Newspaper Frames of Hizbullah:
Uni-Dimensional Framing of a Multi-Dimensional Organization

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to understand how media framed the Lebanese Shi'a organization Hizbullah[1] from 2008 to 2011. Hizbullah is a multi-dimensional organization engaging in political, humanitarian and military activities. Through framing analysis of coverage in four world news sources, the study found that Hizbullah was consistently framed as a terrorist organization, while its more benign functions were marginalized. This focus on terrorism endured over time, and news coverage did not shift to focus on Hizbullah's political role in Lebanon, even as the organization participated in governing Lebanon.

Keywords: *Hizbullah, framing, content analysis.*

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[1] The Arabic form of this organization's name is translated into English using multiple spellings. In this paper, we used the spelling adopted by the organization in its English-language web site (english.moqawama.org, which now brings visitors to english.alahednews.com.lb).

Media consumers around the world are regularly confronted with media reports or depictions of terrorism. Media coverage is an essential element in the dissemination of news about terrorism and in the fight against terrorism. Luyendijk (2010) has written about the dilemmas journalists experience when covering such issues whereby

> news is inevitably biased because a single day in the Middle East can yield 10 different narratives, with different terminology, different parties to hear about different frames and with the victims in one narrative in the role of perpetrators in another. (p. 18)

The news media has a role in communicating about terror and violence (see, for example, Hoffman, 2006; Nacos, 2000). News media play a subtle role by framing terrorists and acts of terrorism for the public (Iyengar, 1991). They are often the first to label an event as terrorism. By their frames, media have the potential to change public discourse surrounding individuals and organizations involved in the violence.

The purpose of this article is to apply content analysis methodology to examine how news media framed one such multi-dimensional organization, the Lebanese Shi'a organization Hizbullah from 2008 to 2011. Alagha's (2011) work has carefully analyzed how Hizbullah's identity has evolved overtime. This paper delves deeper into Hizbullah's image through examining three time periods: (1) January to April 2008, just before Hizbullah forces took over part of Beirut and the organization was given veto power in Parliament; (2) June to September 2008, just after their control of the Lebanese Parliament; and (3) February and March 2011, just after Hizbullah pulled out of Parliament and lobbied for Najib Miqati to be made Prime Minister. The study considered four different international media outlets' source use to detect whether or not frames of Hizbullah changed as the organization's role in Lebanon evolved. The sample included the New York Times, Agence France-Presse, Lebanese Daily Star, and the Times

(London). The following section will briefly review media framing theory, Hizbullah's history in Lebanon, and its influence in the broader Middle East.

Framing Theory

This section will outline past research on framing theory, especially as it relates to frames of terrorism and terrorist organizations. The concept of frame analysis originated with Goffman (1974) and has been expanded and applied to various areas over the years. In the field of mass communication, media framing is "the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation" (Entman, 2007, p. 164). Frames provide "context for understanding communication by including and centering on certain topics" (Bowen, 2008, p. 342). Framing is closely related to agenda-setting and is sometimes even considered second-level agenda-setting (Scheufele, 1999). Though this study is concerned with media portrayals rather than with media effects, it is important to note that the two are linked. Media frames have the potential to shape public perceptions and public agendas and, if nothing else, to provide the language of public discourse. News sociologists note that frames move from macro to micro levels with national ideology providing powerful macro frames that guide public perception of events.

Gitlin (1980) defined frames as "persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual" (p. 7). Gitlin's (1980) definition points out that frames are "persistent" and slow to change; they are a kind of cognitive shortcut used to present and organize news; and they work both through emphasizing certain points and by excluding others.

Multiple scholars have considered how media frame terrorists and terrorist acts. Bowen (2008) suggested that media often refuse to consciously frame terrorists or terrorist acts but that

the frames emerge influenced by several factors, including the ideology of the culture in which the media operate, the sources used by the media, the news organization, and the characteristics of the terrorist attacks or terrorists themselves (Shoemaker & Reese, 1986).

Further complicating the framing of terrorism is the disagreement even among terrorism scholars about the definition of terrorism. Walter Laqueur, one of the leading scholars of terrorism, has conceded that a definition of terrorism acceptable to all (or even many) scholars will never be determined and is not even worth the argument (Schmid & Jongman, 2005, p. 3). For the purposes of this study, however, terrorism is "politically or religiously motivated violence, or threatened violence, against non-combatants, with the intention of generating fear in a wider audience" (Miller, 2007, p. 334). This definition includes the basic elements identified by Schmid and Jongman's (2005) study of terrorism definitions and has the additional benefit of being relatively succinct.

Frames by Ideology

Researchers have considered the effects of organizational and ideological influences on media frames of terrorism. As Shoemaker and Reese (1996) have noted, ideology is "a symbolic mechanism that serves as a cohesive and integrating force in society" (p. 221). Edelman (1993) argued that ideology is most important and influential in frames of contestable (and untestable) categories: portraying a political official as a "leader," for example, or framing oppressive action as "protection." Clearly, then, the role of ideology in frames of terrorism – especially in frames of groups which are by turns terroristic and non-violent – is quite significant.

Papacharissi and Oliveira (2008) revealed the importance of ideology in frames of terrorism in their comparison of the coverage by British and American newspapers following multiple terrorist attacks. Examining frames using Iyengar's (1991) distinction between episodic

frames – which present "concrete events that illustrate issues" – and thematic frames – which present "collective or general evidence" (p. 14), they found that British newspapers used more thematic frames, while American papers used more episodic frames. Researchers have considered the effects of ideological (macro) and organizational (meso) influences on media frames of terrorism. Papacharissi and Oliveira (2008) found that media frames of terrorism vary in multiple ways even in two countries as similar as the United States and the United Kingdom. Among countries with more widely varying views of terrorist organizations, one can expect even more dramatic differences between frames. News frames in nations where an organization appears on a terrorist list, for example, are likely to be different from frames in countries where the organization is not listed as a terrorist group.

