

## ANNOTATION

for the doctoral dissertation of Mussa Nazereke Molzhankyzy on the topic "The role of media in covering social conflicts in an interethnic environment: the case of Kazakhstan", submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the educational program "8D03203 – International Journalism."

**General characteristics of the work.** This research paper examines the specifics of media coverage of conflicts in Kazakhstan and the impact of information on the audience. This is especially relevant for a multinational country like Kazakhstan, where representatives of different nationalities live. The author identifies how Kazakhstani media disseminate information in various conflict situations, compares it with the methods of dissemination by foreign media, and identifies trends and features of the work of journalists.

**Relevance of the research.** The topic of conflicts in Kazakhstan is often not recognized as such and is insufficiently covered in the mass media. In this regard, this scientific work examines the features and challenges of reporting on conflicts in the media. Special attention is given to the role of social networks in conflict coverage, particularly Telegram channels, which are perceived by society as a safe platform for information exchange and an independent news source. This study is essential for a comprehensive and objective analysis of the representation of conflicts in Kazakhstani media.

In addition, the specifics of covering conflicts in Kazakhstan are associated with limited access to information and the influence of state and private media on public opinion.

Journalists face challenges related to censorship, pressure from the authorities, and the need to comply with editorial standards, which complicates the process of preparing objective and unbiased materials. In this context, it becomes relevant to study the tools and strategies that media use to overcome these barriers and ensure access to reliable information.

As part of the research, a guide for journalists was also developed, containing practical recommendations and examples based on international standards for covering social conflicts.

The guide includes key principles such as the need to balance different viewpoints, avoid hate speech and accents that can increase tension. The inclusion of case studies from global practice helps journalists better understand how to cover conflicts competently, minimizing the risks of escalation and providing the audience with an objective and comprehensive picture of what is happening.

**Degree of research on the problem.** The issue of covering social conflicts in Kazakhstani media represents an insufficiently studied area, despite

its importance. Existing studies in this field are fragmented and mainly focus on certain aspects of media policy and freedom of speech. At the same time, a comprehensive analysis of the representation of conflicts in the media, taking into account the specifics of Kazakhstan, remains limited.

Foreign researchers such as M. Laruelle, D. Kudaybergenova, P. Sorbello, and E. Schatz, in their scientific works, thoroughly examine conflict theory and its connection with the media. They analyze both internal contradictions and Kazakhstan's role on the world stage, paying attention to the problems of covering events by journalists under authoritarian conditions. These studies are valuable sources for understanding the mechanisms of conflict coverage in Kazakhstani media and demonstrate the need for a deeper study of this topic.

Among local scholars, L. S. Akhmetova, B. Kylibayeva, A. R. Alipbayev, M. Sengirbay, D. Tussupova, G. Zh. Ibraeva, D. Satpayev, and others have made significant contributions to the study of social conflicts and the specifics of their coverage in national media. Their works raise important questions about the influence of editorial policy, censorship, and public opinion on the coverage of conflicts. However, despite the existence of separate studies, there is a lack of comprehensive works that would combine theoretical analysis with practical recommendations for journalists.

**The research object** includes materials from the international Radio Azattyk and the Khabar 24 channel, found using the keyword "conflict." The online versions of these publications were used. To study the coverage of conflict topics on social networks, Telegram channels Qazaqparat and Orda.kz were analyzed. To determine the features of conflict coverage in domestic journalism, a comparative analysis of foreign information resources such as BBC.com, Reuters, Gazeta.ru, and RIA Novosti was conducted.

**The subject of the scientific research** is Kazakhstani mass media, social networks, and foreign publications, as well as the challenges these media face when covering conflicts and the aspects they consider in presenting the material.

**The purpose of the study** is to identify and analyze the specifics of covering social conflicts in Kazakhstan's media, including sources of information used by journalists, the style of writing materials, methods of disseminating information, as well as the impact on public perception of conflicts.

**The objectives** of the study include:

- Analysis of the current state of research in the field of media and social conflicts.
- Determination of the formats of conflict coverage in the Kazakh media.
- Based on interviews with journalists who have experience covering conflict situations, propose the main conclusions.

**Novelty of the research.** In the context of globalization and the rapprochement of different cultures, the influence of conflict coverage in the media, especially interethnic ones, is increasing. This is also influenced by the growing interest and demand of the audience for social networks. Although some researchers have previously been attracted to the topic of conflict in the media, certain aspects, especially the role of conflict in the case of Kazakhstan, remain insufficiently studied. As a rule, such studies are limited in nature and do not focus on the interethnic context and the specifics of information exchange through social networks. This study is unique in that it systematizes data on the role of the media and social platforms in shaping public opinion on social conflicts for the first time and focuses on these important issues.

