Washington Post. This paper will collect its sample from the aforementioned newspapers regarding the shooting at the Robb Elementary School using the ProQuest database with a keyword search of ‘Uvalde’ and ‘Robb Elementary School’, and analyze them using the framing method of Chyi & McCombs (2004), implementing the space and time attributes in the analysis. Comparing the coverage of the newspapers, which have a varied audience – national and local – will create an opportunity to understand whether there has been any form of variance in terms of coverage in the immediate weeks following the event.

The research will attempt to see how spatial, temporal, and spatial-temporal combination frames were utilized across the two newspapers, and also whether they changed across three different phases in the one month of coverage that will be analyzed.

This study will be able to add critical information to the existing scholarship on the media coverage of events, especially in terms of the difference in coverage, and also how the national media, especially with different editorial policies, deal with matters that are heavily debated among the general public.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

At 11:33 am on May 24, 2022, teachers Eva Mireles and Irma Garcia at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, were screening 'Lilo & Stitch' for fourth graders when gunman Salvador Ramos, who entered the school building through an unlocked back door, fired 100 rounds with his AR-15-style rifle. (Collins, Sun, Lutz, & Buchanan, 2022)

The 18-year-old gunman had shot his grandmother earlier that day and crashed her pickup in a ditch outside the school, before starting to shoot first in the vicinity of the school and then at classroom windows, and even exchanged gunfire with a school police officer. (Goodman, Sandoval, Zraick, & Rojas, 2022) (Hernández, Allam, Nakhlawi, & Slater, 2022)

Police officers entered the building within two minutes, and within half an hour, 19 of them were in the building; however, they refused to engage, fearing the capacity of the rifle the gunman possessed. (Despart, 2023) There were more than 370 officers who had responded to the scene, but nobody stormed inside to help the students trapped with the shooter. (Sandoval, 2023)

However, the director of the Texas state police said following the shooting that it was the wrong decision to wait (Goodman, Sandoval, Zraick, & Rojas, 2022), and Adrian Gonzales, the first officer to arrive at the school, faced 29 counts of abandoning or endangering children, 19 for the dead, and 10 more for survivors, although he was found not guilty three years later. (Sandoval, 2026)

A Texas House Committee in 2022 stated that the blame was not only on the police chief but also on the state and federal officers who gathered at the scene but did not take action, adding that they found systemic failures in the response from the law enforcement officials. (Goodman & Sandoval, Report on Uvalde Shooting Finds ‘Systemic Failures’ in Police Response, 2022)

In 2024, the Justice Department concluded that the police’s actions during the situation were an ‘unimaginable failure’, with Attorney General Merrick B. Garland stating that lives would have been saved if there had been immediate action. 10-year-old Xavier Lopez lost his life in an ambulance carrying him to a hospital following the shooting, and his grandfather, Leonard Sandoval, stated, “If they would have put him in a helicopter, he would have made it out OK. They dropped the ball everywhere. Somebody needs to be held accountable and charged. They didn’t do that.” (Sandoval, Thrush, & Goodman, 2024)

The inaction of the police officers during the shooting became a major talking point, as it was specially trained Border Patrol officers who brought the gunman down, 78 minutes after the massacre unfolded, leaving 19 students and two teachers dead. (Collins, Sun, Lutz, & Buchanan, 2022) The inaction, apparently, was due to Chief Pedro Arredondo ordering not to storm the classrooms, a decision that was questioned by officers present. (Goodman, Baker, Sullivan, & Sandoval, 2022) Arredondo was fired by the district in August that year, after his attorneys had submitted a settlement proposal in the previous month, including a \$1.1 million settlement, \$80,000 in attorney fees, \$25,000 relocation fee, and up to 18 months of medical costs, following which Arredondo would resign and would continue to testify in favor of the school district. (Churchill & DeGuzman, 2025) In 2024, a Texas judge refused to drop criminal charges against him that accused the former Uvalde schools police chief of putting children at risk. (PBS News,

2024) The school district also dismantled its entire police force of five officers. (Goodman, Uvalde Suspends Its Entire School Police Force, 2022)

The police's idleness at the scene was heavily reported, and so was the issue of gun control. President Joe Biden, in a speech, said,

As a nation, we have to ask: When in God's name are we going to stand up to the gun lobby? When in God's name will we do what we all know in our gut needs to be done? (Biden, 2022)

10 days later, in another speech, Biden stated,

We need to ban assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. And if we can't ban assault weapons, then we should raise the age to purchase them from 18 to 21. Strengthen the background checks, enact safe storage laws, and "red flag" laws. Repeal the immunity that protects gun manufacturers from liability. Address the mental health crisis deepening the trauma of gun violence, and as a consequence of that violence. (Biden, Full Transcript: Biden's Speech on Guns, 2022)

What inflamed the issue was the National Rifle Association's annual convention on May 27, three days after the shooting, where Donald Trump spoke about stricter school security regulations and mental health services, instead of gun control, and also stating that, 'In the absence of a member of law enforcement, there is no one you would rather have nearby when a crisis strikes than an armed expertly trained member of the NRA.' (Zhang, 2022)

Texas Senator Ted Cruz, following the shooting, dismissed any talks about gun safety laws and announced that he would be going to the NRA convention, while other prominent Texas politicians had decided not to, stating, 'I'm going to be there, because what Democrats and the

press try to do in the wake of every mass shooting is they try to demonize law-abiding gun owners, try to demonize the N.R.A.’ (Weisman, 2022)

At the NRA convention, participants blamed mass shootings on several factors, such as the breakdown of the American family, untreated mental illness, bullying on social media, violent video games, and the inexplicable existence of “evil”, instead of guns. Wayne LaPierre, the head of the NRA, criticized attempts at gun control, stating they would take away ‘the fundamental human right of law-abiding Americans to defend themselves.’ (Thrush, 2022)

In June, President Biden signed a bipartisan gun-control bill into law, which included funding towards mental health services and school security initiatives, expanded criminal background checks for some gun buyers, stopped domestic violence offenders from buying guns, and funded programs to allow authorities to seize guns from troubled individuals. (Wootson Jr. & Sotomayor, 2022) This was the first major gun safety law passed in Congress in nearly 30 years. (Clyde & Miranda, 2022)

Texas laws, at the time of the shooting, allowed 18-year-olds, like the shooter, to purchase any firearm, except for handguns, the purchase of which requires the buyer to be 21 or older by federal law, which allowed the shooter to purchase AR-style rifles at a local federal firearms licensee on May 17 and on May 20. (Sganga & Linton, 2022) In 2022, Texas stopped fighting to stop 18 to 20-year-olds from carrying handguns in public. (Asgarian, 2022) A push from the families of the victims of the shooting to raise the required age to purchase guns did not materialize into the state changing its law. (Coronado, 2023) However, in 2023, Texas passed a law that required school districts to have armed officers and to train more staff to identify students who may need mental health support. (Méndez, 2023)

Mental health came into focus several times following the shooting, with the Texas House Committee's report suggesting that the shooter, Salvador Ramos, had been suffering from mental health issues. The report stated that people who knew him said he became depressed and lonely, and had dropped out of school following the pandemic. In an interview, his girlfriend at the time said that Ramos said he wouldn't live past 18, citing he would commit suicide or "wouldn't live long".

The report also mentioned that he showed interest in gore and violent sex, sometimes sharing videos and images of suicides and beheadings. Also, while playing online games, he got agitated when he lost and threatened others, especially females. The report also claims a tumultuous relationship with his mother, which led to him moving in with his grandmother, who he shot earlier on the day of the school shooting (Trevizo, 2022). Before the shooting happened, he had posted photos of two long, black rifles on his Instagram story. One of his colleagues at Wendy's in Uvalde said that he would often snap at other employees and customers, and he had been called names, which included "school shooter," partly due to his long hair and dark garb. Talking to a German girl he met on Yubo, he had talked about "a secret," and on the day of the shooting, he told her that he had shot his grandmother and would be attacking an elementary school (Bogel-Burroughs, 2022). The House committee report also stated that he had been buying ammunition and gear well before his 18th birthday, and had been waiting to buy the guns until May 16, when he turned 18, becoming old enough to buy rifles in Texas (Trevizo, 2022).

In the coming years, parents and relatives of the victims of the shooting tried to increase that age; however, they were unsuccessful. The city of Uvalde, Texas, though, settled with most of the victims' families for \$2 million in 2024, promising to overhaul its police force. (Sandoval & Goodman, 2024)

The families now grieve, holding onto the belongings of their lost child. Evadulia Orta, who lost her 10-year-old son Rojélio Torres, keeps a binder of Pokémon cards in her room. “I can hold it and see what he was looking at, what he was into,” she said. (Wolf, 2023) Kimberly Rubio and Kalisa Barboza, the mother and sister of Lexi, who was killed in the shooting, got matching tattoos saying ‘Destination Lexi’ as a reminder of their belief that their family would be united again. Ana Rodriguez, who lost her daughter Maite in the shooting, said, ‘Time doesn’t heal. It shows us how to learn to live with the pain.’ (Kalifa, 2023)

Angel Garza, father of Amerie Jo Garza, another victim of the shooting, said in his testimony in a bid to increase the legal age required to buy firearms in Texas, ‘After dropping off Amerie that morning, I had no idea that ‘I love you, Daddy’ would be the last words I would ever hear come out of her little mouth. No idea that I would get her sunflower backpack back with bullet holes in it.’ (Wolf, 2023)

Several of the students wounded in the incident have had to go through months of physical therapy, and the families have been fighting to bring forth change. ‘I feel this responsibility to her to share her story and to make change for her,’ Ms. Rubio said. (Kalifa, 2023)

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

Framing will be a critical part of this particular study, as it will attempt to analyze and compare those used by media organizations. The decision to choose framing as the main tool for this study is due to the reason that it is a key concept in news analysis to gather empirical evidence and form hypotheses.

