An Analysis of the Application of Framing Theory in "Violent" Short Video News: A Case Study of Observer Network

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Abstract

The "violence frame" is a variant of the traditional "news frame" in the context of short video news. In terms of media effectiveness, it emphasizes and amplifies themes and semantics related to violence within reports, thereby creating an intense sense of dynamism and tension that captivates the audience's "strong gaze." It has significant framing effects in drawing audience attention and evoking emotional resonance. However, it also suffers from evident shortcomings, such as being one-sided, sensational, neglecting factual accuracy, distorting the news structure, and propagating media-induced social anxiety. Thus, how to utilize the "violence frame" to communicate specific events in short video news warrants further discussion.

Full Text Article

Keywords: Short video news; news framing; online communication; violent event reporting

Introduction

In the era of mobile internet, the forms and content of information dissemination have exhibited unprecedented diversity and immediacy. Users not only demand enhanced visual experiences but also seek a sense of realistic engagement akin to "being present on the scene" (Xu, 2015). Against this backdrop, short video news has emerged as an extremely popular form of communication. This innovative mode of content distribution was developed to meet the audience's strong demand for the immersive quality of news in the era of online communication. It satisfies the efficiency of information delivery while catering to users' viewing preferences.

Short video news encompasses nearly all the characteristics of short video dissemination. Firstly, it is characterized by its rapid pace and high degree of fragmentation. Typically, it uses a few seconds of audio-visual montage to outline the key scenes of a news event and extrapolate relevant news topics. This format not only enhances the efficiency of information dissemination but also leverages the strong appeal of visual symbols. Secondly, the dissemination method of short video

news is heavily influenced by its origins in "entertainment videos," enabling it to quickly capture the audience's attention within the fragmented environment of online communication. This mode of transmission, which aligns closely with the fragmented cognitive patterns of audiences exposed to an overwhelming amount of online information, can swiftly mobilize audience emotions through carefully designed news agenda-setting, eliciting their interest and attention toward related events (Liu, 2010). The broad impact of this medium makes it an indispensable area of study in modern communication research.

However, despite its remarkable advantages in dissemination efficiency and audience engagement, the dissemination logic of short video news differs significantly from that of traditional media. In the online communication environment, media outlets must not only process news information rapidly but also distill its deeper meanings through comprehensive reflection, ultimately constructing the core topics of news within a certain frame (Liu, 2017). This framing is not only a manifestation of media's communication ideology but also an essential means of conveying complex information to audiences within a limited timeframe.

This paper will use the "2022 French May Day demonstrations" as a case study to deconstruct the framing mechanisms of a short video news piece published by Observer Network (hereafter referred to as "Guanwang"in mandarin pinyin). By integrating methods of news planning and short video editing, this paper will dissect the specific framing strategies employed by online media in reporting socially contentious events through short videos. Furthermore, the study will analyze how these framing strategies stimulate public emotions and influence public opinion trends, ultimately exploring the roles and limitations of short video news within the modern communication environment (Zhang, Wei, & Wu, 2022).

Theoretical Review and Research Design
(1) Overview of Framing Theory

Framing, as a scholarly concept for examining human cognition and communication behavior, has two origin lines: Bateson's "meta-communication" and Goffman's "cognitive structure" (Goffman, 1974; Miller, 2007). The American scholar Lori Dorfman (2001) argued that the practical application of frames by media is analogous to the three levels of conceptual categorization in news construction: overarching values, general issues, and core substance (Zhao, 2021). Accordingly, frames can be categorized into three levels: value frames, event frames, and detail frames (Entman, 1993). Gitlin (1980) proposed a mechanism in which news producers process information through selection, omission, and emphasis. Expanding on this, Entman (1993) noted that news frames appear "natural" on the surface, often blending indistinctly into texts, and can only be fully revealed through systematic comparisons of narrative methods (Liu, 2010).

Entman identified four factors that contribute to constructing prominent frames:
• Agency: The agent, person, or institution responsible for the news event.
• Identification: The cues and classifications associated with the identity attributes of participants.
 • Categorization: The process of classifying the news event into categories of specific nature, often labeled.

