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Laughter in the Line of Fire: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Indo-Pak War Memes

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Abstract

Bluffs made by the coward were heard after the feigned Pahalgam attack just to gain political limelight and votes in the general elections of India by BJP. The pride of being greater in number and strong economy made India run wild without a leash. The whole scenario, however, has become a laughing stock for the Pakistani netizens where memers have flooded the social media platforms with innumerable memes that not only mocked the Indian baseless claims but also attenuated various social issues in a lighter note. This study aims to probe the selected memes from various social media platforms in the Indo-Pak war situation and even during the war of May, 2025. It highlights how these memes convey the social issues and armed supremacy in the digital realm of social media. This study employs Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model (1992) to analyze the memes on the textual, discursive and social meaning making levels. The description, interpretation and explanation of the memes probe to show how Pakistanis laugh in the line of fire because of strong armed forces. This is the recent contemporary and hot topic which is definitely untouched and provides ample space for this research to pave the way for future research to read between the lines of the memes. This study adds to the prior existing literature and research in the realms of digital media, memes, and discourse, with a particular emphasis on war memes.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), digital and social media, dimensions of memes, memes, netizens, social issues, war.

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Introduction

Digital communication is inexorable, inevitable and inescapable when social media has become as indispensable as food. People love to give vent to their emotions, political opinion, social and cultural portrayal in the digital spaces and memes are the potent and compelling delineating tools of the linguistic and cultural artefacts. Memes are culturally grounded and mirrors of social stumbling blocks in humorous way. The memes can be defined as; *"Memes are cultural symbols and social ideas that spread virally, primarily with the intent to make people laugh or provoke thought"* (Miltner, 2014, p. 336). A theme of mimicry is present along with the discursive strategies such as, satire, humor, sarcasm, etc. to manifest the school of thought of the memer who created it. In other words, memes are the way the memers give the digital audience a piece of their minds, mimicking some renowned lines or concepts sarcastically. *"Memes are contagious ideas or cultural practices that get transmitted from one mind to another through writing, speech, gestures, rituals, or other imitable phenomena with a mimicked theme"* (Knobel & Lankshear, 2007, p. 199).

Indo-Pak tension and war situations are forged whenever the general elections of India are there and BJP has to secure votes. Whether it is Pulwama attack of February, 2019 or Pahalgam attack of April, 2025, the Indian general elections are imminent. BJP ignites the war emotions and manipulates it to get votes. The outcome is, of course, PAF vs. IAF and the results are always the same i.e. the deplorable defeat and the loss of warplanes worth billions of dollars. Neither Pakistanis nor Indians want war. The statement of DG ISPR after the ceasefire in May, 2025 is the proof of it. *"In a conflict between two rival nuclear powers … such a conflict is actually an absurdity and it is inconceivable and sheer stupidity,"* (DG ISPR, as cited in Dawn, 2025, para. 1). Keeping in view the political stance of the BJP, the war is no more than a joke for the masses of both the countries. This frivolous attitude of Pakistanis and Indians is manifested in the form of war memes that are teemed with cultural and social issues portrayal and neglect the actual war fear. The war memes also array the political and nationalist agenda and narratives of cross-border rival nations that mock each other through memes. This study aims to critically analyze the lighter notes or memes in the horrific war situation using Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model (1992).

Some popular Indo-Pak war memes will be selected from various social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter (X), TikTok, etc. Indo-Pak war memes will be analyzed employing

Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model (1992) on triple levels of analysis; textual analysis, discursive analysis, and social discussion. The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of Indo-Pak war memes will bridge the gap of the analysis of war memes with a real and recent scenario of Indo-Pak war. The study will be a contribution to the existing literature and research in the realm of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

Problem Statement

Indo-Pak war memes play a significant role in shaping the public opinion and imbuing nationalist spirit in a humorous way. This study aims to probe how the memes build various conflict-based narratives and portray social challenges of the nation in the whimsical and comic way.