Goffman (1974) defined frames as schemata of interpretation that allow individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences. Entman (1993) described framing as “to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p.52). Pan and Kosicki (1993) considered the news media frame as “a cognitive device used in information encoding, interpreting, and retrieving; it is communicable; and it is related to journalistic professional routines and conventions,” (p.57) and thus framing can be studied as a strategy of constructing and processing news discourse or as a characteristic of the discourse itself. Tankard, Hendrickson, Silberman, Bliss, and Ghanem (1991) defined a frame as “a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration” (Tankard, 2001, p. 100)

Gamson (1996) argued that framing is a discursive process of strategic actors utilizing symbolic resources to participate in collective sense-making about public policy issues. Drawing upon that, Pan and Kosicki (2001) discussed framing as “strategic actions” in public deliberation,

adding that framing effects can be found from schema activation or modification and can be found in how information is processed and made sense of, how people talk about an issue, and how they form political evaluations, while D'Angelo (2017) described media frames as a “written, spoken, graphical, or visual message modality that a communicator uses to contextualize a topic, such as a person, event, episode, or issue, within a text transmitted to receivers by means of mediation” (p. 1).

The idea of framing suggests that journalists present public issues using certain story frames (Gamson W. A., 1992). Price, Tewksbury, and Powers (1997) stated that how journalists package and present issues can fundamentally affect how readers and viewers understand those issues. Considering the number of events that happen in the world today, and even of one event, it is critical to note that not all information makes it to the reader, and that is determined by certain features, called news values, upon which stories can vary in their level of newsworthiness (DeFleur, 2010). Price and Tewksbury (1997) argued that shared sets of news values can organize the coverage and amplify certain perspectives, but it will also lead to the repression of some others.

D'Angelo (2002) stated that the core of any study that uses news framing as a method is reflected in four empirical goals – (a) to identify thematic units called frames, (b) to investigate the antecedent conditions that produce frames, (c) to examine how news frames activate, and interact with, an individual's prior knowledge to affect interpretations, recall of information, decision making, and evaluations, and (d) to examine how news frames shape social-level processes such as public opinion and policy issue debates. In this study, all of these goals will come into conversation, although some might be more prominent than others.

Hackett (1984) suggested that framing could be a useful approach because it can potentially get beneath the surface of news coverage and expose hidden assumptions, as he believed ideology

provides a framework through which the news media often present events, and thus researchers should focus more on that instead of objectivity and bias.

Chong and Druckman (2007) mentioned that identifying frames in communication had become a virtual cottage industry, where scholars tracked frames to identify trends in issue definitions, compare coverage across media outlets, and examine variations across types of media. They added that uniform measurement standards did not exist, a view preceded by Scheufele (1999), who argued that, in terms of media effects, the concept of framing was yet to be integrated into a consistent theoretical model, which resulted in the development of several approaches, leading to the comparability of empirical results being limited. Ghanem (1997) had also raised similar concerns, stating that attributes of one object often are not generalizable to other objects, leading to cross-object comparisons becoming impossible. De Vreese (2005) specifically criticized this matter, stating that an issue-specific approach to the study of news frames, while allowing for finding specificity and relevant details, makes it difficult to build theories based on empirical evidence, as it lacks comparability, leading researchers to ‘finding evidence for what they are looking for and generating unique set of frames for every study’ (p. 55) Tankard (2001), from his experience, suggested that a smaller number of frame categories, instead of a list of frames, may help improve the reliability of coding, although it might reduce the actual complexity and diversity of framing to achieve coder reliability.

This becomes especially difficult considering that media coverage changes over time, as media organizations switch to different frames in different time periods to keep stories relevant, meaning it becomes more difficult to code the existing data into specific frames based on the content of the news articles. This phenomenon, named ‘frame-changing’, makes it necessary to change how any news object is viewed in empirical research, as it then requires deeper attention

to the matter (Chyi & McCombs, 2004). Addressing this particular issue, Chyi and McCombs (2004) attempted to analyze frame-changing by proposing a generalizable measurement scheme applicable to the study of framing in their study of the coverage of the Columbine school shootings in the New York Times. Building on previous studies on agenda-setting and second-level agenda-setting, they examined the shifting patterns of attribute salience in the media over time to see how a specific news event gained salience on the media agenda through its coverage.

Their argument for using frames as an attribute was that it provides the news object with a theoretical link between agenda-setting and framing research, building on the work of McCombs and Ghanem (2001), which stated that the convergence between these two theories will help advance both. Chyi and McCombs (2004) also suggested that, as they analyze news objects over a significant period of their lifespan, it allows them to see how the media build a news event's salience by emphasizing different aspects, claiming their use of frames is substantially different from previous studies.

For example, Ghanem (1997) identified four dimensions of media frames: the topics of a news item, presentation, cognitive attributes, and affective attributes; however, she also pointed out that the attributes of one object are not generalizable to other objects, a problem other researchers have also driven into, as cross-object comparisons are impossible, besides the difficulty to develop mutually exclusive or exhaustive frames for objects. (Chyi & McCombs, 2004)

In search of that, Chyi and McCombs (2004) broke news objects down into two fundamental dimensions – space and time, considering them the most crucial parts of any news. These two components cover the 5Ws of journalism practice, with time representing when, and space broken down to where, what, who, and why. The first dimension, space, consists of five levels, from micro (individual) to macro (international), while the second dimension, time, has

three levels – past, present, and future. This framework solves the issue of cross-object generalizability and provides an exhaustive and mutually exclusive list of frames to use for different types of news. According to them, by applying minimal constraints on specific content while also capturing major aspects of the news, the measurement scheme solves the issue of cross-object generalizability while increasing sensitivity to various news perspectives, as well as providing an exhaustive and mutually exclusive list of frames on the two dimensions, which are applicable to any news object, to empirically study framing as a process over time during the lifespan of the news. This allows researchers to not only apply them to events in the same category to identify frame-changing patterns but also compare highly salient news events with those that are not so much. (Chyi & McCombs, 2004)

Chyi and McCombs (2004) first applied their framework in a content analysis of the New York Times coverage of the 1999 Columbine school shooting in Littleton, Colorado. The reasoning behind choosing this event was that it would not branch out into other events over time, as it would be difficult to differentiate between which frames are associated with which subevents during a preliminary analysis.

They collected all articles related to the Columbine school shootings published in the New York Times for a month, and coded on three variables - date of publication, space frame, and time frame. The coding categories for the space frame variable were: (1) Individual; (2) Community; (3) Regional; (4) Societal; (5) International. The time frame variables were: (1) Past; (2) Present; (3) Future.

In their study, they found that the coverage peaked on April 22, the day after the shooting. Of the 170 articles coded, 52% adopted a community frame, 29% adopted a societal frame, and 17% adopted an individual frame, with the regional and international frame being used 2% and

1%, respectively. Analysis of frame-changing of the three most used frames also showed that the use of societal frames increased from 37% to 78% during the first 25 days, while individual frames dropped from 30% to 0. In the time dimension, expectedly, 71% of the stories had a present frame, while past and future frames were used 16% and 13%, respectively.

They also found some frame-changing in the time dimension, with the present frame was over 50% in most days. However, near the end of the one-month period, the future frame gained prominence, almost as much as the present frame, which caused the past frame to disappear, meaning the conversation shifted from historical background to preventive measures.

A cross-tabulation analysis of the relationship between the use of space frames and the use of time frames revealed that “societal plus present” was the most dominant, with 39%, followed by community-present with 24% and individual-past with 10%.

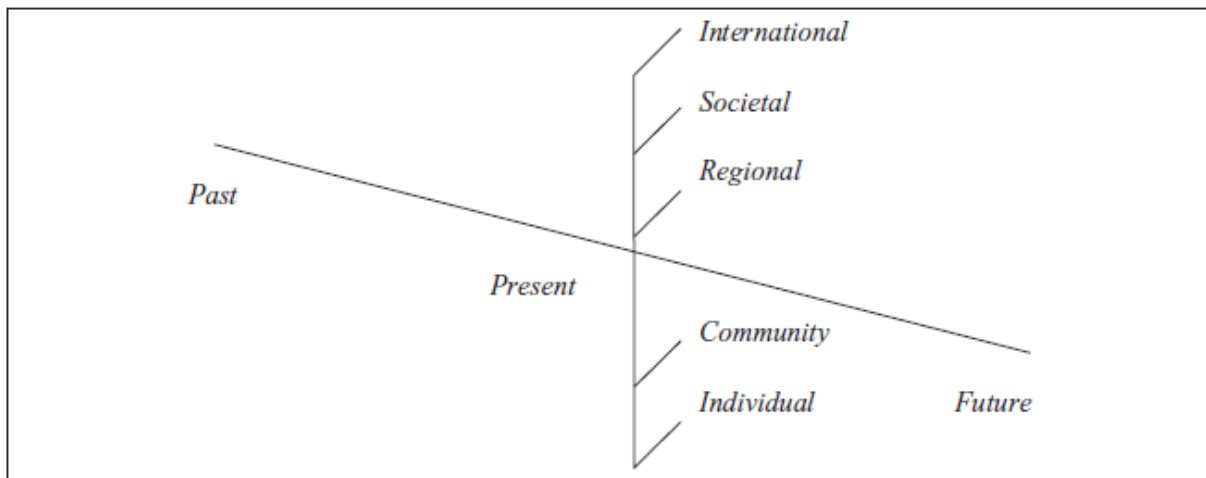


Figure 1: Chyi-McCombs (2004) Measurement Scheme for Frames

Chyi & McCombs (2004) stated that the New York Times built the salience of this case by focusing on different aspects of the incident over time to keep the story fresh, and concluded that this scheme for measuring frame-changing identified two sets of attributes in journalistic practice that are likely to have differential agenda-setting effects, and recommended further research to understand those.

Overall, the framework by Chyi & McCombs (2004) provided an important tool in terms of generalizability, as it allows this study to progress towards an analysis of both space and time dimensions of the coverage of the Uvalde School Shooting incident, which garnered significant coverage. This study, focusing on two national newspapers, will follow the path of several studies that followed the method provided by Chyi & McCombs (2004), as it provides the research with the option to analyze, instead of using a list of frames, through cross-object generalizability and find frame-changing factors during a certain time period, creating grounds to gather empirical evidence. Muschert (2009) added that the media frame of the coverage of Columbine changed to focus on reactions occurring elsewhere in the U.S, which is consistent with what Chyi and McCombs (2004) mentioned.

Muschert & Carr (2006) analyzed the New York Times coverage of nine school shootings between 1997 and 2001, applying the framework proposed by Chyi & McCombs (2004), while also serving as an extension to the originally proposed scheme to examine issue salience across events. The study coded the news reports by date of publication, spatial focus, and time frame, with both the space and time frames being the same as Chyi & McCombs (2004).