One important factor which determines media frames is the selection of sources (micro level) or "frame sponsors" (Bowen, 2008, p. 344). Frame sponsors have serious implications in coverage of terrorism, where terrorists themselves are frequently sources. In fact, Bowen (2008) claims that "news media show little willingness to frame these events [terrorist spectaculars] themselves, especially those that happen on a grand scale, but leave the framing to terrorists by relaying their message to a larger audience" (p. 347). One, though by no means the only, consequence of this is that leaving the framing to terrorists allows terrorist organizations to define whether they are or are not "terrorists."

Media can rely on anti-terrorist sources, which produces a quite different frame. Wittebols (1991) found that media frequently rely on government sources to define what is and is not terrorism and that many more (69% as opposed to 21%) terrorist news stories presented the official side of the issue rather than the adversarial side. By using government sources, rather than sources from the organization carrying out the violence, media allow officials to frame the

news. As Entman (2004) noted, the use of elite sources is both common and influential in determining news frames. Clearly, the sources selected for inclusion in news stories, and those featured most prominently, whether pro- or anti-terrorist, affect the news frames of the stories.

In addition to influences on content creators, frames of terrorism are influenced by characteristics of the terrorists themselves. Both Eckstein (2003) and Berkowitz (2005) have examined how individual characteristics of terrorists affect media frames. Eckstein (2003) considered how domestic and foreign terrorists are framed in different ways by U.S. media, finding that media use thematic frames to cover domestic terrorists while using episodic frames to cover foreign terrorists. Berkowitz (2005) found that Western media frame female suicide bombers much differently than they frame male suicide bombers.

Though framing analyses have focused on how different news organizations frame the same attacks and how the same organizations frame different attacks or perpetrators, researchers have missed an important variable. Organizations involved in terrorism can also have other roles in a society, including governance, social development and philanthropic activities. Violence is just one of their activities in their tactics to accomplish a goal. In this way, studies have ignored the importance of these organizational characteristics as a variable in determining frames. By considering a specific type of organization – the multi-dimensional organization that engages in violence along with other activities– this study will help fill that gap in the research.

Hizbullah: History and Development of a Multi Faceted Organization

This section will provide a brief history of Hizbullah, as it moved from being primarily an organization dedicated to resisting the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 to being a cross-national organization combining political, humanitarian and military functions. Hizbullah grew up in the early 1980s in the wake of the Iranian Revolution, but mobilized after the 1982 Israeli

invasion of southern Lebanon. A brief examination of the group's media site

(english.alahednews.com.lb) and other organizational materials shows that Israel is still

considered its primary opponent. The group's leader, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, has made it clear

that the elimination of Israel as a political entity was the group's goal (Noe, 2007). Israel as a

country, Israeli politics, Israeli treatment of the Palestinians, and Israel's actions toward its Arab

neighbors are the topics of Hizbullah statements and stories. In the past 25 years, Hizbullah has

grown from a disorganized group of militants to "a kingmaker and spoiler in Lebanon's politics,

as well as decisions of war and peace" (Worth, 2011, para. 1). (For a timeline of the

organization's development, see Appendix A.)

Hizbullah's ascension occurred as the Lebanese government essentially collapsed

following the 1982 Israeli invasion. U.N. sanctions, embargos of Lebanon by multiple countries,

and increased violence in and around Lebanon created the conditions for Hizbullah to fill the

power vacuum. The group became more widely known following a campaign of suicide

bombings in the mid-1980s (Kramer, 1990). The bombings served a dual purpose of further

destabilizing the Lebanese government and increasing Hizbullah's visibility. Though the group's

reputation grew internationally because of these attacks, it has since broadened its involvement

in Lebanon to include much more than violent acts.

Over the years, Hizbullah has provided social aid to much of southern Lebanon and has

become an integral player in Lebanese politics (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009; Worth, 2011).

This unique role has led to the organization pursuing various activities that include but are not

limited to focusing political action, violence, and humanitarian aid. Qassem (2010) wrote

"Hizbullah: The Story From Within," noting that the organization accepts these three roles as

three faces of the same organization. It provides social services, uses violence, and participates in

the Lebanese political process (see, for example, statements by Hizbullah representatives in IRIN, 2006).

Hizbullah is supported both ideologically and financially by Iran and Syria, and actions by Hizbullah are often linked to the influence of these countries and their interest in destabilizing Lebanon (Byman, 2005). In the Syria conflict, Hizbullah has provided both military and humanitarian aid in its support to President Assad. Hizbullah is included in the U.S. Department of State's official list of foreign terrorist organizations, and its military wing is included on Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and now the Gulf Cooperation Council's lists of terrorist organizations. However, as Bloodgood and Tremblay-Boire (2011) note, the line between terrorist organization and non-governmental organization sometimes blurs, and "for some groups, such as Hezbollah or Earth Liberation Front, the label INGO [international non-governmental organization] is subjective" (p. 147).

Though Hizbullah appears on several countries' terrorist lists, it also "operates an extremely sophisticated network of health and social-service providers that far exceeds the capacity of the Lebanese state" (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009, p. 123). These services are divided between the Islamic Health Unit, which oversees hospitals, dental clinics, and social health programs; the Education Unit, which oversees primary, secondary and technical schools and provides scholarships to needy children; and the social unit, which provides aid to those affected by Hizbullah's struggle with Israel (Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, 2009). In a region where the government is unable to provide basic social services (in part because of Hizbullah's disruptive activities), the organization has stepped in to provide good-quality and effective social services, to the extent that it is "the agency widely considered to be the most efficient and accountable" in the country (Brennan & Sondorp, 2006, p. 818).