• Generalization: Explaining the essence of a news event in general terms (Entman, 1993).

In summary, news framing is not only the interpretative routine used by media organizations in reporting issues but also the path through which audiences rapidly recognize, decode, and categorize information, shaping intrapersonal communication on a psychological level (Scheufele, 1999).

(2) Definition of the "Violence Frame"

A news frame is a theoretical and conceptual framework used to organize and present news reports. It encompasses diverse types, angles, and styles of reporting. Based on the preceding analysis, framing is an inherent principle and strategy that news media employ to selectively process news facts. It also serves as one of the cognitive schemas for audiences to interpret media information (Iyengar, 1991). It can be inferred that frames with different qualifiers are extensions of the foundational framing theory concept, adapted by communicators and audiences to achieve specific transmission and interpretation objectives by adding emotional or subjective inclinations.

"Violence" serves as a symbolic construct that can explain specific real-world behaviors or function as an abstract semantic concept in psychological and emotional dimensions of interpretation. Simultaneously, "violence" is also a gesture, embodying the symbolic significance of resistance and conflict through physical actions of individuals (Fahmy, 2004).

By definition, the "violence frame" is a refined branch of framing, situated within the domain of violence, and represents the application of framing through subjective treatment involving emotions and intentions. News reports employing the "violence frame" often feature highly dynamic, tense, and even sensationalized content. Common manifestations in media coverage of various social events include:

1. Direct depictions of violent scenes (e.g., riots, disasters, wars) in news content.

2. Highlighting the inherent violent contradictions within social events by selectively focusing on violent themes and emphasizing the intractability of events, thereby amplifying the violent atmosphere.

3. Using suggestive headlines and commentary to evoke associations with "violence-related themes and semantics" in news events, prompting audiences to interpret their personal situations with conflicting perspectives rooted in the context of the news (Iyengar, 1991).

The violence frame typically relies on specific, widely contentious, and emotionally charged social events. Civic issues, especially those involving conflict-laden topics, serve as key anchors for such framing (Gross & Aday, 2003). Civic and political news, due to its distinctive nature, has a strong emotional connection with audiences, making it a primary focus for violence frames.

In essence, the "violence frame" is a specific type of extended media and news frame. In terms of media effectiveness, it emphasizes and amplifies violence-related themes and semantics within reports, thereby creating intense dynamism and tension that captivate the audience's "strong gaze" (Fahmy, 2004).

Regarding its characteristics, the content focus of the "violence frame" prioritizes the violent themes and semantics in reports. By showcasing violent scenes and stressing the intractable nature

of events, it draws the audience's attention. Compared with the objective, multi-angled presentation required by "news frames," the violence frame tends to emphasize emotional and subjective expressions, aiming to generate emotional resonance between news events and audiences through dramatic portrayals (Scheufele, 1999). Additionally, the violence frame crafts a high-tension atmosphere by outlining conflicts and tensions in scenes and employing specific headlines and commentary. It prioritizes tone framing over causal framing, intentionally omitting some attributive news details to facilitate the construction of emotional scenarios.

Literature Review

Framing theory in contemporary communication and journalism research has gradually expanded from the traditional media environment to the digital and networked multimodal communication context, reflecting an intertwined evolution of theoretical exploration and practical application. In recent years, as communication technologies and media environments have undergone rapid transformation, scholars have begun to reassess the applicability and limitations of framing theory, particularly its extension into emerging media forms such as online communication and short video news.

In traditional framing theory, media construct specific news frames through the selection, arrangement, and emphasis of information, providing audiences with a pathway to comprehend events. However, in the networked communication environment, the construction and dissemination effects of media frames have undergone significant changes. Some scholars argue that platforms like short videos and social media have reshaped the expression of frames through highly visualized and symbolic forms, making them more emotional and fragmented (Fahmy, 2020). This shift not only amplifies the appeal of frames but also exacerbates audiences' tendency toward superficial cognition. For instance, van Dijk (2018) highlights that the algorithmic mechanisms of digital media, by amplifying the exposure of specific topics, have made news frames increasingly susceptible to environmental control, thereby diminishing their original objectivity. This perspective is noteworthy as it underscores both the functional expansion of framing theory and its latent issues in the new media era.