The scientific study analyzes the main social conflicts that occurred in the period **from 1991, when Kazakhstan gained independence, to 2022**, and makes it possible to trace their reflection in the media. Particular attention is paid to the **January 2022 events** - the largest conflict in the modern history of the country, since it became a turning point that led to significant changes: the resignation of the government, the revision of state policy, the formation of the concept of the "New Kazakhstan".

Kazakhstan, as a multinational and multicultural state, intends to solve the most important strategic tasks of maintaining interethnic harmony and unity. From a scientific point of view, the dissertation aims to shed new light on the role of the media by studying the mechanisms of media portrayal of interethnic conflicts. This study contributes to the development of theoretical and applied knowledge in the field of journalism and communication. New methods aimed at ensuring social stability and harmony in society through the analysis of interethnic problems in the information space of Kazakhstan are also presented.

The **main conclusions proposed for defense** based on the results of the study:

1. There are cases when Kazakh journalists resort to self-censorship and limit their coverage of the conflict and cannot provide completely impartial coverage due to editorial pressure.
2. There are differences in the broadcasting format of independent and state media.
3. The way the media presents and interprets conflicts determines how audiences perceive them.
4. Effective conflict resolution is only possible if the media approaches this topic responsibly and ethically.

**Methodological and theoretical basis of the study.** The main and primary data for presenting the topic are materials from news agencies of Kazakhstan, foreign media, as well as information distributed in social networks. A qualitative and quantitative analysis of news texts and materials in the media and social networks is carried out, theoretical concepts of framing and conflictology are applied.

To achieve this goal, a qualitative and quantitative analysis of news materials was carried out. In addition, theoretical concepts of framing and conflictology were used.

**Theoretical significance of the research.** This research is significant for the theoretical understanding of the processes of covering social conflicts in Kazakhstan's media space. The study systematizes the understanding of how various media platforms cover conflict-related topics and what theoretical approaches can be applied to the analysis of conflict information.

**Practical significance of the research.** The practical significance of this work lies in providing journalists and media professionals with specific recommendations and strategies for covering conflicts in Kazakhstani media, including new media formats such as Telegram channels. The results of the research will help develop practical approaches that align with international standards to minimize the risks of misinformation and manipulation, as well as to ensure more objective and balanced coverage of conflicts under the existing constraints in the country. Additionally, this research can be useful in the context of media policy, training programs for journalists, and educational programs on media literacy. It can also contribute to the development of specialized courses and materials for teachers and students of journalism faculties, as well as to the advancement of ethical standards in domestic journalism.

**Research results.** The main trends in the display of social conflicts in the media and their impact on public opinion have been identified. At the same time, the results will help to better understand how the media cover conflict situations and how this information is perceived by the audience, and for journalists and editors, the experience and advice shared by journalists can become a useful tool when covering this topic.

**Approval of the research.** All conducted research was carried out in accordance with the principles and fundamental norms of scientific ethics. The key theoretical provisions and research findings were presented at international scientific conferences and discussed at a meeting of the UNESCO Chair in Journalism and Communication at the Faculty of Journalism of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. A report on *"The Coverage of 'Bloody January' in Kazakhstani Media"* was presented at the international CESS conference. At an international scientific and practical online conference, the topic *"Interethnic Harmony and the Role of Journalists"* was discussed. The main research findings have been published in journals included in the list of the Committee for Quality Assurance in Education and Science of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as in international conferences and foreign journals indexed in the Scopus international database.

**Author's personal contribution.** The doctoral candidate independently completed the following tasks:

- Conducted a detailed review of scientific and analytical sources on the topic of social conflicts in Kazakhstan, including domestic and foreign studies.
- Analyzed the main theoretical approaches to studying social conflicts and their representation in the media, considering the specifics of Kazakhstan's media landscape.
- Conducted a content analysis of media materials, collected, and processed empirical data obtained through interviews with journalists covering social conflicts.
- Conducted a comparative analysis of how social conflicts are covered across various media platforms and in foreign media, assessing their impact on public perception.

**Structure of the dissertation.** The aim and objectives of the research determined the structure of the dissertation, which consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, and an appendix. A list of references is also attached to the dissertation.