Because of its demonstrated effectiveness in providing services and voice for Shi'a citizens, Hizbullah has emerged as significant political force in Lebanon. Since its entrance into Lebanese politics in 1992, the organization has consistently won approximately 10% of the seats in the Lebanese Parliament (Norton, 2009). In early 2011, the group orchestrated the collapse of the government, which resulted in Najib Miqati, the group's favored candidate, becoming prime minister, replacing Saad Hariri, a powerful opponent of the group (Shadid, 2011). Further complicating this change in government was the fact that Hizbullah and its supporter, Syria, have been accused of orchestrating the assassination of Hariri's father, the former prime minister Rafik Hariri (Shadidi, 2011). Thus, Hizbullah combines politics, social aid, and violence in one group, and sometimes in one act.

There are three key periods in Hizbullah's recent history that capture its evolution. First, there is the time before Hizbullah forces took over part of Beirut and the organization was given veto power in Parliament (January to April 2008). A second pivotal time is June to September 2008, just after their power was consolidated in Parliament. The final time is February and March 2011, just after Hizbullah pulled out of Parliament, causing the government to collapse, and ensuring that Najib Miqati became Prime Minister. These three political periods provide distinct segments that can be used to study news coverage of the organization.

Though Hizbullah is the best-known example of what this study refers to as a multi-dimensional organization, it is not the only example. Other organizations, most notably Hamas in Palestine and Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia, have adopted "the Hezbollah Model" (Abuza, 2009). Hamas is often closely associated with Hizbullah. By enacting violent activities while also providing social aid to their primary publics, these groups gain support among their constituents. Though most world leaders are hesitant to overlook the groups' violent actions,

leaders and international organizations are increasingly also reluctant to categorize the

organization as a terrorist organization, and several countries, including Australia and Great

Britain, classify only the militant wing of Hizbullah as a terrorist organization (Australian

National Security, 2010; Home Office, 2010). Even as acceptance of Hizbullah grows, the

organization is heavily dependent upon the media to spread its messages outside of Lebanon.

Picard (1989) noted that it is important to determine the level of traditional media

relations tactics used by such groups. To engage with outside publics, including the media,

Hizbullah maintains an English-language new web site offering numerous press releases,

celebrations of martyrs, stories about politics (March 8 Alliance, The Loyalty to the Resistance

parliamentary bloc-LTRB), and other regional and international news items. In addition to an

extensive collection of anti-Israeli articles, the site includes translations of speeches by and

interviews with Hizbullah's Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah.

The complex functions of Hizbullah suggest that it can legitimately be considered as a

political organization, an organization that carries out violence in pursuit of political and geo

political goals, a humanitarian organization, or a combination of these. Thus the options for

framing it are more complex than other organizations in the Middle East like Al Qaeda or Daesh

(Islamic State). Consequently, understanding the news frames used to explain the group is a

timely matter because rather than simply framing acts of political violence, media organizations

must frame an organization which is simultaneously involved in actions which are violent and

non-violent, legitimate and illegitimate.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Using Hizbullah as a case, this study examines the ways in which media frame a multi-

dimensional organization. The purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which cultural

ideology of the news media influence the frames of Hizbullah as a terrorist group as labeled by

the US and other Western and Gulf nations, a political entity in the Lebanese government, a

humanitarian organization, or some combination of the three. In Hallahan's (1999) typology, the

most common framing types in this case would be attribute, issue, and responsibility frames. As

seen above, the current framing literature does consider some elements of media frames of

terrorism (see Berkowitz, 2005; Bowen, 2008; Eckstein, 2003; Papacharissi & Oliveira, 2008).

However, researchers have not considered how such organizations are framed when they also

function as political and/or social aid organizations, and have certainly not considered the effect

of traditional macro-level framing variables on media frames of those organizations. Using

Hizbullah as a well-known multi-dimensional organization, this study will extend the framing

literature to consider these variables. This study will consider how media frames of the

organization are influenced by time and source selection. Addressing gaps in the literature, two

research questions and two hypotheses are proposed for study.

The first research question considers how news media frame Hizbullah in their coverage

of the group's actions. Because of the organization's structure and involvement, media can frame

Hizbullah as a political party, a humanitarian organization, a terrorist group or some combination

of these.

RQ1: How does country of origin influence the news media frames of Hizbullah and its

actions?

The second research question addresses Hizbullah's own changes and development of political

and social influence over time. This question examines at the meso level of media analysis the

way news organizations frames of Hizbullah have or have not changed as the group's functions

have evolved.

RQ2: How do media frames of the news organizations change over the three points of the

study as Hizbullah's political influence increased in Lebanon?

The two hypotheses consider the role of micro external influences (specifically outside

information sources) on news frames. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) included information sources

as an important element in external influences on news content. Bowen (2008) went so far as to

argue that sources can be "'frame sponsors' because they always bring their own frames to mass

communication" (p. 344). As Entman (2004) argued, the sources which are used in news stories

shape the frames of those stories. The sources are influential because of the frames that sources

lend to a story. Because of the influence of information sources on news content and frames, the

following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Articles which use anti-Hizbullah sources more often and more prominently will

be more likely to use terrorist frames of Hizbullah.

H2: Articles which use pro-Hizbullah sources more often and more prominently will

be more likely to use political frames of Hizbullah.

The specific operationalizations of source types will be explained in the following section. By

answering these research questions and testing these hypotheses, this study will add to the

knowledge of how macro, meso and micro-level variables influence news frames of

organizations defined as terrorist organizations. In addition, the study will determine if and how

media frames of organizations often defined as "terrorist" change as an organization gains

political power or provides humanitarian services.

Method

To answer the research questions and test the hypotheses, the research team conduced a

content analysis of 464 articles from four different news sources over three time periods. The

results provide longitudinal data about the media frames of Hizbullah's activities from 2008 to 2011.