In total, Muschert & Carr (2006) analyzed 290 articles that they collected from eight shootings, while they extrapolated the data from the Chyi & McCombs (2004) study for the Columbine school shooting. In those articles, they found that 48% adopted a societal frame, 29%

adopted a community frame, and 21% adopted an individual frame, with only 2% in a regional frame. Their analysis also focused on the evolution of the spatial framing over the life span of the news events, using five-day periods to visualize the aggregate proportion of the three dominant space frames [societal, community, and individual] that comprised almost one-third of the articles that appeared immediately after the incidents, finding that the societal frame comprises more than 80% in the fifth five-day period [21-25 days], and almost 50% in the final period. The community frame dwindled from the start, but picked up in the final period to account for around 40% of the news articles, while the individual frames peaked early but dropped off to around 10% by the final five-day period. This led Muschert & Carr (2006) to suggest that this pattern of frame-changing means that immediately after a school shooting, the media focus is equally on the individuals involved, the community, and the social importance of the event; although, over time, the focus increasingly shifts away from individuals to the societal level.

In terms of the time frame, Muschert & Carr (2006) found that 78% adopted a present frame, 12% a future frame, and 10% a past frame. However, during the fifth five-day period, future frames rose up to near 40%, with present frames dropping to approximately 50%.

Yet, this study was consequential because of how it analyzed news objects from different shootings to focus on the frame-changing phenomenon. It found that societal frames were most-used across the coverage of the nine shootings, with the community frame also being employed significantly. On the other hand, coverage of all nine shootings primarily focused on the present time frame.

During the cross-tabulation of the space and time frames, Muschert & Carr (2006) found results similar to those of Chyi & McCombs (2004), with community-present and societal-present

being the dominant core frame-changing across the nine events, while individual-present and societal-future were the secondary core frame-changing.

Following the study, Muschert & Carr (2006) concluded that the coding scheme worked as a useful framework to understand how the frames evolve over time, and with their study, the framework's cross-case potential was applied to empirical research, meaning if the present findings were generalized to other events, it would allow to use the coding scheme to identify core temporal-spatial frames and nuanced core frame-changing happening over time.

Holody & Daniel (2017) used a similar method to compare the coverage between local and regional coverage of the Aurora shooting in Colorado in 2012, with their coding including the presence/absence of a gun control frame, with the valence level set at negative, neutral, or positive. They used the scheme from Chyi & McCombs (2004) with the same spatial and time frames, although in the case of individual frames, they split that down to gunman, victims, or families, and celebrities or notable personnel, with the victim sub-frame broken down to descriptions, death, memorial, and special issues.

Out of the 40 national articles using the space frame at the individual level, 45% focused on the gunman, 37.5% on noteworthy personalities, and 17.5% on victims. In comparison, among the 46 local articles, there was a 43.5% focus on the victims or their families, 30.4% on the gunman, and 26.1% on noteworthy personalities. The data shows a sharp contrast between the coverage of national and local newspapers, and in the case of gun control valence, national newspapers had 100% of negative frames in the headline or lead, 58.8% of neutral frames in the body, and 63.6% of positive frames in the body. In case of negative frames, local newspapers also had 100% of them in the headline/lead, 66.7% of neutral frames in the body text, and 75% of positive frames in the headline or lead, which led to them stating, 'when the newspapers treated

gun control negatively in relation to the shootings, they more often made that argument prominently, but did so perhaps less prominently when treating gun control positively.'

When the space and time attributes were combined, national newspapers used individual-present frames most often (39.8%), followed by societal-present (29%) and individual-past (9.7%). In the local newspapers, the most prominent combination was individual-present (32.4%), followed by community-present (29.5%) and community-future (10.5%). Holody & Daniel (2017) suggested that the use of the individual-present frame instead of the societal-present frame was the most notable difference compared to the previous coverage of other shootings, which supported the prediction from Schildkraut & Muschert (2013) that the media coverage of school shootings will be focused more on individuals because of the US audience's familiarity and understanding of shootings in general, meaning their attention will now be directed towards the individuals involved in a shooting.

Schildkraut & Muschert (2014) compared the media coverage of the Columbine school shooting to the coverage of the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, using the New York Times as their news object, and implemented the scheme from Chyi & McCombs (2004).

Analyzing the coverage of the Sandy Hook shooting, Schildkraut & Muschert (2014) found that 46% of the 132 articles adopted the societal frame, as compared with 52% of 170 articles covering Columbine, data which was extrapolated from Chyi & McCombs (2004), and 48% of 290 articles covering nine school shootings, data which was from Muschert & Carr (2006). The individual frame was the next in line, used in approximately 18% of the articles, which is significantly different from both the Chyi and McCombs (2004) and Muschert and Carr (2006) studies, as in those, the community frame was the second-most used in each study. The third most prevalent frame in the Schildkraut & Muschert (2014) study was the community frame, accounting

for 16% of the articles. In line with the aforementioned studies, Schildkraut & Muschert (2014) found that the present was the most used time frame, accounting for approximately 83% of the total coverage.

Following cross-tabulation, Schildkraut & Muschert (2014) found that the societal-present was the most implemented Spatial-Temporal frame in news coverage of the Sandy Hook shooting, with 49%, compared to 39% of Columbine. However, unlike previous studies, the second-most common was the individual-present frame, with 22% [7% in Columbine], followed by the community-present frame with 20% [24% in Columbine].

These numbers led Schildkraut & Muschert (2014) to state that the coverage of Sandy Hook exhibited a significant difference from Columbine in terms of how the story was told, as mass media discourse had changed with Sandy Hook, in line with that of the shooting in Aurora, Colorado, in the same year, as the focus was more on the victims instead of the shooters. Also, they added that the coverage of the Sandy Hook shooting included conversations about gun control and other preventive measures, spiking the future frame on the time continuum.

Cassidy, La France, & Babin (2018) analyzed the news framing of the Charleston shooting, implementing the same framework while using news articles from The New York Times, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, and The Washington Post to calculate the number of paragraphs representing these frames for each article. They found that the societal frame appeared the most (37%), followed by the individual frame (33%), the community frame (20%), the regional frame (9%), and the international frame (1%). In case of time frames, present was the most used (53%), followed by past (33%) and future (14%). In the cross-tabulation of the spatial and temporal frames, the individual-present frame was the most used one with 21%, followed by the societal-past frame with 18%, and the societal-present frame with 16%.

Their study also differs from that of Chyi & McCombs (2004) and Muschert & Carr (2006), as it clearly depicts that the media coverage trend changed over time, with the individual frame gaining further prominence, while the community frame was used comparatively less. However, what was even further different in comparison to prior studies is that the individual-present frame trumped even the cross-tabulated frames with the societal frame as the spatial metric, showcasing an evolving media trend. (Cassidy, La France, & Babin, 2018)

Adding to that, Cassidy, La France, & Babin (2018) said that the Charleston shooting was a unique event because of the lack of frame-changing compared to previous studies as they found no relationship between date of publication and the use of the space frame, which had happened in other studies; for example, Chyi & McCombs (2004) found shifts from individual to societal frame, while Schildkraut & Muschert (2014) had found that the opposite was the case in the Sandy Hook shootings. However, they did find a positive correlation between publication date and the use of the future frame, although it tended to appear in articles that were published in the latter days of the 30-day period.

Park, Holody, & Zhang (2012), in their investigation of news media coverage of the race of the perpetrator in the 2007 Virginia Tech shootings, used space and time as attribute agenda-setting variables, alongside race, while during coding of framing variables, they used the following: 1) Racialization of the perpetrator, 2) Racialization of the crimes, 3) Racial generalization of criminal culpability, 4) Prominence of racialization, and 5) Racialization via implicit stereotyping. Their analysis of the media coverage of spatial and temporal continuum showed a pattern similar to that of Chyi & McCombs (2004), with societal being the most dominant spatial frame, followed by community and individual, while in the case of the temporal frames, present was the most dominant. It is important to notice that the studies that had different results

compared to Chyi & McCombs (2004) in terms of the dominant frame in the coverage were on incidents that happened later than the Virginia Tech shooting, which happened in 2007.

While discussing their method to analyze the shooting, Park, Holody, & Zhang (2012) criticized the Chyi & McCombs (2004) scheme, stating that ‘beyond very broad observations’, it did not live up to its promises, as, according to them, the scheme’s ability to reveal a variety of news perspectives is less obvious, and that it reduced rich details of the shooting incidents to such levels that it became difficult to determine what the findings meant in terms of audience understanding of an incident, which is why in their study, Park, Holody, & Zhang (2012) opted to only use the Spatial-Temporal scheme as part of their method, with different frames being utilized for their content analysis.

Holody & Daniel (2017) had critiqued the scheme in a similar manner, stating that the scheme does not show the full picture of how the space and time attributes are used in news coverage, even though it broadly comprehends how often news media utilize the spatial frames.

Analyzing the Virginia Tech shooting, Kwon & Moon (2009) opted to revise the five spatial levels provided by Chyi & McCombs (2004) to four, combining the regional and community levels together, mentioning that those two levels are not always distinguishable, adding to the critique of the scheme. However, they added the collectivism frame to analyze collectivistic storytelling regarding the shooting.

Although not criticism, Brimeyer, Muschert, & Lippmann (2012), while analyzing the media coverage of worker displacement from 1980 to 2007, coded for the presence or absence of a problem frame alongside the general attributes of the scheme provided by Chyi & McCombs (2004), as they intended to address whether layoffs were portrayed as problematic in themselves

or as potentially leading to problems, stating that it would allow them to track changes in ‘the problematizing of layoffs in relation to the temporal and spatial framing of the news coverage’. This depicts another shortcoming of the scheme, in line with the prior criticisms, which state that while the analysis provides insight into the use of media frames across time and frame-changing, it fails to account for the depth and textual understanding of the news objects.

LaRose, Torres, & Barton (2022) suggested adding an approach to the scheme provided by Chyi & McCombs (2004) to understand the significance of space and time towards the dynamic process of framing to address how physical space and time influence the dynamic process of framing, such as how does a media outlet’s location intersect with time since the shooting to influence the framing of the subsequent news coverage while analyzing the Parkland school shooting.