Simultaneously, the multimodal characteristics of news frames in network communication have become increasingly evident, with the importance of visual frames in the dissemination process gaining recognition and investigation. Rodriguez and D'Angelo (2017) argue that visual frames, through the composition, color, and emotional elements of images and videos, can directly influence audiences' emotional responses to news events. This view is supported by other studies, such as those by Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007), who contend that emotionalized visual frames significantly enhance the dissemination effect of news but may also lead to emotional polarization and biased judgments among audiences. This discussion of the tension between emotional appeal and cognitive depth offers a new dimension for framing theory research: how to balance these elements within news frames.

Moreover, research on the interactivity of frames reflects the dynamic nature of framing theory in the digital age. In traditional media, frames are primarily constructed by journalists and media organizations. In contrast, in online communication, audiences redefine and disseminate news

frames through comments, shares, and other forms of engagement (Matthes, 2020). This phenomenon demonstrates that news frames are no longer unidirectional constructs but outcomes of multi-actor interactions. This shift weakens media control over frames while expanding the diversity of dissemination. This aligns with Entman's (1993) classical framing analysis, which posits that the power of frames lies in their ability to guide public understanding of events cohesively—a capacity that networked communication potentially disperses.

When exploring the evolution of framing theory, the unique role of short video news in the dissemination process cannot be overlooked. With its rapid pace, direct content, and strong emotional impact, short video news offers a novel experimental setting for the application of framing theory. Fahmy (2020) notes that conflict frames in short video news can significantly enhance dissemination effects but also risk distorting complex events and misleading audiences due to their oversimplification. Such critiques prompt researchers to consider whether news frames in this medium require stricter norms to address the challenges of fragmented information.

Methodologically, framing theory research in social and theoretical news reporting exhibits diverse development trends. Content analysis remains a primary tool, particularly effective in comparative analysis and textual deconstruction. For example, Zhao Qingyuan's comparative study of rhetorical frames in livelihood and tourism news from China and the U.S. reveals the impact of cultural contexts on frame construction(Zhao, 2021). Meanwhile, case studies offer in-depth support for framing research on specific events. Liu Dayong's analysis of extreme social event reporting examines how framing deviations can provoke emotional agitation and influence public opinion. Driven by new technologies, statistical analysis has gained prominence(Liu, 2010). Zhang Yue's model-based study integrates audience emotion analysis to quantify the impact of different news frames on audience attitudes and emotions, providing more precise empirical support for framing theory(Zhang, Wei, & Wu, 2022). Additionally, the rise of multimodal analysis and experimental methods has expanded the boundaries of framing research. The former combines text, images, and videos to decode the construction logic and dissemination effects of news frames, while the latter simulates the cognitive and emotional impacts of frames in immersive communication environments using technologies like virtual reality. The integration of these diverse methods has enabled framing research to evolve into a more systematic and nuanced theoretical toolkit, offering a comprehensive perspective for understanding the construction logic and social effects of news frames.

In summary, framing theory's application in the digital era not only broadens the research scope of communication studies but also provides theoretical guidance for media practices. However, the theory faces challenges posed by evolving communication technologies and media ecosystems. Questions such as how to balance emotionalization and rationalization in frame construction and how to ensure the authenticity and integrity of multimodal frames pose higher demands on academic research and media practices. The significance of studying this paper's theme lies in analyzing the manifestation and dissemination effects of the "violence frame" in short video news, thereby contributing empirical evidence to refine the application of framing theory in the networked era and offering improvements for news editing practices in the digital media environment.

Research Design

This study employs a combination of research methods to comprehensively analyze the application of the "violence frame" in short video news and its dissemination effects. First, the study uses literature analysis to review the academic background of framing theory, clarifying the definition, characteristics, and applicability of the "violence frame" in the context of short video news. Second, in the case analysis phase, the content deconstruction method is applied to perform a shot-by-shot analysis of a short video news piece published by Observer Network. This detailed deconstruction examines the composition of visuals, narrative logic, and textual information, revealing how these elements collectively construct the "violence frame." This approach effectively uncovers the specific techniques short video media employ in their storytelling to create high-tension atmospheres through tone, emotional elements, and symbolic expressions.