Sampling Frame

The sample was constructed by choosing four national news sources – one U.S. source (the New York Times), one British source (the Times), one European English-language source (the Agence France-Presse), and one English-language Lebanese source (the Daily Star) – to detect if country of origin has any influence on news frames. Next, to capture the evolution of the group, the researchers defined three key time frame periods for comparison: (1) January to April 2008, just before Hizbullah forces took over part of Beirut and the organization was given veto power in Parliament; (2) June to September 2008, just after their takeover; and (3) February and March 2011, just after Hizbullah pulled out of Parliament, causing the government to collapse, and installing Najib Miqati as Prime Minister. The three segments represent major changes in the organization and thus provide an adequate window to see if the frames evolved as Hizbullah's organizational influence and key activities evolved (Alagha, 2011).

After the sources and time frames were selected, the researchers used the Lexis Nexis database to select a random sample of articles mentioning Hizbullah. A total of 464 articles met the criteria of the study. Figure 1 shows the sampling logic based on the population of articles from each news organization. Sub-samples of 40 articles each were pulled from each news source for each time frame. For the two 2008 time periods, the Times did not publish 40 articles mentioning Hizbullah. For those sub-samples, then, the entire population (32 articles in each case) was considered. Of the 464 articles, the coders examined 120 from AFP, 120 from the Daily Star, 120 from the New York Times, and 104 from the Times (London). This sampling strategy allowed the researchers to examine a relatively equal number of articles from each

source, limiting source bias, and also provided a sufficient total number of articles for meaningful statistical analysis.

Variables of Interest

Each article was coded for basic characteristics – date, news source, and length – and for story topic. Political and terrorist frames of the country and organization were measured. The frames were operationalized into three characteristics each. To determine *terrorist frames*, articles were coded for (1) specific references to Hizbullah as a terrorist organization; (2) connections between Hizbullah and violence; and (3) connections between Hizbullah and terrorist organizations or known sponsors of terrorism. To determine *political frames*, articles were coded for (1) specific references to Hizbullah as a party or member of the opposition; (2) non-violent connections between Hizbullah and the Lebanese Parliament or Cabinet; (3) references to Hizbullah politicians. To determine *humanitarian frames*, articles were coded for (1) references to Hizbullah as a non-governmental organization; (2) reference to Hizbullah hospitals, schools, or social aid; (3) positive connection between Hizbullah and UN. Each type of political, terrorist, and humanitarian frame was recorded for all articles; thus, a single article could have as many as three types of political, terrorist, or humanitarian frames. These frames were then recalculated into interval-level measures by adding the number of frames in each article; frame measures are thus reported as a number between zero (no use of frames) to three (use of all three types of frames for that measure). Originally, both headlines and story text were coded. However, so few articles (N=15, 3.2%) used any frame at all of Hizbullah in headlines that the headline results were later dropped. The research also examined sources since they play a role in framing.

Sources

The articles were coded by sources quoted and paraphrased in the story. As Bowen (2008) noted, sources are significant influences on news frames and are used as measures of framing. Only sources which were directly (by name) or indirectly (by position or characteristic) attributed were counted, but both direct quotations and paraphrases were coded. In addition, when multiple sources were used, the sources were coded separately and in order of their appearance in the story, up to ten sources (the first source was coded as source one, the second as source two, etc.). Sources were coded on an eleven-category nominal scale. These categories were first based on the source categories used in Foote and Gade (2006) then modified by the researcher after reading and coding 25 non-sampled articles and modified again after the first intercoder check.

After coding was completed, source categories were condensed to pro-Hizbullah (Hizbullah, other militant, or Iranian or Syrian official), anti-Hizbullah (U.S., Canadian, or European, Israeli officials, Israeli civilians, or non-political experts), humanitarian (representatives of non-governmental or intergovernmental organizations), non-militant Middle East (non-Hizbullah Lebanese and non-Lebanese Middle East), and other. This created larger cells for analysis and created the categories required for testing the two hypotheses.

To determine intercoder reliability, a 47-article (10%) subset of the sample was given to another researcher to code. The primary researcher worked with the second coder to review and train on the code book. Slight changes in wording and in the definition of sources were made to the code book as a result of this discussion. After the two researchers each coded the same sample, Krippendorf's alpha values were used to calculate intercoder reliability. Among all variables coded, the only variables with alpha scores below 0.6 were those with very few cases to

compare (for example, there were problems when the coders examined the ninth or tenth sources. There were so few articles that contained nine or ten sources so that disagreement on a few cases pulled down the alpha scores). Alpha values for most key variables (topic: α 0.742, percent agreement 78.7%; headline terror score: α 0.791, percent agreement 97.9%; text political score: α 0.838, percent agreement 89.4%; total sources: α 0.705, percent agreement 79.4%) were reliable or highly reliable. For those key variables with lower alpha values, percent agreement was still high (text terror score: α 0.662, percent agreement 78.7%; headline political score: α undefined, percent agreement 97.9%; headline humanitarian score: α undefined, percent agreement 100%).

Results

The article characteristics, source choice, and framing variables were analyzed using SPSS statistical software. Frequencies and descriptive statistics were calculated for the article characteristic variables while chi squares, correlations, and ANOVAs answered the research questions and tested the hypotheses.

Article Characteristics

In all, 464 stories were coded. The mean story length was 847.08 words (SD = 635.01); stories ranged from 301 to 8147 words. Because of the inclusion of one unusually long article (only one article was longer than 5000 words), the story length data were skewed; the median story length was 712 words. Interestingly, only 14 articles (3%) focused specifically on Hizbullah violence. The most common story topic was Israel (n = 102, 22%), closely followed by Middle Eastern politics (n = 98, 21.1%), then by Lebanese politics (n=79, 16.4%), non-Hizbullah violence (n=48, 10.3%), the U.S. involvement in the Middle East (n=39, 8.4%), other non-politics (n=30, 6.5%), news advisory articles (n=26, 5.6%), and other politics (n=21, 4.5%).

Religion (n=10, 2.2%) and health and education (n=0, 0%) were the only coded topics that occurred less frequently than Hizbullah violence.