Another issue from the study by LaRose, Torres, & Barton (2022) was the use of only The New York Times in the use of this scheme, as it fails to address how the news salience may vary depending on the location of the media organization.

However, Holody & Shaughnessy (2020) analyzed the salience and valence of frames in the coverage of the Parkland School shooting in community and national newspapers, where, instead of using the scheme by Chyi & McCombs (2004), they used a list of frames. Although their reluctance to use the scheme is understandable, as their study, instead of attempting to focus on what kind of frame-changing happened in media following an incident, focused more on the salience and valence of specific frames.

Also, Schildkraut & Muschert (2014) had pointed out that using The New York Times as the source of news objects created a distinct difference in the regional frames of the Columbine

shooting (2%) and the Sandy Hook shooting (16%), as the latter's location, Newtown, being close to New York, led to more coverage across the pages of the newspaper.

Yet, the spatial-temporal framework continues to be a key tool to analyze media coverage of incidents, and it will be implemented in this study to find whether news coverage of school shootings has changed its use of frames across a 30-day period, and whether frame-changing has subsequently become different since the Columbine study by Chyi & McCombs (2004).

This study, using the scheme provided by Chyi & McCombs (2004), will attempt to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What was the distribution of spatial frames, and was there a significant difference in the distribution between the two newspapers?

RQ2: What was the distribution of temporal frames, and was there a significant difference in the distribution between the two newspapers?

RQ3: What was the distribution of spatial-temporal frames, and was there a significant difference between the two newspapers?

RQ4: Was there any significant difference in the frame-changing in the three 10-day periods, and did it vary between the two newspapers?

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Content Analysis

This study utilizes the content analysis method of research, which is intuitively considered central among the social science methods available for use in researching the broad domain of communication. (Riffe, Lacy, Watson, & Lovejoy, 2024) It can be a systematic, quantitative, and objective gathering of data and measurement of variables, which can be utilized to describe communication content, to compare media content to the ‘real world’, and to establish a starting point for understanding media effects. (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011)

Quantitative content analysis is defined in social sciences as,

The systematic and replicable examination of symbols of communication, which have been assigned numeric values according to valid measurement rules (called a protocol), and the analysis of relationships involving those values using statistical methods, to describe the communication, draw inferences about its meaning, or infer from the communication to its context, of both production and consumption. (Riffe, Lacy, Watson, & Lovejoy, 2024)

This study attempts to analyze the news coverage of a significant event across a certain period of time, for which content analysis is an appropriate method, and thus, the study used it as the method.

4.2 Sample

The study compares the coverage of the shooting at the Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, in two legacy newspapers – The New York Times and The Washington Post, which were selected based on their status as leading, influential national newspapers. Wanta and Hu (1993) explained that such newspapers can have an agenda-setting effect because they often impact how other media organizations cover issues. Previous research has pointed to news media impacting the public perception of reality; these newspapers provide a reliable sample for the study to collect data from to analyze the coverage of the significant event. (Husselbee & Elliott, 2002; McCombs et al., 2011)

The study will be conducted on the coverage of the shooting from May 25, 2022, to June 23, 2022, in the two newspapers. The beginning date has been selected based on the fact that it is the day after the shooting, meaning this was the first day of publication that included coverage of the shooting, while the 30-day period was selected as it provides the study with significant data to collect. Each news article published in the newspapers will be considered as a unit for this study. The three-day periods are as follows:

First 10-Day Phase: *May 25, 2022, to June 3, 2022*

Second 10-Day Phase: *June 4, 2022, to June 13, 2022*

Third 10-Day Phase: *June 14, 2022, to June 23, 2022*

The sampling was done by conducting a keyword search of the Uvalde School Shooting in the ProQuest database. The keywords used were ‘Uvalde’ and ‘Robb Elementary School’.

4.3 Research Questions

The research will answer the following questions –

RQ1: What was the distribution of spatial frames, and was there a significant difference in the distribution between the two newspapers?

RQ2: What was the distribution of temporal frames, and was there a significant difference in the distribution between the two newspapers?

RQ3: What was the distribution of spatial-temporal frames, and was there a significant difference between the two newspapers?

RQ4: Was there any significant difference in the frame-changing in the three 10-day periods, and did it vary between the two newspapers?

4.4 Research Methodology

The study will use the space-time scheme from Chyi & McCombs (2004) to analyze the frames. [See Figure 1] As the study attempts to conduct a content analysis of the frames used in the articles covering the incident, and also on how the frames changed over time, this specific scheme provides the ideal way to quantify the data and present findings.

The news articles, following the database search, will be coded for the spatial and temporal frame, depending on the headline, lead, and the dominant frame weaving the story together, as discussed by Chyi & McCombs (2004).

The spatial frame will have *five* levels –

- **Individual:** Articles that focus on the victims, the shooter, any individual related to the incident, parents of the victims, celebrities, and politicians.
- **Community:** Articles that focus on the school, people living in Uvalde, the neighborhood of the school, local law enforcement, and the incident as a whole.
- **Regional:** Articles that focus on the state [Texas], state law or policy changes, state officials' [Senators, Congress officials] statements that have a considerable effect on the region.
- **Societal:** Articles that focus on national policy, debate, and comments that influence and impact society as a whole.
- **International:** Articles that focus on international coverage and response.

The *three* temporal frames will be as follows –

- **Past:** Articles focusing on time periods before the shooting, meaning any background information related to the shooting will be included in this frame.
- **Present:** Articles focusing on the shooting, the immediate consequences, or current social trends of that time period.
- **Future:** Articles that focus on future effects of the shootings, possible policy, solutions, or prevention strategies.

All the articles collected from the database will be coded into the codebook based on these frames and subsequently analyzed.

4.5 Pilot Study

To establish the research method's reliability, an additional coder (in addition to the author of this study) was trained, and a pilot study was conducted with a different dataset (Riffe, Lacy, Watson, & Lovejoy, 2024; Wimmer & Dominick, 2011).

Before the pilot study, the coder was provided with background information regarding the shooting in Uvalde, Texas, previous studies on school shootings, prior studies using framing and frame-changing as a method to analyze news coverage, and how this study attempts to analyze the coverage of the event, following which the coder was provided with a copy of the codebook and coding sheet to conduct the pilot study [The codebook and the coding sheet can be found in the Appendix section].

Once the coder was prepared, the ProQuest database was used to find news articles on the Buffalo shooting in New York in 2022, where 10 people were killed (McKinley, Traub, & Closson, 2022). This incident was chosen for the pilot study for its similar timeframe to the Uvalde Shooting.

A total of 10 articles were collected from The New York Times and The Washington Post for the pilot study. The New York Times, expectedly, had significantly more coverage due to the geographical location of the incident, which was considered while selecting the samples to code.

After the coding was done separately, the author met with the coder for the reliability test. The two coders agreed on the spatial and temporal framing of nine articles, with only one disagreement in each coding. The author coded two articles as Individual Framing, three as Community, one as Regional, and four as Societal, while the other coder coded two articles as Individual Framing, two as Community, one as Regional, and five as Societal. In the case of the

Temporal frames, the author coded three articles as Past framing and seven as Present framing, while the coder did so as two articles as Past framing and eight as Present framing.

Holsti's test provided a reliability coefficient of 0.90 for both spatial and temporal frames, matching the required standard of intercoder reliability, while Scott's Pi produced a reliability coefficient of 0.85 for the spatial frame and 0.73 for the temporal frames, also meeting the minimum to achieve an acceptable level of intercoder reliability. (Riffe, Lacy, Watson, & Lovejoy, 2024; Wimmer & Dominick, 2011)

4.6 Main Study

The author and the coder coded 30 articles from the final sample, which is 12.44% of the final sample total.

In the case of the spatial frames, the coders agreed 27 times, with three disagreements. The author coded individual and community 11 times each, with societal being coded eight times. The other coder coded individual 12 times, community nine times, regional once, and societal eight times. Holsti's test resulted in a reliability coefficient of 0.90 for the temporal frames, meeting the required standard to achieve an acceptable intercoder reliability. Using Scott's Pi, the spatial frame produced a reliability coefficient of 0.85, reaching an acceptable level of intercoder reliability. (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011)

In the case of the temporal frames, the two coders agreed 26 times, with the author coding past, present, and future frames one, 24, and five times, respectively, while the other coder coded past, present, and future frames three, 23, and four times, respectively. With the temporal frame coding heavily eschewed towards the present frame, after using Scott's Pi, the data produced a

reliability coefficient of 0.62, while using Holsti's test, the reliability coefficient came to 0.87. While both are slightly under the threshold, they are negatable considering the significant disproportion of the frames towards the present frame in the sample.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

A search of the ProQuest database with keywords ‘Uvalde’ and ‘Robb Elementary School’ found 272 news articles in The New York Times and 237 in The Washington Post. Following the collection of data, it was scraped and filtered for only relevant news articles, excluding any form of opinion pieces, editorial articles, commentaries, quotes, letters, and reports that did not have the Uvalde School Shooting as a key theme. Combining the articles from The Washington Post (N=118) and The New York Times (N=123), the total sample size on the Uvalde School Shooting was N = 241. As the number of articles was similar, each article was coded into the codebook, following which a cross-tabulated Chi-square analysis was run on the dataset using SPSS software.

RQ1: What was the distribution of spatial frames, and was there a significant difference in the distribution between the two newspapers?

The first research question of this study discusses the distribution of spatial frames in the two newspapers over a 30-day period and whether there is any kind of difference in the coverage.

Spatial Frame Distribution in the two newspapers

Frame Newspaper	Individual	Community	Regional	Societal	International
The Washington Post	32.2%	17.8%	6.8%	43.2%	0%
The New York Times	19.5%	29.3%	2.4%	47.2%	1.6%
Total	25.7%	23.7%	4.6%	45.2%	0.8%

Table 1: Spatial Frame Distribution in the two newspapers [N=241; X^2 value: 11.732; DF:4; p-value = .019 (<0.05, statistically significant)]

As seen in Table 1, overall, the societal frame was the most-utilized, followed by individual and community. Although, while comparing the two newspapers, there is a significant difference in the use of spatial frames. The numbers for the societal frame are highest for both newspapers [47.2% for NYTimes, 43.2% for TWP]; however, what is different is the ones that follow the leading frame. TWP [32.2%] used individual frames significantly more compared to NYTimes [19.5%], while in terms of the use of the community frame, NYTimes [29.3%] had a much higher proportion compared to TWP [17.8%]. The p-value of this comparison is 0.019, which is less than 0.05, meaning the finding is *statistically significant*, which signifies that there was a definite difference in the use of spatial frames among the two newspapers.