Furthermore, the study utilizes Python web scraping tools to extract 3,926 comments related to the short video from the Bilibili platform. By identifying the most popular keywords and discussion topics in the comment section, the study conducts keyword analysis and text classification to quantify audience emotional responses to the video and their dissemination tendencies. This process verifies the effects of the "violence frame" in a specific communication context. The integration of quantitative and qualitative methods enhances the reliability of the research.

The research design integrates three dimensions—literature, case studies, and data analysis—by combining multiple methodologies to comprehensively present the manifestation and dissemination effects of the "violence frame" in short video news. This design not only provides empirical support for the application of framing theory in the new media environment but also offers practical suggestions for improving the use of news frames in media practice.

Empirical Analysis
(1) Presentation of the "Violence Frame" in Short Video News

According to a report by the Associated Press on May 2, 2022, tens of thousands of people marched in various European cities on May Day to commemorate International Workers' Day and urge governments to provide more support for laborers. Historically, May Day has been the peak period for the rise of socialist ideologies and left-wing movements in Europe. Influenced by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labor and employment markets, the demonstrations in Europe on May Day 2022 were more fervent and intense compared to previous years. A report from China Daily on May 3 noted: "May Day in Europe is usually a time when workers' emotions run high. Over the past two years, protests by workers were curtailed due to the pandemic." France, with its long-standing social and cultural tradition of demonstrations and workers' strikes, exhibited the most radical and turbulent behavior among European nations during the 2022 May Day events. These factors, rich in news value, naturally made the French demonstrations the primary focus for media coverage of May Day activities.

Regarding the French May Day event, Observer Network (Guanwang) published a written report on May 2, 2022, titled "France's 'May Day' March of 110,000: Violent Clashes in Paris, 54 Arrested". On the same day, it released a short video news piece on its Bilibili self-media account

titled "Massive Protests Erupt on France's May Day, Demonstrators Clash with Police in Paris". The video, lasting 37 seconds, prominently featured violent street confrontations, complemented by bold yellow headlines that delivered a striking visual impact at first glance. This paper deconstructs the presentation of the "protest frame" in the short video using Entman's four "salient elements" of framing theory (Miller, 2007).

1. Agency Attribution

The short video news piece by Guanwang was based on its written report but selectively extracted violent segments from the May Day demonstrations, emphasizing the violent aspect of the event rather than providing a comprehensive depiction of its broader social context. Compared to the written report's descriptive language, the short video used captions such as "Violence Continues Unfolding in Paris" and added quotation marks around the term "May Day" as a symbolic gesture, suggesting a sense of mockery and satire (Lin, n.d.). Through this rough and provocative editorial approach, the video presented an image of May Day in France as a highly polarized event rife with overlapping conflicts.

Despite the audience's lack of complete understanding of the event's background, the display of violent acts by the agents in the video enables viewers to draw their own interpretations through hypertextual references to reality (Gan & Dong, 2013). The emotional connection elicited by such a framing strategy creates an instant impact that traditional news reports are often unable to achieve in framing applications.

2. Identification

The fragmented and jumpy design characteristics of short video media justify the frequent use of shaky and logically tenuous jump cuts in short video news. In the Guanwang example, numerous visuals of citizens fighting each other and fire-laden scenes were paired with captions like "Violence Continues Unfolding on Paris Streets; French Interior Minister Darmanin Strongly Condemns Protesters." These combinations of language and visual information create a compelling impact, leading audiences to form clear impressions of confrontational roles in the violent activity.

Viewers are inclined to associate the visuals with simplified identities, such as "thuggish citizens" versus "dedicated police officers." The crude selection of visual content amplifies the perception of violence, making it easier for online audiences to resonate and empathize emotionally. However, as cross-cultural exchange and media literacy among audiences improve in the information age, the media's coarse and biased identity guidance (Liu, 2006) can spark debates in comment sections over the authenticity of events. The editorial approach used by Guanwang is particularly intriguing: while guiding the audience toward a harsh critique of opportunists destroying public property, it simultaneously provokes others to question the rights of workers and the truth behind the protests. Such polarized discussions in the comment section amplify the short video's virality, strategically boosting its popularity.