The vast majority of articles (n = 440; 94.8%) cited at least one source; more than half (n = 244; 52.59%) used five or more sources. For the entire sample, the mean number of sources used was 5.02 (SD = 3.08). The most common source used was an anti-Hizbullah source. The results show that 338 articles (72.8%) used at least one anti-Hizbullah source (see Table 1). Non-militant Middle East sources (non-Hizbullah Lebanese or non-Lebanese Middle East) were also used in a majority of articles; 256 articles (55.2%) used a non-militant Middle East source. Fewer than one-third of the articles coded (n = 148; 31.9%) used pro-Hizbullah sources. Humanitarian sources were quoted least of all, with only 124 articles (26.7%) quoting one or more humanitarian source.

The order of sources included in an article is important. Sources used early on in the story are given more prominence and more weight than sources appearing near the end of the article. In this study sample, almost half of the stories (n = 226, 48.7%) used an anti-Hizbullah source as their first source. Over 89% used an anti-Hizbullah source as either a first or second source, or as both.

News Media Frames of Hizbullah

Research question one asked how the four international newspapers framed Hizbullah and its actions. This question sought to determine whether or not news frames from the four different nations reflected the complexity of Hizbullah, including its function as a group appearing on some countries' terrorist list, a political organization, and a provider of social services. Broadly speaking, the data showed that news frames did not reflect this complexity; rather, the organization was framed mostly as terroristic, sometimes as political, and almost

never as a humanitarian organization. To answer the question, the articles were coded for

multiple framing variables. These variables were then re-coded into three aggregate scores:

terrorism frame; political frame; and humanitarian frame. Each of these categories were

computed by adding together the three variables which measured their respective frames; thus,

each of these aggregate scores fell between zero and three. Scores at or near zero indicate that

that framing category was relatively unused. Scores at or near three indicate that that framing

category was heavily used.

More than three-quarters (n = 352, 75.9%) of the articles in the sample used some kind of

terrorism frame to refer to Hizbullah. The mean terrorism frame score was 1.17 per story (SD =

0.872). Most articles used more than one terrorism frame variable. In contrast, only 27.2% (n =

126) of the articles used some political frame. Only 1.9% (n = 9) of the articles used any

humanitarian frame. To test for the significance of these differences, a chi-square goodness-of-fit

test of their respective frequencies was conducted. A chi-square test confirmed that the

differences in frames are significant at the 99% confidence level (see Table 2). These data

suggest that news frames do not reflect the complexity of Hizbullah's activities. Media focus on

the organization's violent activities, rather than on its political involvement, and essentially

ignore Hizbullah's provision of social aid to the Lebanese people.

Frames over Time and Evolution of Hizbullah

The second research question asked if media frames of Hizbullah changed from 2008 to

2011, as the organization became more politically influential. In general, the frames did not

change across the time periods, though there were some changes in frames of individual news

outlets. To answer this question, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was used to

compare the mean frame scores across the three time periods. A Scheffe post-hoc test showed no

significant differences for any variables across the time periods (see Table 3). In short, then, frames of Hizbullah remained static over the three time periods included in this study despite an expanded role for the organization in the governance of Lebanon. The same test was conducted for each individual news source to measure if news frames within the news outlets changed over time. The study sample included a broad range of news outlets, so it was possible for changes in the coverage of individual outlets to be lost in the complete sample data. No differences for any variable across time were found in AFP or Times articles. For the Lebanese Daily Star and New York Times articles, significant differences were found.

For Daily Star articles, the ANOVA test revealed significant differences in the political frame (f (2,116) = 6.652, p = .002). A Scheffe post-hoc test showed that Daily Star articles published in the February and March 2011 time period scored significantly higher on political framing variables as compared to both the January to April 2008 time period (p = .005) and the June to September 2008 time period (p = .015). No other significant differences were found across time periods in Daily Star articles.

Though the changes are not significant over time, the political frames used in both the Times and the AFP actually decreased across the three time periods. As Hizbullah was gaining political influence in Lebanon and the Middle East, then, the Times and the AFP were framing the organization as a political entity less often.

New York Times articles' use of terrorism frames also differed significantly (f (2, 116) = 6.028, p = .003). A Scheffe post-hoc test found significant differences in terrorism frames between the February and March 2011 and June to September 2008 time periods, showing that the June to September 2008 terrorism frames were significantly higher than the February and

March 2011 terrorism frames (p = .003). No other significant differences were found across time periods in New York Times articles.

When articles from all four news outlets were considered, then, there were no significant changes in frames of Hizbullah as the organization gained political influence in Lebanon. In articles published by the Daily Star and the New York Times, however, there were significant changes between time periods. This suggests that frames used in the Daily Star and New York Times were slightly less resistant to change in explaining Hizbullah's evolving influence than were the Times and the AFP. In general, though, news frames did not change as Hizbullah became more politically influential. Frames mostly depicted Hizbullah as terrorists despite its increased political involvement and governmental influence in Lebanon.

Relationships Between Frames and Source Use

Both hypotheses considered the relationship between source use and frames of Hizbullah. Hypothesis one suggested that articles using primarily anti-Hizbullah sources would be more likely to frame the organization as terroristic. This hypothesis was supported. A significant positive correlation (r = .132, p = .002) was found between the composite anti-Hizbullah source use score and terrorism frames. As the use and prominence of anti-Hizbullah sources increased, the use of terrorism frames also increased. As the use and prominence of anti-Hizbullah sources decreased, the use of terrorism frames decreased. In other words, articles which relied on anti-Hizbullah sources were more likely to frame Hizbullah as a terrorist organization.