RQ2: What was the distribution of temporal frames, and was there a significant difference in the distribution between the two newspapers?

The second research question attempts to answer a similar question to the previous one for the temporal frames.

Temporal Frame Distribution in the two newspapers

Frame Newspaper	Past	Present	Future
The Washington Post	11.9%	70.3%	17.8%
The New York Times	17.1%	70.7%	12.2%
Total	14.5%	70.5%	14.9%

Table 2: Temporal Frame Distribution in the two newspapers [N=241; X^2 value: 2.391; DF:2; p-value = .302 (>0.05, statistically insignificant)]

The overall use of temporal frames heavily leaned towards the present frame, with it being used in 70.5% of the total coverage, which is also consistent with the two newspapers' use of the temporal frames on their own [TWP = 70.3%, NYT = 70.7%]. There is a slight difference in the use of the past and future frames, as the NYTimes used the past frame in 17.1% of their coverage compared to TWP's 11.9%, while TWP used the future frame in 17.8% of their coverage, compared to the NYTimes' 12.2%.

The p-value for this cross-tabulation was .302, which is *statistically insignificant* and yields no real results, as it can be seen that there was little difference between the two newspapers while using temporal frames.

RQ3: What was the distribution of spatial-temporal frames, and was there a significant difference between the two newspapers?

This study also attempted to find what kind of spatial-temporal frames were implemented, creating a 15-grid matrix, multiplying the five spatial frames by three temporal frames.

Spatial-Temporal Frame Distribution in the two newspapers

<i>Newspaper</i> <i>Frame</i>	The Washington Post	The New York Times	Total
<i>Individual-Past</i>	4.2%	3.3%	3.7%
<i>Individual-Present</i>	27.1%	16.3%	21.6%
<i>Individual-Future</i>	0.8%	0	0.4%
<i>Community-Past</i>	0.8%	0	0.4%
<i>Community-Present</i>	16.1%	29.3%	22.8%
<i>Community-Future</i>	0.8%	0	0.4%
<i>Regional-Past</i>	0.8%	0	0.4
<i>Regional-Present</i>	3.4%	1.6%	2.5%
<i>Regional-Future</i>	2.5%	0.8%	1.7%
<i>Societal-Past</i>	5.9%	13%	9.5%
<i>Societal-Present</i>	23.7%	23.6%	23.7%
<i>Societal-Future</i>	13.6%	10.6%	12%
<i>International-Past</i>	0	0.8%	0.4%
<i>International-Future</i>	0	0.8%	0.4%

Table 3: Spatial-Temporal Frame Distribution in the two newspapers [N=241; X^2 value: 19.556; DF:13; p-value = .107 (>0.05, statistically insignificant)]

Table 3 shows that the Societal-Present [23.7%] frame was the most-used combination frame in the total coverage, followed by Community-Present [22.8%] and Individual-Present [21.6%]. However, the two newspapers had two different leading frame combinations. The Individual-Present frame was used the most by TWP [27.1%], while it was Community-Present for NYTimes [29.3%].

The second-most used frame, for both newspapers, was societal-present with 23.7% [TWP] and 23.6% [NYTimes], displaying almost identical numbers. The third-most used frame for the NYTimes was Individual-Present [16.3%], while for TWP, it was Community-Present [16.1%].

In all three cases, the present frame was the most common, and it is no surprise considering that the previous dataset clearly showed that the present frame was the most common frame utilized by these newspapers.

The p-value of this dataset was 0.107, which is once again statistically insignificant, meaning this does not determine any significant difference between the two newspapers' use of spatial-temporal frame combinations. However, it is also important to note that, considering the sample size [N=241] and the granulated nature of the 15-grid matrix for this combination, 18 [64.3%] of the cells had an expected count of less than 5, creating limitations on running a Pearson Chi-Square Test.

RQ4: Was there any significant difference in the frame-changing in the three 10-day periods, and did it vary between the two newspapers?

The final research question attempts to answer whether the use of spatial, temporal, and spatial-temporal frames in the two newspapers changed over three ten-day periods, providing a path to analyze whether there was any significant change in coverage over time.

Spatial Frame-Changing in two newspapers over three 10-day periods

<i>Frame</i> <i>Newspaper</i>	10-Day Period	Individual	Community	Regional	Societal	International
The Washington Post	First	38.7%	18.7%	8.0%	34.7%	0
	Second	23.3%	20.0%	3.3%	53.3%	0
	Third	15.4%	7.7%	7.7%	69.2%	0
The New York Times	First	23.4%	28.6%	1.3%	44.2%	2.6%
	Second	16.7%	36.7%	6.7%	40.0%	0.0%
	Third	6.3%	18.8%	0.0%	75.0%	0.0%
Total	First	30.9%	23.7%	4.6%	39.5%	1.3%
	Second	20.0%	28.3%	5.0%	46.7%	0.0%
	Third	10.3%	13.8%	3.4%	72.4%	0.0%

Table 4: Spatial Frame-Changing Distribution in the two newspapers [N=241; χ^2 value: 13.929; DF:8; p-value = .208 (>0.05, statistically insignificant)]

Overall, the Societal frame was the most used across the three 10-day periods [39.5%; 46.7%; 72.4%]. The Individual frame was utilized more in the first 10-day period across the newspapers [30.9%]; however, it was less utilized in the following phases, with 20% in the second and 10.3% in the third. The Community frame was used in 23.7% of the total coverage in the first period before rising to 28.3% in the second period, before dropping to 13.8% in the third.

TWP, in the first 10-day phase, used Individual [38.7%] and Societal [34.7%] frames at a similar rate; however, over the next two phases, the Societal frame became more and more prominent, with 53.3% use in the second phase and 69.2% in the third. The p-value for TWP's frame-changing over time is .208, meaning its use of spatial frames did not change significantly over the three phases.

The Societal frame was the most prominent spatial frame used by The NYTimes across the three phases, although its use rises significantly in the final phase [75%], compared to 44.2% in the first phase and 40% in the second. The Individual frame faces a sharp decline after the first phase [23.4%] to 16.7% in the second and 6.3% in the third, while the use of the Community frame starts with 28.6% in the first phase, then rises to 36.7% in the second, before dipping to 18.8% in the final phase. Similar to TWP, The New York Times had a statistically insignificant p-value of .223, meaning there was no significant change in its utilization of spatial frames over time.

The p-value for the comparison between the newspapers sits at .084, rendering it statistically insignificant, although such a probability indicates a trend of frame-changing over time, although not strong enough to justify a likelihood of frame-changing over time.

Temporal Frame-Changing in two newspapers over three 10-day periods

<i>Frame</i>	10-Day Period	Past	Present	Future
<i>Newspaper</i>				
The Washington Post	First	12.0%	76.0%	12.0%
	Second	10.0%	66.7%	23.3%
	Third	15.4%	46.2%	38.5%
The New York Times	First	18.2%	67.5%	14.3%
	Second	13.3%	76.7%	10.0%
	Third	18.8%	75.0%	6.3%
Total	First	15.1%	71.7%	13.2%
	Second	11.7%	71.7%	16.7%
	Third	17.2%	62.1%	20.7%

Table 5: Temporal Frame-Changing Distribution in the two newspapers [N=241; X² value: 1.943; DF:4; p-value = .746 (>0.05, statistically insignificant)]

In case of the use of Temporal frames, the present frame stays dominant over time, both overall [62.1%] and separately in the two newspapers. TWP used it in 76% of their reports in the first phase, 66.7% in the second, and 46.2% in the third, while NYTimes implemented it in 67.5% of their stories in the first phase, followed by a rise to 76.7% in the second and a 75% use in the final phase. In the case of the other frames, the use of the Future frame rises significantly in the coverage of TWP, from 12% in the first phase to 23.3% in the second and 38.5% in the final phase. In the coverage of the NYTimes, the use of the Future frame reduces over time, from 14.3% to 10% in the second and 6.3% in the third.

The p-value of this analysis is .746, rendering it totally statistically insignificant, meaning there was no credible difference between the two newspapers' utilization of temporal frames.

Table 6: Spatial-Temporal Frame-Changing Distribution in the two newspapers [N=241; X2 value: 25.403; DF:26; p-value = .496 (>0.05, statistically insignificant)]

Spatial-Temporal Frame-Changing in two newspapers over three 10-day periods

<i>Newspaper Frame</i>	The Washington Post			The New York Times			Total		
	First	Second	Third	First	Second	Third	First	Second	Third
10-Day Period									
<i>Individual-Past</i>	5.3%	3.3%	0.0%	5.2%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	1.7%	0.0%
<i>Individual-Present</i>	32.0%	20.0%	15.4%	18.2%	16.7%	6.3%	25.0%	18.3%	10.3%
<i>Individual-Future</i>	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%
<i>Community-Past</i>	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%
<i>Community-Present</i>	18.7%	13.3%	7.7%	28.6%	36.7%	18.8%	23.7%	25.0%	13.8%
<i>Community-Future</i>	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%
<i>Regional-Past</i>	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%

Continued: Spatial-Temporal Frame-Changing in two newspapers over three 10-day periods

<i>Newspaper Frame</i>	The Washington Post			The New York Times			Total		
	First	Second	Third	First	Second	Third	First	Second	Third
10-Day Period									
<i>Regional- Present</i>	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	3.3%	0.0%	3.3%	1.7%	0.0%
<i>Regional- Future</i>	1.3%	3.3%	7.7%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.7%	3.3%	3.4%
<i>Societal-Past</i>	5.3%	3.3%	15.4%	11.7%	13.3%	18.8%	8.6%	8.3%	17.2%
<i>Societal- Present</i>	20.0%	33.3%	23.1%	19.5%	20.0%	50.0%	19.7%	26.7%	37.9%
<i>Societal- Future</i>	9.3%	16.7%	30.8%	13.0%	6.7%	6.3%	11.2%	11.7%	17.2%
<i>International- Past</i>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%
<i>International- Future</i>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%

Individual-Present [25.0%] was the most used combination frame in the overall coverage of the Uvalde Shooting in the first 10-day period; however, over the next two periods, its implementation goes down, with 18.3% use in the second period, and 10.3% in the third. The

Community-Present frame also lost significance over time, going from 23.7% in the first period to 25.0% in the second, and finally 13.8% in the third. The three frame combinations involving the Societal frame, on the other hand, see an upward trajectory in usage. The Societal-Present frame combination gains the most prominence, going from 19.7% in the first period to 26.7% in the second and 37.9% in the last. The Societal-Future combination was used in 11.2% of the coverage in the first phase, followed by 11.7% in the second, and 17.2% in the third, while the Societal-Past combination went from 8.6% to 8.3% to 17.2% in the first, second, and third periods, respectively.