3. Categorization

According to Lori Dorfman's framework classification theory, news frames can be categorized into value frames, event frames, and detail frames based on the conceptual levels of message construction in news. Detail frames, which are closely tied to the essence of the problem, often rely on expressive language that emphasizes "detailed depictions" to categorize the subject of the news into specific attributes.

In the Guanwang case, phrases like "110,000 Protesters," "Violent Demonstrators," and "Fifty Arrested" appeared multiple times during the short video, with high temporal prominence (as shown in Table 1). However, these detailed and descriptive keywords served merely as transitional captions for interpreting the visuals rather than directly contributing to the narrative. Nonetheless, the media leveraged the "power of visuals" to frame the event as premeditated, violent, and illegal from a moral standpoint. Driven by the "violence frame," this categorization process further intensified audience emotions from a singular perspective. At the same time, it risked fostering public prejudice and misunderstanding. Compared to traditional textual frames, this approach leads audiences to adopt more oversimplified, extreme, and one-sided views on protests and conflicts, amplifying the subjective dissemination of "violence."

4. Generalization

The construction of news frames typically involves two layers. The first is delimitation, which determines the scope of news material and employs selection strategies to emphasize or highlight particular facts or attributes. The second layer is internal structure, which reorganizes selected content elements into a coherent narrative, constructing the complete meaning of the news text.

In short video news, where the format limits the inclusion of extensive textual content, visual captions, background music, and video editing measured in seconds and frames become key tools for implementing reorganization strategies. In the Guanwang case, metaphorical headlines and captions, ambiguous yet visually stimulating elements, and suspenseful music collectively highlighted extreme, violent, and conflict-laden symbolic motifs (Suo, 2016). Purely video-based news discards the "textual imagination" of traditional formats. Instead, its shot composition is designed to maximize audience engagement with public issues as passive spectators, immersing them in a "violence frame" constructed by successive dramatic visuals rather than encouraging critical discussion.

Scene No.	Camera Shot	Visual Content	Filming Technique	Duratio	Audio	Narration
1	Wide Shot	A large group of people in black vandalizing	Horizontal panning, repetitive footage	7s	Background music, crowd shouting	On May 1st local time, France witnessed May Day

		stores				demonstrations, with over 110,000 people participating across cities like Paris.
2	Medium Shot	Disorderly crowd looting supplies, police hitting protesters	Handheld panning	3s	Background music, sound of running	Violence erupted on the streets of Paris as the demonstrations began.
3	Long Shot	A group setting fires in the streets, flames spreading	Handheld zoom-in	3s	Background music, sound of fighting	None
4	Medium Shot	Several individuals fighting	Shaky handheld	3s	Background music, sound of fighting	None
5	Wide Shot	A large number of police deploying tear gas	Zoom shot	5s	Background music, sound of fighting and flames	Approximately 5,000 police officers were deployed in Paris to maintain order and arrest suspects.
6	Long Shot	People fighting with weapons amidst smoke	Handheld	8s	Background music, sound of fighting and flames	The French Interior Minister Darmanin condemned the violent events in Paris, pledging support for law enforcement to maintain public order. Eight officers were injured, and the Paris police condemned attacks on firefighters.

7	Long Shot	(Unspecified)	Handheld	6s	Background music, sound of running and fighting	As of the evening of May 1st, 50 arrests were made in Paris, according to the Paris police.