In addition to the correlation between anti-Hizbullah source use and terrorism frame, significant relationships were also found between the use of pro-Hizbullah sources and the use of non-militant Middle East sources. A significant positive correlation (r = .144, p = .001) was found between the composite pro-Hizbullah source score and terrorism score. As the use and

prominence of pro-Hizbullah sources increased, the use of terrorism frames also increased. As the use and prominence of pro-Hizbullah sources decreased, the use of terrorism frames decreased. A significant negative correlation ($r = - .201, p < .001$) was found between the composite non-militant Middle East source score and the use of terrorism frames. Thus, as the use and prominence of non-militant Middle East sources increased, the use of terrorism frames decreased. As the use and prominence of non-militant Middle East sources, including non-Hizbullah Lebanese and non-Lebanese Middle East sources, decreased, the use of terrorism frames increased. In other words, articles which relied on non-militant Middle Eastern sources were less likely to frame Hizbullah as a terrorist organization.

Hypothesis two suggested that articles using primarily pro-Hizbullah sources would be more likely to frame Hizbullah as a political organization. This hypothesis was not supported. No significant correlation was found between the use and prominence and use of pro-Hizbullah sources and political frames. However, a significant negative correlation ($r = - .339, p < .001$) was found between the composite anti-Hizbullah source score and political frames. As the use and prominence of anti-Hizbullah sources increased, the use of political frames decreased, and as the use and prominence of anti-Hizbullah sources decreased, the use of political frames increased. Articles which relied on anti-Hizbullah sources were unlikely to frame Hizbullah as a political organization. Though the hypothesis was not supported, then, the logic of the hypothesis held: There was a significant positive correlation between source views of Hizbullah and use of political frames.

A significant positive correlation was found between the composite non-militant Middle East source score and political frames ($r = .354, p < .001$). As the use and prominence of non-militant Middle East sources increased, then, the use of political frames increased. As the use and

prominence of non-militant Middle East sources decreased, the use of political frames decreased. Articles which relied on non-militant Middle East sources were more likely to frame Hizbullah as a political organization.

Summary of Results

As these results show, Hizbullah was primarily framed as a terrorist organization, regardless of its multi-dimensional roles in Lebanese society at the three points in time of the study. Hypothesis one was supported. Articles using anti-Hizbullah sources as their primary sources were more likely to use terrorism frames. Hypothesis two, however, was rejected. Articles using pro-Hizbullah sources as their primary sources were not more likely to use political frames.

In addition to the findings to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses, the data collected for this study also yielded some interesting results which shed more light on the ways media frame Hizbullah. First, past research about Hizbullah has emphasized the organization's connections to other entities that have appeared on Western terrorist lists including Hamas and Iran (see, for example, Byman, 2005). News articles analyzed in this study seem to reify those connections. Media stories linked Hizbullah to terrorist organizations or sponsors of terrorism in 41.7% (N=194) of articles in the sample. The literature also suggests that official sources may be relied on quite heavily (Entman, 2004; Wittebols, 1991). Our results confirm media reliance on official sources. For instance, Israeli officials were used as the first source in 16.6% of articles (N=77), more than any other source type except U.S., Canadian, or European sources or non-Hizbullah Lebanese sources. Israeli members of government and military or police officials, then, were the third most-used first source in the entire sample. Stories that feature Hizbullah continue to frame it through its oppositional relationship to Israel.

The final section of this paper will discuss the significance of these findings, consider the

limitations of this study, and provide suggestions for future research in this area.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine the roles of macro, meso and micro-level

variables on news frames of a multi-dimensional organization. To consider the roles of these

variables, the study asked how frames of Hizbullah varied by news organization, over time, and

by the types of sources used in articles. Although Hizbullah has evolved over time (Alagha,

2011), few political frames appeared in the Western media reflecting the organization's

increased political roles in Lebanon.

In the Lebanese Daily Star, the number of political frames increased over time, but the

number of terrorist frames remained relatively constant. With regard to source use, however,

frames did vary significantly. From these results, two major trends can be seen: First, news

outlets' existing frames of Hizbullah are change-resistant; second, articles relying on anti-

Hizbullah (or, put differently, pro-Israeli) sources are most likely to use terrorist frames, while

articles relying on non-militant Middle Eastern sources are most likely to avoid terrorist frames.

Frames Resist Change Even as Organization's Role in Lebanon Changes

This research supports Gitlin's (1980) conclusion that frames are persistent. While

Hizbullah had an evolving role in Lebanese society from 2008 to 2011, news articles presented a

static frame of the organization. The New York Times merely decreased its use of terrorism

frames of Hizbullah without increasing its political frames of the organization over time. The

exception to this rule is the Daily Star. Though the Star did not decrease its use of terrorism

frames of Hizbullah, its use of political frames of the organization did increase significantly after

Hizbullah's rise to power. Of the news outlets examined in this study, the Star's frame use most

closely mirrors Hizbullah's reality-- both Hizbullah's political presence and the Star's political

frames increased over time, while the organization's violent activities and the Star's use of

terrorist frames continued.

Sources Matter

This study also reinforces past research in finding a significant correlation between

source use and frames. As Wittebols (1991) suggested, articles relied heavily on official sources

rather than on terrorist sources. This reliance on anti-Hizbullah sources strongly influenced

articles' use of terrorist frames of the organization. When articles used non-militant Middle

Eastern sources – sources close to the situation geographically but not officially connected either

with Hizbullah or with its defined enemy (Israel)– significantly more political frames and

significantly fewer terrorist frames were used. As journalists relied more on local sources who

were not official representatives of Hizbullah, Israel, or another militant organization, the

articles' frames of Hizbullah moved closer to representing the organization's actual multi-

dimensional role in the region. As the media relied more heavily on the quotes from

representatives of Hizbullah's defined enemies, their article frames shifted to focus on only one

dimension of Hizbullah. While supporting Wittebols' (1991) argument that reliance on

government sources leads to increased negative frames of terrorists, this research suggests that

the key to a more accurate frame of multi-dimensional organizations may not be increased use of

organizational sources but rather an increased use of sources not officially connected to the

organization or its enemies.

The content analysis results show that the media rely on the terrorist frame. The findings

lend support to those who argue that dominant political formations influence news production.