Research Objectives

1. To critically explore how Indo-Pak war memes language build and reinforce nationalist narratives and ideologies.
2. To analyze the discursive strategies such as humor, sarcasm, satire, etc. in the memes to present the Indo-Pak war situation.
3. To probe the role of Indo-Pak war memes as the tools of political opinion, social and cultural representation.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do Indo-Pak war memes build nationalist narratives and ideologies both linguistically and visually?
2. What discursive strategies, such as satire, humor, sarcasm, etc. are employed in Indo-Pak war memes to portray the war situation?
3. In what ways do Indo-Pak war memes depict political opinion, social and cultural representation in the digital spaces?

Significance of the study

This study attenuates the power of the memes in the digital spaces to construct nationalist narratives, spirit, ideologies, identity and to express the political opinion, emotions, social and cultural representation. The memes are the mirrors of the cross-border perceptions, sentiments and

nationalism along with the social-issues portrayal in a humorous way. The whimsical insights of memes highlight the public attitude in conflict-driven situations and how public enjoys the situation instead of getting fearful and traumatized.

Limitations of the study

The study focuses on the limited number of memes from the limited famous social media platforms. The dataset used in the study is limited to the time of Indo-Pak war like situations when the Indo-Pak tensions are at the peak and neglects all other Indo-Pak memes that target each other in normal situations. The researchers chose only such memes that represent their nationalist narratives and views and neglect other memes portraying the cross-border perspective. The study primarily focuses on the memes that are the amalgamations of Urdu-Hindi, Urdu-English, or Hindi-English languages or either one of them.

Literature Review

Social media platforms are flooded with memes whether it is an occasion of jubilation, agony, celebration or war. Netizens have portrayed their feelings, satire, humor, and social issues in the memes and so the researchers are focusing on the Critical Discourse Analysis of the memes to show how they reflect social realities. The research realm is replete with the discourse analysis of the digital memes and discourses and how they assist in identity construction in the digital spaces. This literature review has included some of the recent prior studies of memes.

Nada Ehab Ebrahim Mohamed and Shaimaa Zolfakar Zoghaib (2024) analyze the evaluative implications underpinning gender identities established in Facebook memes in their paper titled "Attitudinal Evaluation among Gender Ingroups and Out-Groups in Facebook Humorous Memes: A Comparative Analysis." Using a socio-cognitive discursive method, the study applies Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis to 24 memes developed by male and female users. The data show that multimodal metaphors are the most common technique of transmitting attitudinal meanings, followed by lexical components and symbolic qualities.

Zeb, Malik, & Hussain (2025) employed Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model (1992) with the integration of multimodal discourse analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) to highlight the intersection of digital discourse, and resistance in digital culture of Pakistan. The qualitative methodology is used to analyze the visual and linguistic texts of the memes from various social

media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook to highlight the role of memes in the political satire, identity construction and cultural resistance. The irony, satire, humor and intertextuality in memes have been analyzed in the study to show how memes build narratives in the digital realm using discursive strategies and how youth show resistance and engagement along with identity construction. The dominant discourse analyzed shows the disruption of the traditional gender roles, neo liberal disillusionment and challenging the prevailing political and power dynamics. The study shows how satire is a safe resistance under censorship, using the subversive power and potential of humor in the digital discourses.

Vazquez-Calvo, Paz-López, and Rey-Godoy (2025) investigate how memes are used as reflective instruments for identity building among preservice language teachers in Spain, in their work "Memes and Identity in Language Teacher Education,". The researchers employed a qualitative, multimodal method to assess 777 memes developed during the "Story by Memes" classroom exercise, focusing on frameworks such as Yus's (2018) inferential meme analysis and Gee's (2000) identity theory. The study demonstrates how humor, satire, and translingualism serve as discursive tools for participants negotiating personal, academic, and professional identities.

Tafseer, Arshad, Khalid, and Jahan (2025) use van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Theory (2006) to investigate how Facebook memes shape political ideologies and identities among Pakistani youth in their article "Sociocognitive Analysis of Facebook Memes: Investigating Political Ideologies and Identity Formation." Using a qualitative method, the authors examine 16 political memes from high-traffic Facebook pages, concentrating on their visual and verbal components. The study looks at discursive qualities including humor, satire, irony, and intertextuality to see how memes serve as cognitive and ideological instruments for expressing dissent. The findings show that memes use digital comedy to challenge prevailing sociopolitical narratives, undermine established power systems, and promote alternative points of view.