In case of the newspapers' separate coverage, TWP used the Individual-Present frame the most [32%] in the first 10-day phase, followed by Societal-Present [20%] and Community-Present [18.7%]. In the second phase, Societal-Present was the most used frame combination with 33.3% use, followed by Individual-Present [20%] and Community-Present [13.3%]. In the final phase, Societal-Future [30.8%] was the most prominent frame, followed by Societal-Present [23.1%], Societal-Past, and Individual-Present [both 15.4%]. In comparison, in the first phase, Community-Present [28.6%] was the most used frame in the NYTimes, followed by Societal-Present [19.5%] and Individual-Present [18.2%]. The utilization remained the same in the second phase, with the Community-Present frame being utilized in 36.7% articles, followed by the Societal-Present frame in 20% articles, and the Individual-Present frame in 16.7% articles. Societal-Present [50%] was the most used frame in the third phase, followed by Societal-Past and Community-Present [both 18.8%], while the Individual-Present frame had a sharp decline in usage to 6.3%.

The Pearson-Chi Square Test faced a similar issue while implementing the 15-grid matrix, as 28 cells [66.7%] had an expected count less than 5, which led to this study using the percentages of the frame combinations in the news coverage to analyze the frame-changing, instead of cross-

tabulated results, where the p-value was .496 for the overall coverage, .408 for The Washington Post, and .525 for The New York Times.

CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS

This study's goal was to analyze several aspects of the use of framing in two newspapers – The Washington Post and The New York Times – to see whether there was any difference in the coverage of the Robb Elementary School Shooting in Uvalde, Texas.

The cross-tabulation of the dataset provided answers to the research questions of this study. As for the first question, the study wanted to examine whether there was any difference between the two newspapers' implementation of the Spatial frame. As we can see from the statistically significant output following the Chi-Square Analysis, there was a difference between the two newspapers. While both used the Societal frame significantly, The Washington Post utilized the Individual frame more, while The New York Times used the Community frame more.

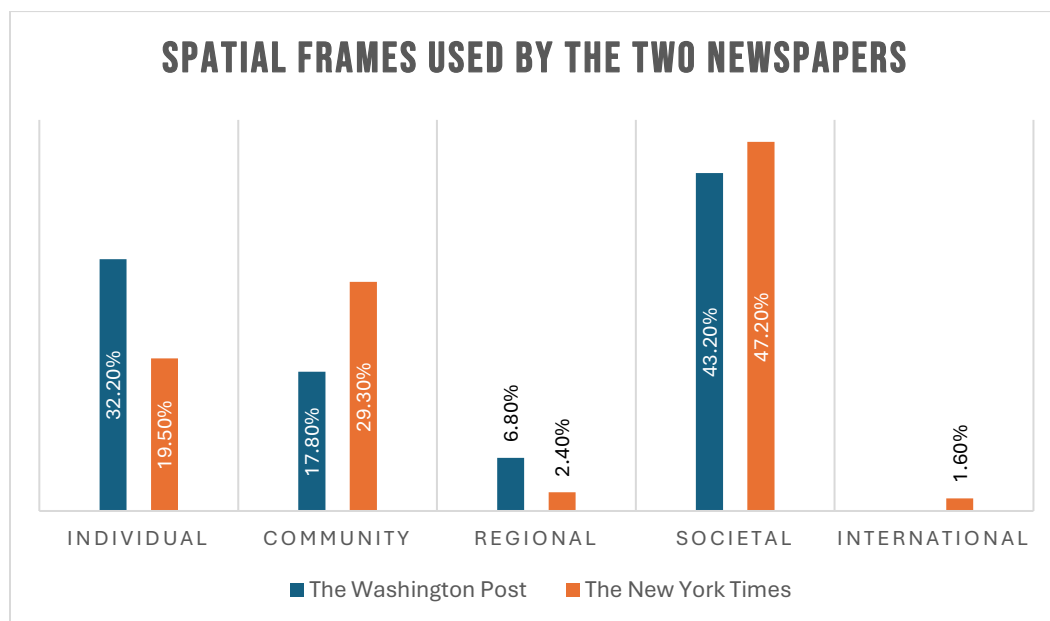


Figure 2: Use of Spatial Frames between The Washington Post and The New York Times

The results regarding the use of the Societal frame are similar to those of Chyi & McCombs (2004), Muschert & Carr (2006), Schildkraut & Muschert (2014), and Cassidy, La France, & Babin (2018), who all found that Societal frames are the most prominent.

However, the two newspapers' differences in terms of their second-most used frame compare differently to different prior studies. Schildkraut & Muschert (2014) mentioned in their study that media coverage of school shootings would be focused more on individual frames in the future, which corresponds to The Washington Post data, although it also requires mentioning that the study had also mentioned the coverage of the Sandy Hook shooting included conversations regarding gun control and other preventive measures, and while that spiked the data towards the future frame in that particular study, it is important to note that due to the coding definitions of this study, such discussions also added up the numbers in case of the use of the societal frames.

The present frame, being the most prominent temporal frame, is also in line with the aforementioned studies, as those studies had also found that there was an overwhelming use of this particular frame, considering that the focus of the coverage generally stays on the incident itself. Chyi & McCombs (2004) found that the present frame was utilized more than 50% of the time on most days, while the study from Muschert & Carr (2006) saw a 78% use of the present frame. Schildkraut & Muschert (2014) found the present frame in use in 83% of the total coverage, while Cassidy, La France, & Babin (2018) found the utilization at 53%. The results from these studies are in line with the results produced by the temporal frame analysis conducted in this study, where the temporal frame was found to be in use 70.5% of the coverage, with both newspapers producing similar numbers. [TWP = 70.3%; NYTimes = 70.7%]

This study found that the most used spatial-temporal combination for TWP was Individual-Present with 27.1% utilization, while for NYTimes, it was Community-Present with 29.3%. The

second-most used frame, for both newspapers, was societal-present with 23.7% [TWP] and 23.6% [NYTimes], displaying almost identical numbers. The third-most used frame for the NYTimes was Individual-Present [16.3%], while for TWP, it was Community-Present [16.1%].

TWP using the Individual-Present frame the most means it matches with the prediction from Schildkraut & Muschert (2013), stating that the media coverage of school shootings will be focused more on individuals, as the audience in the US will gather familiarity and understanding of shootings in general, leading to a focus on personnel involved in a shooting instead of the repercussions or shockwaves. However, both newspapers using societal-present as their second-most prominent frame combination are somewhat similar to what Chyi & McCombs (2004), Muschert & Carr (2006), and Schildkraut & Muschert (2014) found, as their most prominent combination was societal-present, followed by community-present in second place, which is the most-used for the NYTimes and third-most used for TWP. However, TWP's most prominent combination frame matches that of Holody & Daniel (2017), as their study on the Aurora Shooting in Colorado had also yielded Individual-Present as the most prominent combination in national newspapers, followed by societal-present.

In case of spatial frame-changing, both TWP [38.7% → 23.3% → 15.4%] and The NYTimes' [23.4% → 16.7% → 6.3%] use of the individual frame reduced over the three 10-day periods, while the use of the societal frame increased; for TWP, it was utilized 34.7% in the first phase, 53.3% in the second, and 69.2% in third, while for the NYTimes, it was 44.2%, 40%, and 75%, respectively.

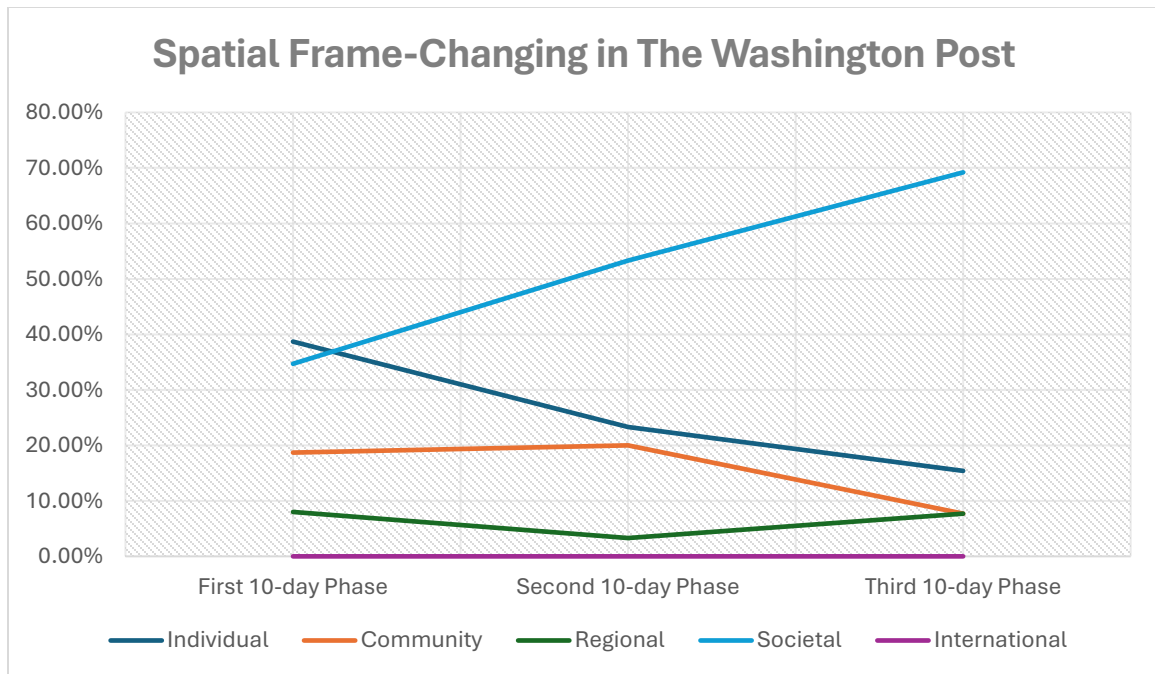


Figure 3: Spatial Frame-Changing in The Washington Post

This changing of the spatial frame over time matches the results yielded by Chyi & McCombs (2004), who found that societal frames became more prominent, while the individual frame became less used over time. It is also similar to that of Muschert & Carr (2006), who found that the societal frame comprised more than 80% of the coverage in the fifth five-day period, which, in comparison to this study, falls in the third phase, and also accounted for more than 50% in the final five-day period.