Table 1: "Observer Network's" Short Video Report on the French May Day Workers' Movement - Scene Analysis

(2) The Logic Behind the Use of the "Violence Frame" in Short Video News

With guidance from the basic presentation form of the violence frame, the media must further combine the selected news elements under "framing" logic to achieve the editor's intended communication effects at the audience level. In traditional journalism, text-based narratives in print media served as the primary vehicles for framing, with "text" as the main medium of expression in both print publications and pre-information era broadcasting systems. However, in the age of online communication, framing expressions have undergone significant changes in the context of mobile, lightweight, small-screen, and fragmented media environments. These changes are partly attributed to innovations in multi-scenario, on-site reporting styles and partly to audiences' new demands for receiving news texts empowered by technological advancements. Overall, these transformations result from the continuous evolution of mass communication in the online environment. The "violence frame," with its inherent emotional "cultivation," strong stimulation, urgency, and controversial nature, aligns with public expectations of the media's role in "democratic" discourse in the internet era. It has thus developed its own logic for narrative influence. Observing the short video news case from Observer Network, three prominent patterns of the "violence frame" are evident:

1. Direct "Violence" to Capture Audience Attention

Direct violence employs visual and auditory multimedia elements to create an immediate sensory impact on the audience through multi-scenario editing formats in integrated media applications. In the analyzed case, visual elements of violence—such as looting, arson, and fighting—occupy 20 seconds of the video's duration. This content delivers a strong and immediate impression, providing intense and direct shocks to the audience. Combined with emotionally charged background music, the visuals effectively amplify the perceived severity of the event and trigger curiosity-driven interest in the footage, establishing a strong first impression that lays the foundation for the video's dissemination.

2. Indirect "Violence" to Evoke Audience Empathy

News narratives utilizing the violence frame often appear in media with overt editorial stances and topics aligned with mainstream societal consensus on controversial events, such as France's

May Day demonstrations. The Observer Network capitalized on short video media to report on a narrow aspect of the entire demonstration, explicitly presenting violent resistance as the core narrative. This portrayal highlights seemingly irreconcilable conflicts between the event's participants. The report indirectly exposes Europe's internal social unrest and chaotic order, effectively critiquing Europe's "systemic institutional violence" through the lens of direct violence.

Referring to the original report from China News, it becomes evident that the short video selectively integrates only the most extreme elements of the event. Consequently, the report implicitly labels the majority of French workers with legitimate demands as "rioters." Although this bias poses certain issues, it aligns with the reality of ideological competition, wherein Chinese media are expected to highlight the advantages of China's political system through comparative reporting. It also resonates with mainstream cultural desires to "expose the West," subtly eliciting varying degrees of reflection and empathy among the audience.

3. Grafted "Violence" to Imply Audience Associations

Beyond leveraging mainstream cultural perspectives to maximize the violence frame's dissemination effects, the broader social context in China, including demands for labor reform and opposition to "996" work culture and overwork, has transitioned from subcultural arenas to mainstream platforms, becoming a growing societal consensus. Particularly on short video platforms dominated by younger audiences, criticisms of capitalist exploitation and advocacy for labor rights are increasingly seen as morally correct.

Given this context, the Observer Network's use of media "violence" may invite audience skepticism. However, rather than diminishing the report's effectiveness, such skepticism and critique within interactive and relatively lightly regulated short video media amplify engagement. The feedback in comment sections creates large-scale discussions, where increased participation heightens the video's popularity. Consequently, the report's comment section becomes a secondary topic generator. This engagement triggers algorithmic amplification on the platform: as the comment section gains traction, related videos featuring themes like "workers' movements" and "Marxism" are increasingly recommended.

In the analyzed case, this ripple effect of the "violence frame" connects the radical emotions of France's workers' movement to the inner emotional sentiments of modern laborers, subtly grafting them onto short video viewers. By the time this paper was written, Python web scraping tools had extracted 3,926 comments related to the Observer Network short video, excluding invalid and deleted comments. Keyword analysis of terms such as "anti-capitalism," "workers' rights," "overtime," and "collapse" revealed that 67.9% of the audience expressed critical attitudes toward the report. Neutral attitudes (keywords not identifiable) accounted for 16.9%, while only 15.2% of the audience aligned with the media's framing stance. The three most popular comments, each receiving thousands of likes, were as follows:

1. Username: Arctic Lemming – "Truly the revolutionary heartland."
2. Username: Heihei China Rises – "Workers' rights are earned by themselves."
3. Username: FerrariSF – "It would be odd if France stopped protesting one day."

Through these three core logic patterns, the "violence frame" in short video news effectively builds public discourse in the online domain. Simultaneously, it amplifies integrated communication effects by regulating audience emotions, showcasing the unique communication landscape of the "violence frame."