Ideology is a strong force in media news production because news production reflects societal

ideology. The four newspapers in the sample did little to contextualize Hizbullah beyond one frame and they did little to contest portrayals of Hizbullah as a terrorist group (Edelman, 1993). Macro governmental or political ideologies may be influencing how media outlets from one country cover events in other nations. If a media outlet's home nation has determined that a part of Hizbullah is a terrorist organization, then media coverage appears to reify that ideology.

The media relations tactics of Hizbullah have been chronicled by McLeary (2006), who urged reporters to acknowledge that they are being "hosted" by the organization in their coverage of violence in Lebanon. McLeary concluded "If being led around by Hezbollah 'press officers' is the only way for reporters to tour bomb-damaged neighborhoods in Beirut, so be it — as long as they disclose as much" (para 8). Getting sources about the violence from alternate sources, those not affiliated with Hizbullah or supporting the other side, might mean more focus on the humanitarian issues that seemed missing from this data set. Humanitarian sources appeared in only 26% of the articles. NGOs and other groups are working in Lebanon. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) lists nearly 400 NGOs working in Lebanon. They have valuable information to share about relief efforts and reconstruction. Yet, none of the four news organizations seem to be quoting these NGOs yet. Humanitarian topics are not as interesting to the media as conflict.

Conclusion

This study found that media frames are enduring and are resistant to change – even when the focal organization has evolved. The frames of Hizbullah remained essentially static over time even though the organization became a leader in the Lebanese government. The data from the four newspapers also show that as journalists relied more on sources not serving as representatives of Hizbullah or Israel, then the frames were more likely to capture the multi-

dimensional role of the organization in Lebanon. Official sources provide uni-dimensional frames, no matter whose side they represent. As media scholars and educators, our task is to acknowledge this situation and to prepare future media professionals to better understand how ideology influences media coverage. Editors, journalists and media houses should be more reflective of the assumptions they make and the sources they cite in stories.

The goal of this study was to explore one multi-dimensional organization that engages in violence as one part of its activities. As with all studies, however, the scope and results of this research are limited in several ways. First, the research included a Western bias because of the papers included in the sample. The researcher's language limitations required the use of English-language newspapers. This exclusion of other newspapers, though, limits the generalizability of the research to other news sources. Second, because of the size of the populations of news articles, the AFP and the Daily Star were underrepresented in the sample. In raw numbers, all four news outlets were used equally; however, a higher percentage of articles from the Times and the New York Times were included in the sample. Finally, the sample did not include enough headline frames or humanitarian frames of Hizbullah for this data to be included in any statistical tests. Though this is itself revealing, it does limit the scope of this study, especially because headline frames are so influential in creating news frames.

Future research in this area should focus on other multi-dimensional organizations which engage in terrorism in addition to other activities. As Jenkins (2006) notes, "larger [terrorist] organizations and more ambitious operations have functional specialization, with individuals devoted to recruiting, training, intelligence, reconnaissance, planning, logistics, finance, propaganda, and social services (e.g., support for widows, orphans, and families of suicide attackers)" (p. 123). Stokke (2006), for example, examined the structure the Liberation Tigers of

Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka, noting that the organization provides "revenue collection, police and

judiciary as well as public services and economic development initiatives" (p. 1022). Abuza

(2009) also noted that Hamas and Jemaah Islamiyah are moving toward the Hizbullah model.

Future studies should examine how these organizations are framed in media. Future studies

should also include more in-depth analyses of variations of coverage in specific regions or

countries, in addition to analyses of variations across borders. Future studies should also correct

for some of the limitations of this research by including non-English newspapers. The inclusion

of non-English news sources – especially non-European sources – would correct for some of the

Western bias in the sample used in this study and provide for a more globally representative

analysis of news frames of Hizbullah. Finally, this study examined only one side of the

supposedly symbiotic relationship between Hizbullah and the media. However, both terrorism

studies and public relations theory suggest that the relationship is co-dependent. Future studies,

then, should consider the other side of the information subsidy and examine what publicity

materials Hizbullah itself sends out. This study has made it clear that Hizbullah is framed as a

terrorist organization in the four newspapers. Future studies should examine how Hizbullah

frames itself in its own communication. As noted above, it is possible that Hizbullah leaders

accept and encourage terrorist frames of their organization because their audiences are not the

readers of the New York Times but Lebanese who support the war against Israeli and Shi'a

Islamist positions. Future research should determine whether or not this is the case.

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Table 1 Weighted Use of Sources by Category.

Source Category	Mean	SD
Pro-Hizbullah Sources	4.78	7.28
Anti-Hizbullah Sources	18.26	16.63
Humanitarian Sources	1.47	4.10
Non-militant Middle East Sources	10.94	13.89
Other Sources	0.81	3.77

Table 2 Chi-Square Test of Terrorist and Political Frames (all news sources).