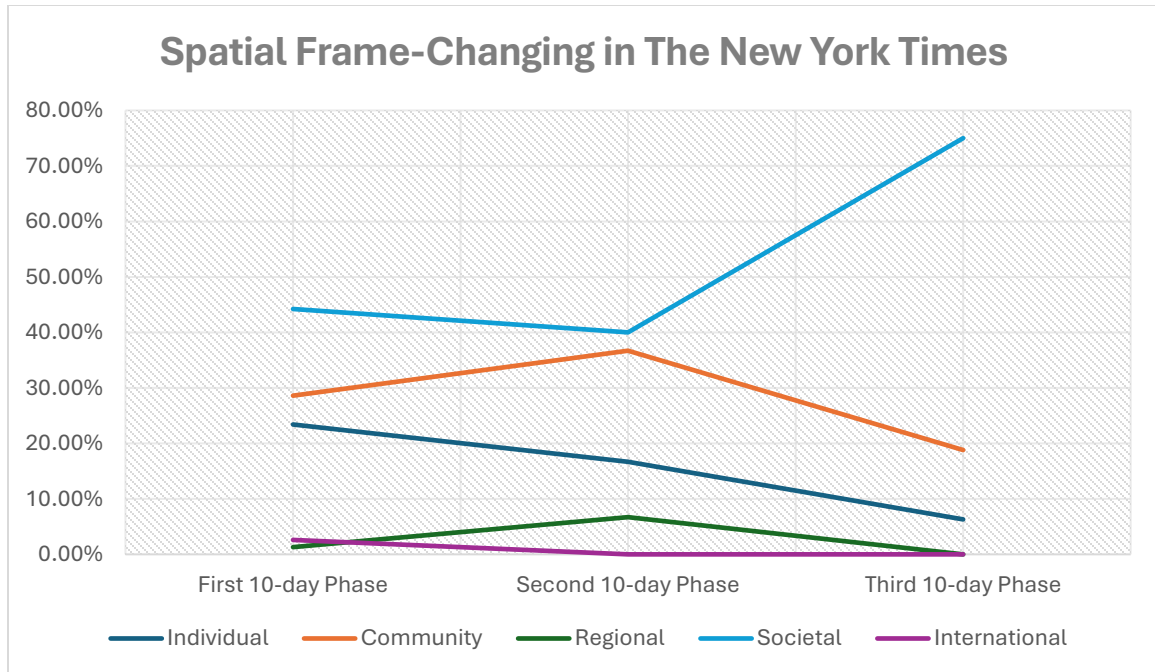


Figure 4: Spatial Frame-Changing in The New York Times

Muschert & Carr (2006) also found that in the fifth five-day period, the use of the future frames rose to near 40%, with the present frame shifting down to almost 50%. This study, in the case of TWP, yielded similar results, as it showed that the use of the temporal frame increased over the three publication phases, rising from 12% in the first to 38.5% in the final phase. However, in the case of the NYTimes, the use of the future frame consistently fell, with first phase usage at 14.3% and final phase usage at 6.3%.

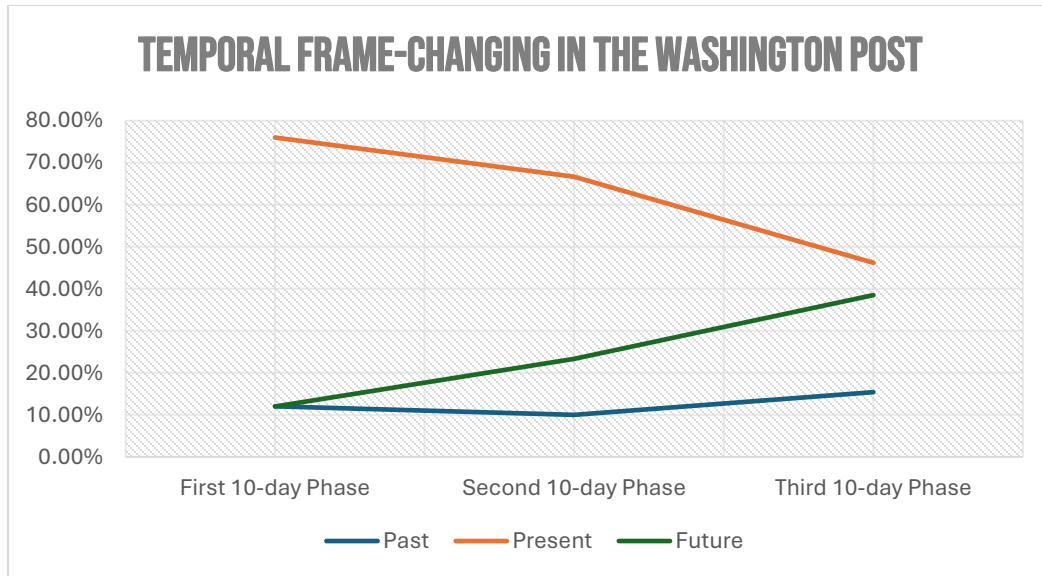


Figure 5: Temporal Frame-Changing in The Washington Post

As the data shows, the NYTimes's distribution of the temporal frames remained fairly consistent over the 30 days, while in the case of TWP, the present frame was used less over time, with the future frame gaining prominence.

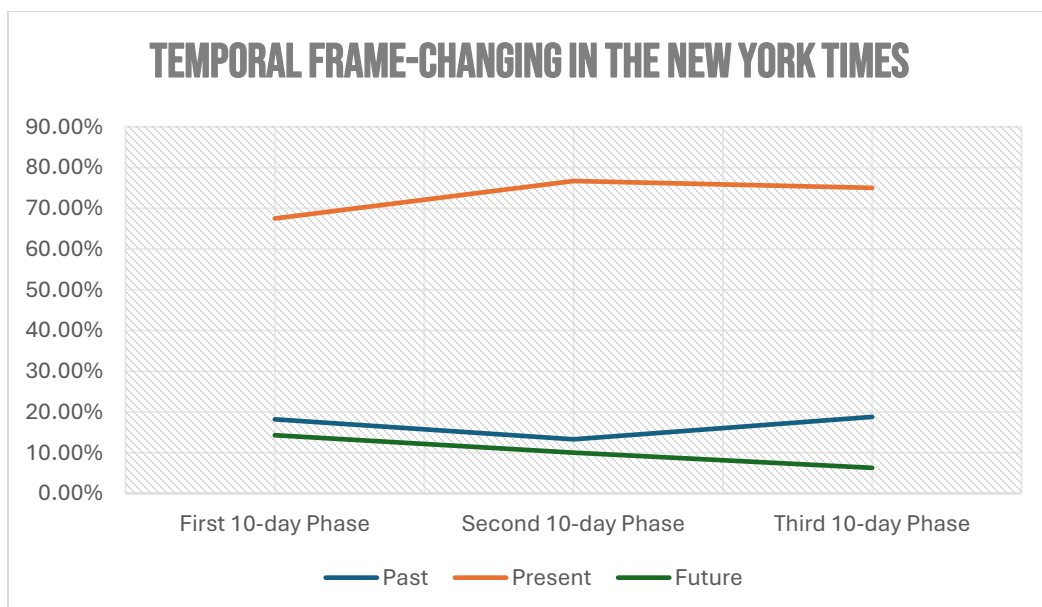


Figure 6: Temporal Frame-Changing in The New York Times

Frame-changing of the spatial-temporal combination over three 10-day periods stayed consistent with the different separate spatial and temporal frame-changing. Both newspapers reduced the use of the Individual-Present frame over time [TWP = 32% → 20% → 15.4%; NYTimes = 18.2% → 16.7% → 6.3%], while two combinations involving the societal frame – Societal-Past [TWP = 5.3% → 3.3% → 15.4%; NYTimes = 11.7% → 13.3% → 18.8%] and Societal-Present [TWP = 20% → 33.3% → 23.1%; NYTimes = 19.5% → 20% → 50%] – increased over time. The other combination frame using the societal spatial frame – Societal-Future – had different results for the two different newspapers; TWP saw an increase in usage [9.3% → 16.7% → 30.8%], while the NYTimes saw a downward trend in usage for that specific combination [13% → 6.7% → 6.3%]. However, that aligns with the temporal frame-changing of the aforementioned newspapers, as TWP used the future frame more in the final 10-day phase, while the NYTimes reduced its use.

While the results yielded from the cross-tabulation showed similarities to prior studies, the statistically insignificant data means that there was no significant change in the frame-changing over time in the case of either spatial, temporal, or spatial-temporal combination frames.

However, the one data point that was statistically significant was the difference in the use of spatial frames by the two newspapers. While the societal frame was the most-used frame for both, the key difference is in the second-most-prominent frame, as two newspapers utilized two different ones.

This signifies that the two newspapers, while maintaining a similar key framing focus, opted for different frames early on, as visualized by the previous graphs. As the figures reveal, TWP initially had slightly more individual coverage, but the use of the societal frame rose in the final two time periods, creating a big disparity between the use of the two frames by the end of the

30-day period that this study utilized. In the case of the NYTimes, the societal frame was the most-used from the beginning, and continued to do so, followed by the community and the individual frames.