Sentiment	Keyword Classification	Percentage
Supportive (93 comments)	Freedom, violence, vandalism, riot, disorder, collapse, "beautiful scenery," failures, idlers, May Day, armed…	15.2%
Neutral (104 comments)	Comments outside "supportive" and "critical" categories, not included in sentiment recognition statistics.	16.9%
Critical (417 comments)	Against overtime, workers' rights, revolution, international demonstrations, Paris Commune, demands, support, oppression, vacation, struggle, awakening, comrades, role model for the people…	67.9%

Table 2: "Observer Network's" Report on the French May Day Workers' Movement - Public Sentiment and Keyword Analysis

(3) Negative Effects of the "Violence Frame" in Short Video News

Although the inherent advantages of the "violence frame," such as its strong visual appeal and remarkable ability to evoke audience emotions and influence public opinion, often yield favorable communication outcomes in short video and other online media, it also faces significant limitations. In an era that emphasizes journalistic professionalism and media responsibility, the "violence frame" is not suitable for extensive application across diverse societal issues. Its associated media biases and reporting tendencies prominently reflect subjective editorial judgments, which hinder the accurate representation of news facts.

On one hand, as discussed earlier, the "violence frame" subtly amplifies audience emotions during the dissemination of major social events. However, the constraints of short video media—characterized by their brevity—limit the ability to channel these heightened emotions through comprehensive analysis and discussions of solutions. Instead, media often build montages of "violent" imagery without providing audiences with explanatory sources, leaving them in a state of frustration and uncertainty.

On the other hand, the subjective portrayal of facts within the "violence frame" on online platforms frequently invites sharp audience criticism and skepticism. While such heated discussions can significantly boost the visibility of media reports in interactive online environments, they simultaneously risk undermining the media's credibility. This effect is particularly pronounced in reports on news topics closely related to public livelihoods, such as labor movements. Audience interpretations are influenced by societal hotspots, such as immigration, unemployment, and workplace burnout ("neijuan"), which are critical factors in decoding individual information. In this

context, the public media's use of the "violence frame" can extend audience emotions toward questioning government policies, potentially leading the "collective public media institution" into the "Tacitus trap"—a loss of credibility harmful to fostering positive social narratives and strengthening national image.

If the "violence frame" is overused in short video news, it is likely to cause more profound and lasting negative effects:

1. Extreme Sensationalism Supplants Rational Public Cognition

The violence frame emphasizes connections and associations, often exploiting the contradictions between stakeholders in contentious social events. In the case of Observer Network, extreme acts of violence within the news event were exaggerated using highly sensational language and expressive strategies in the short video. This approach risks distorting public understanding of news events, fostering partial interpretations that are detrimental to cultivating rational public cognition.

2. One-Sided Depictions Create an Extreme Public Opinion Climate

Overuse of the "violence frame" in short video news inevitably embeds "violent thinking" into the entire editorial process, from topic selection to content presentation. This framing strategy results in videos overloaded with illogical violent elements while emphasizing binary opposition and unresolvable conflicts. Consequently, these reports propagate negative emotions in society, fueling extreme social psychology and the spread of antagonistic attitudes.

In the analysis of comments on the Observer Network case, numerous user remarks reflecting skepticism or thematic emotional projections reveal such tendencies. By amplifying the perceived intractability of social issues like "worker demands," the "violence frame" stokes feelings of imbalance and inferiority among specific audience segments. Under continuous psychological reinforcement, these emotions may escalate toward extreme, even violent, outcomes.

3. Endless Competition for Traffic Dilutes Media Accountability

The "violence frame" allows media outlets to attract audience attention through visually shocking and sensational content. While this initially offers competitive advantages in the race for online information traffic, overuse of this frame risks diluting the media's sense of responsibility. It provides opportunities for unchecked exploitation of violent elements, such as depicting acts of looting or irreconcilable conflicts, to stimulate audience interest in sensational content.

This trend often involves oversimplifying complex news stories and disregarding objective truths. By focusing on superficial violence to capture attention, media outlets increasingly shift their reporting focus away from meaningful, nuanced narratives.