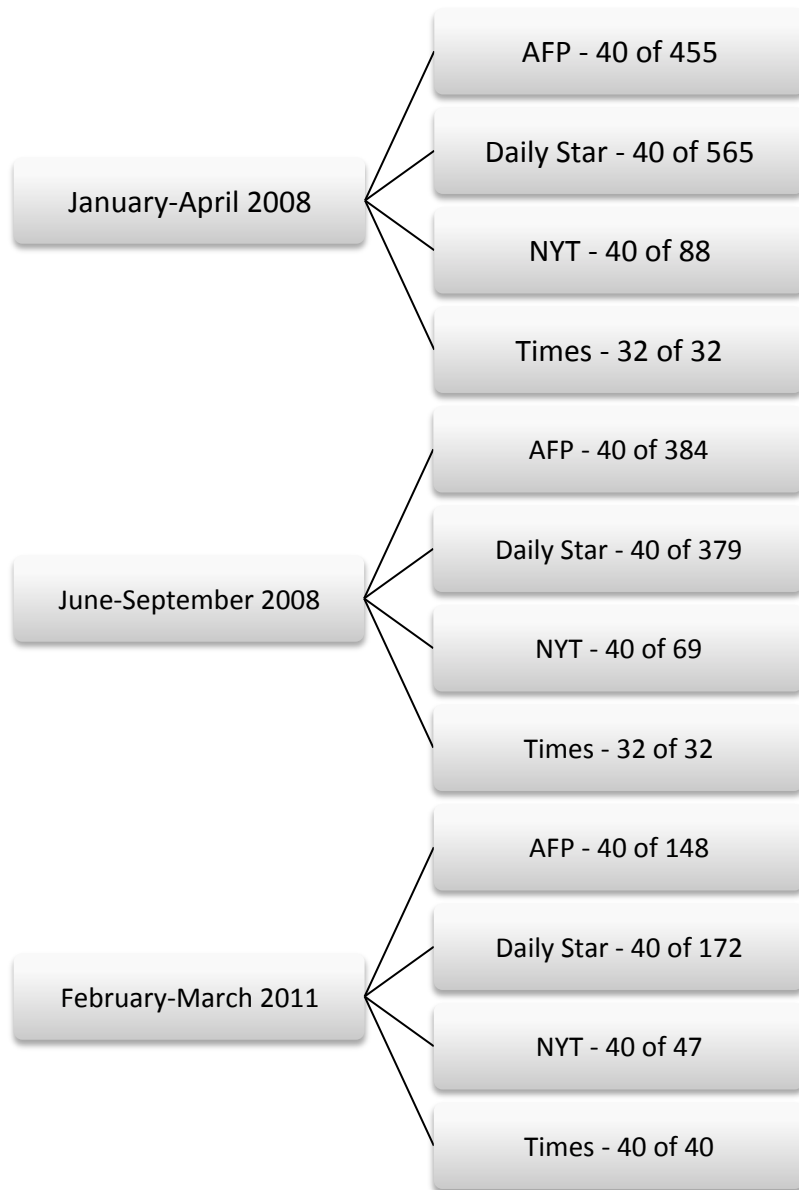| Frame variable	Frequencies			
	0	1	2	3
Text terrorism (n = 464)	112	191	130	31
Text political (n = 464)	338	68	42	16

Note: * = *p* < .001 Chi-square for terrorism frame = 112.603*, df =3 and political frame = 578.138*, df = 3.

Table 3 ANOVA of Changes of Political and Terrorist Frames over Time By News Outlet.

	Time Period Means			df	*f*
	Jan.-April 2008	June-Sept. 2008	Feb.-March 2011		
Entire sample political	.41	.41	.47	2, 458	0.304
AFP political	.57	.45	.23	2, 117	2.145
Daily Star political	.64$_a$	.73$_b$	1.35$_{a, b}$	2, 116	6.652
New York Times political	.25	.23	.18	2, 116	.167
Times political	.13	.19	.13	2, 101	0.192
Entire sample terrorism	1.17	1.26	1.09	2, 458	1.472
AFP terrorism	1.00	1.30	1.23	2, 117	1.104
Daily Star terrorism	1.00	.68	.78	2, 116	2.767
New York Times terrorism	1.23	1.64$_b$	.95$_b$	2, 116	6.028
Times terrorism	1.53	1.47	1.40	1, 101	.218

Note: a = significant difference (*p* < .01) between Jan-April 2008 and Feb.-March 2011
        b = significant difference (*p* < .01) between June-Sept. 2008 and Feb.-March 2011

Figure 1: Population and Sample Sizes.

January-April 2008	AFP - 40 of 455
	Daily Star - 40 of 565
	NYT - 40 of 88
	Times - 32 of 32
June-September 2008	AFP - 40 of 384
	Daily Star - 40 of 379
	NYT - 40 of 69
	Times - 32 of 32
February-March 2011	AFP - 40 of 148
	Daily Star - 40 of 172
	NYT - 40 of 47
	Times - 40 of 40

Appendix A: Timeline of Hizbullah Rise to Power in Lebanon.

1982   Israel invades southern Lebanon; Shi'a resistance coalesces into Hizbullah;

Hizbullah begins kidnapping campaign

1983   Hizbullah attacks U.S. Embassy in Beirut with car bomb; attacks American

Marine barracks with truck bomb

1984   Hizbullah carries out a string of bombings; blamed for attack on American Marine

barracks in Beirut

1985   Hizbullah fighters hijack TWA Flight 847 and hold passengers hostage for 16

days, leading to the Israeli release of Shi'a prisoners

1989   Lebanese Parliament ratifies Taif Agreement, restructuring the religious makeup

of Parliament and calling for the disbandment of all militias; Hizbullah remains

active

1992   Hizbullah's Secretary General Sheikh Abbas al-Musawi is killed in Israeli attack;

Sayyad Hassan Nasrallah takes over as Secretary General of Hizbullah; Hizbullah

enters politics and begins running candidates for Parliament

1996   Hizbullah fires rockets into northern Israel; Israel responds with "Operation

Grapes of Wrath" attacks on southern Lebanon

1997   U.S. lists Hizbullah as terrorist organization

2000   Israel pulls out of Lebanon; Hizbullah credited with victory

2005   Former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri is assassinated; Hizbullah denies

involvement, but members are implicated in the killing

2006   Hizbullah captures two Israeli border patrolmen. Israel invades southern Lebanon

with the express purpose of routing Hizbullah; after a month, a ceasefire is

declared and Hizbullah claims victory

2007   UN Security Council votes to set up tribunal to try suspects in Hariri assassination

2008   After a series of mass protests and a takeover of portions of Beirut, Hizbullah is

given veto power over governmental decisions

2010   Hizbullah's spiritual guide, Grand Ayathollah Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah, dies

2011   In protest of UN inquiries into Hizbullah's alleged role in Hariri's assassination,

Hizbullah representatives withdraw from government; as a result, the government

collapses. As the government is re-assembled, Hizbullah-backed Najib Miqati is

appointed prime minister