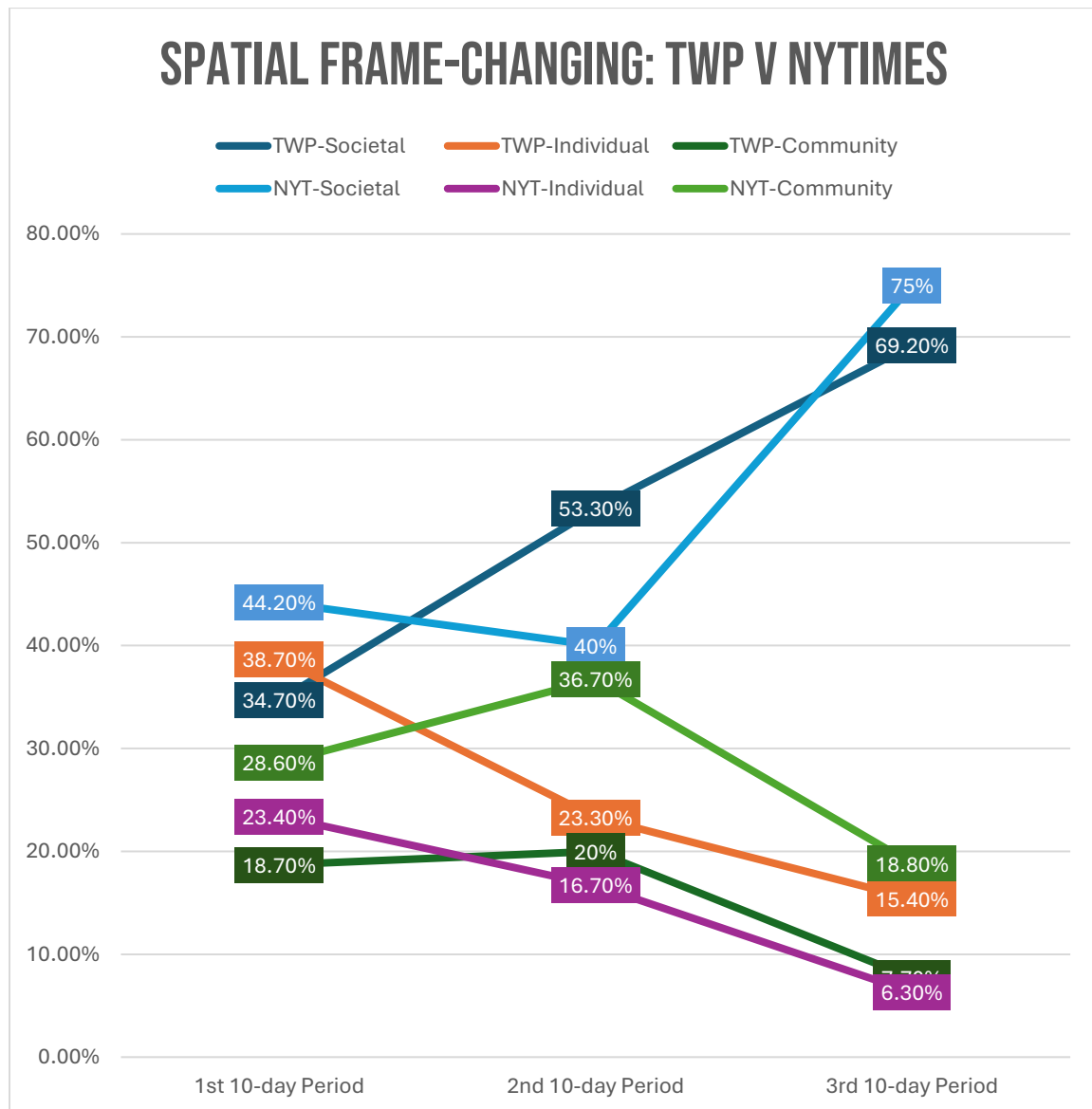


Figure 7: Spatial Frame-Changing in The Washington Post and The New York Times

As the frame-changing data continued to be insignificant, it means that the two newspapers did not change their use of frames from the first phase, as they continued on that trend throughout the coverage, leading to no significant changes in terms of frame usage over the 30-day period.

This allows the study to comprehend the differences in the editorial policies of the newspapers and what they focused on during the coverage of the Uvalde School Shooting, as the cross-tabulated data verifies that while both newspapers focused more on societal frames, The Washington Post focused more on using Individual frames, meaning their news coverage was more personnel-oriented, while The New York Times focused on the community affected by the shooting, creating a strong coverage of Uvalde, the shooting, and incidents that were connected to the event.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This study aimed to see whether there was a significant difference in the use of frames in the coverage of the Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, in 2022, in two legacy newspapers – The Washington Post and The New York Times.

Following the cross-tabulated results and the analysis, the following conclusion can be drawn that there was a significant difference between the two newspapers in how they utilized spatial frames across the 30-day period, which was reflected in the comparison of the separate frame-changing of the two newspapers. However, there was no significant difference between the coverage of the two newspapers in terms of the use of temporal frames, as both newspapers used the present frame the most.

While there was some difference in how the two newspapers used the spatial-temporal frame combinations, it was not statistically significant to justify a conclusion stating that their use of the combinations was vastly different. In case of frame-changing, there was no statistically significant difference, but there were differences in the frames used in the newspapers over the 30 days.

From the discussion, it can be stated that the two newspapers opted to use spatial frames in different ways in the early coverage, which then continued over the 30-day period, leading to no significant frame-changing output.

This study contributes to the rich scholarship that exists in communication research regarding the use of frames in newspapers in the coverage of school shootings. This study adds critical details on understanding how legacy media organizations opt for different frames while covering incidents of such nature.

The sample size of this study was exhaustive, with several factors contributing to it. The death of 19 children in a school led to significant discourse on gun control, and with several other shootings in Buffalo, New York, California, and Tulsa, Oklahoma, happening in close temporal proximity, there was further discussion on the topic, and the National Rifle Association convention taking place in Texas only two days after the Robb Elementary School Shooting in Uvalde, where strong pro-gun opinions were shared by prominent personalities of the country, led to even further coverage from legacy newspapers, and was likely a compounding factor in the newspapers opting for significant use of societal frames. Another factor in the heavy use of the societal frame, contradicting the prediction from Schildkraut & Muschert (2013) that individual frames would gain further focus in school shootings, was the death of the shooter at the hands of law enforcement officers, meaning there was no reporting on the shooter's fate following the shooting, i.e., charges or sentencing.

While this study adds to the substantial research in the field, it is not without limitations. As mentioned, there were several other shootings in the temporal vicinity of the Uvalde Shooting, meaning the use of the Societal frame was not singularly dependent on this particular incident, especially news articles that were focused on policy decisions. Also, this study did not investigate editorial sections or commentaries, which means that while it managed to analyze and compare the editorial policy regarding the use of different frames, it did not get a holistic interpretation of what the policy for each of these newspapers might have been.

This study also adds to the existing scholarship by comparing two legacy newspapers and how they covered the incident, as prior communication research on similar events considered legacy newspapers as a single organism in the media landscape. This comparison creates a unique ground for further research into how separate legacy media organizations frame incidents differently, positing the option to delve deeper into the contrast, such as investigating a gun control valence in the coverage of similar incidents, or a comprehensive study on editorials to fixate on what specific aspects of the incident the newspapers focused on.

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APPENDIX

CODEBOOK

Coding Instructions

Read each article carefully. For each article, select the most prominent temporal and spatial frame used in the headline, lead, and key theme of the article. While it is possible that multiple frames are included in an article, you must choose the ones that you feel are most present. If you are unsure of which frame is being used, refer to the three metrics mentioned above – headline, lead, theme of the story – to determine which frame is the most prominent.

Spatial Frames:

- **Individual:** Articles that focus on the victims, the shooter, any individual related to the incident, parents of the victims, celebrities, and politicians.
- **Community:** Articles that focus on the school, people living in Uvalde, the neighborhood of the school, local law enforcement, and the incident as a whole.
- **Regional:** Articles that focus on the state [Texas], state law or policy changes, state officials' [Senators, Congress officials] statements that have a considerable effect on the region.
- **Societal:** Articles that focus on national policy, debate, and comments that influence and impact society as a whole.
- **International:** Articles that focus on international coverage and response.

Temporal Frames:

- **Past:** Articles focusing on time periods before the shooting, meaning any background information related to the shooting will be included in this frame.
- **Present:** Articles focusing on the shooting, the immediate consequences, or current social trends of that time period.
- **Future:** Articles that focus on future effects of the shootings, possible policy, solutions, or prevention strategies.

CODING SHEET

Story # _____

Newspaper _____

Date of Story _____

Headline _____

Spatial Frame (mark only one)

Individual _____

Community _____

Regional _____

Societal _____

International _____

Temporal Frame (mark only one)

Past _____

Present _____

Future _____

VITA

S M SHAMS RAHMAN

Education:

- 2024 – 2026 (expected): MA in Journalism, University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS, USA
- 2018 – 2022: Bachelor of Social Sciences in Mass Communication and Journalism, University of Dhaka, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Professional Appointments

- May 2025 – Current: Graduate Assistant, University Marketing and Communications, University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS, USA
- June 2025 – August 2025: Reporting Intern, The Oxford Eagle, Oxford, MS, USA
- August 2024 – May 2025: Graduate Teaching Assistant, School of Journalism and New Media, University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS, USA
- August 2024 – May 2025: Graduate Research Assistant, School of Journalism and New Media, University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS, USA
- August 2023 – July 2024: Sub-Editor, New Age, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- December 2023 – March 2024: Communication Consultant, Article 19 Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh

- June 2021 – August 2023: Staff Reporter, The Business Post, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- February 2023 – November 2023: Youth Facilitator, DW Akademie and Article 19 Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- October 2020 – June 2021: Staff Reporter, NewsBangla24.com, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- May 2019 – October 2020: Sports Journalist, The Business Standard, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Awards

- April 2026: Excellence Award, School of Journalism and New Media, University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS
- April 2026: Top Scholar Award, Kappa Tau Alpha, National Honor Society in Journalism and Mass Communication
- April 2026: Outstanding Master of Arts in Journalism, University of Mississippi, Oxford, MS
- August 2023: Professor Sitara Parvin Award for Academic Excellence, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, University of Dhaka, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Training & Fellowships

- September 2021 – October 2023: Local Media Hub Fellowship, DW Akademie, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- July 2022: Reporting on Social Inclusion in South Asia Training Programme. ADB & Thomson Reuters Foundation