Recommendations for the Use of the "Violence Frame" in Short Video News

How media recognize and use the "violence frame" appropriately, guide social cognition under the framework of network communication, foster a positive public opinion environment, and critically examine the issues arising from its application are essential for building a harmonious society and promoting a healthier, more rational development of the network communication landscape. This article provides the following recommendations for the application of the "violence frame":

(1) Adhering to the Principle of Balanced Reporting in the "Violence Frame"

Media should prioritize balanced reporting by dismantling simplistic understandings of the "violence frame" as merely an accumulation of violent elements. Regardless of the type of report, media must avoid overemphasizing negative narratives and illogical polarizations. Instead, it should objectively identify the key actors in news events, introduce mechanisms for guiding the analysis of these events, and expand the traditional fragmented and singular content dissemination model of short videos. Balanced reporting ensures a more comprehensive and multi-dimensional representation of news, helping audiences form nuanced and informed perspectives.

(2) Combining "Objective Frames" for Rational Communication

The case analysis of the Observer Network's short video report on the May Day labor protests highlights that the media's framing biases within the "violence frame" can significantly influence audience emotions on multiple levels. In the post-truth era, audiences, compared to those in the traditional internet age, are increasingly empowered by access to networked knowledge and shaped by varying social and cultural contexts. This has led to more subjective and profound interpretations of media-provided news (Lin, n.d.). In the case study, this empowerment partly explains the strong critical responses from audiences.

Thus, media should respect objective facts and strive to avoid extreme "violence frame" narratives that primarily serve to incite emotions (Zhang, Wei, & Wu, 2022). Instead, news reporting should integrate objective frameworks to ensure rationality, maintaining the balance and authenticity of reporting while upholding the media's social responsibility. On the basis of goodwill, media should guide public opinion toward constructive discourse and adhere to factual balance (Liu, 2010).

(3) Developing a Mature Ethical Model for the "Violence Frame"

Journalistic ethics represent the value orientation and daily practices aligned with societal moral conventions that news media must observe during their activities. Media reporting practices should be regulated by these ethical standards. However, short video news reporting under the "violence frame" currently lacks mature reporting models and ethical guidelines. This ethical vacuum is a primary cause of the frequent deviance in media "violence narratives" and intense competitive behaviors among media outlets.

Media professionals must consciously assume their roles in environmental monitoring and public opinion oversight, establishing industry standards for the use of the "violence frame" in network communication. Additionally, injecting a sense of humanistic care into news reports is vital (Liu, 2010). Exploring a mature ethical guideline for reporting within the "violence frame" will help mitigate sensationalism and foster responsible journalism practices, ensuring that news reports contribute positively to societal discourse.

Conclusion

Although the "violence frame" has existed in various forms throughout the history of media reporting due to its inherent inevitability within the framework of mass communication, it remains a cornerstone of innovative network thinking in emerging news production and distribution driven by internet-based communication logic in the information age. When applied appropriately, the "violence frame" can uncover the latent value of news topics from multiple dimensions, such as audience engagement and the distillation of newsworthiness. It stimulates intense discussions around public opinion while delivering impactful "violent imagery" to audiences, leveraging the networked effects of online news dissemination.

However, excessive or irrational use of the "violence frame" risks pushing media toward overly subjective reporting, inflating emotional bubbles during societal transformations, and encouraging voyeuristic and entertainment-driven audience psychology. Such tendencies undermine journalistic professionalism and rational public discourse.

The harmonious development of short video news hinges on constructing a holistic approach to online communication that balances the scientific media perspectives of communicators, the psychological needs of audiences, and the objective elements of news. This approach can counteract the negative attributes of short video media amplified by the "violence frame." Therefore, media must continuously explore logical and standardized uses of the "violence frame" in short video news reporting, exercise caution in overemphasizing conflict and contradictions, and actively provide space for rational audience reflection.

Moreover, it is crucial to weave rational connections among audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds, fostering thoughtful engagement with the emotions evoked by news. The ultimate goal should be to exert more positive and insightful influence on society, ensuring that media achieve both optimal communication outcomes and significant public benefits through the responsible application of the "violence frame."

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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