AlAfnan (2025) explores how political discourses are shaped on various social media platforms using the memes. The author examines the ways memes influence public political opinion, ideological polarization and public political behavior. Memes are selected from 4 social media platforms and analyzed the memes by adopting a mixed method approach. The quantitative techniques of frame analysis and discourse analysis are employed along with the qualitative techniques such as sentiment analysis and network analysis. The study has opted for an

interdisciplinary approach by integrating multimodal framing, media ideology and discourse theory.

Zeb, Malik, and Hussain (2025) in their article "Memes as Tools of Resistance: Analyzing Digital Discourse in Pakistan," used Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model (1992) and multimodal discourse analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) to investigate the intersection of digital discourse and resistance within Pakistan's digital culture. Using a qualitative methodology, the study examined visual and linguistic materials from memes on social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook.

Toyosi, & Adewunmi, (2025) probe the cyber bullying in Nigeria through the Critical Discourse Analysis of memes. The study highlights how language and identity are constructed through memes and how memes forge religious bigotry and discrepancy. The authors have integrated the Fairclough's CDA and social identity theory (SIT) to explore the shaping of online discourses in the digital spaces. Cyber bullying is unraveled through decoding memes about how they contribute to satire, prejudices, stereotypes, religious sectarianism, trolling, denigration, impersonation, speech fraping, discrimination, exclusion, discrepancy, bigotry, etc. and how they influence social cohesion and unity.

Shoukat, Hussain, & Murtaza (2025) attenuate a unique and innovative analysis of online memes and present them as the sociolinguistic artefacts. The study employs the theoretical lens of Jan Blommaert (2010) named as Sociolinguistics of Globalization. The theoretical perspective explains the fundamental concepts such as mobility, polycentricity, and scale-shifting and their application to the online memes. The study opts for the qualitative methodology and analyzes 50 memes using content analysis. The globalized memes chosen from various social media platforms are analyzed to show how they reflect linguistic adaptation, identity construction and cultural nuances. The study of the recent Indo-Pak war memes is an unexplored and untouched area which will be attenuated in this study to highlight the explicit and implicit layered meanings of the memes.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze the discursive development of social and political ideologies in Indo-Pak war

memes. Memes are digital, multimodal writings that reflect the cultural zeitgeist of their time, therefore qualitative discourse analysis allows for a comprehensive examination of both textual content and sociopolitical implications. Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model (1992) is especially useful in this study since it allows for a layered and interpretive understanding of memes as discursive events.

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research approach based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze the discursive development of social and political ideologies in Indo-Pak war memes. Memes are digital, multimodal writings that reflect the cultural zeitgeist of their time, therefore qualitative discourse analysis allows for a comprehensive examination of both textual content and sociopolitical implications.

Data Collection

This is an exploratory qualitative study that seeks to investigate how memes uploaded during Indo-Pak war-like situations in April and May 2025 encapsulate nationalist sentiments, cultural narratives, and ideological tensions. The study is interpretivist in character, attempting to comprehend subjective meanings and symbolic representations provided by meme culture. The interpretive approach is consistent with the study's goal of understanding memes as socially situated communication and ideological objects rather than solitary texts.

The dataset is made up of memes carefully selected from four main social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter (X), TikTok, and Instagram. These platforms were chosen due to their popularity and importance in meme culture in Pakistan and India. The memes were gathered over a two-month period (April-May 2025), coinciding with increased Indo-Pak tensions and significant digital involvement among netizens.

The sampling strategy is purposeful and criteria-driven. Memes were picked using the following criteria:

I. Relevance to Indo-Pak war themes or military rhetoric

II. Increased audience engagement (likes, shares, and comments)

III. Use of linguistic elements such as satire, comedy, sarcasm, or irony.

IV. References to social or nationalist narratives are visual or written.

A total of 6 memes were selected for in-depth study, resulting in a manageable and representative sample.

Data Analysis

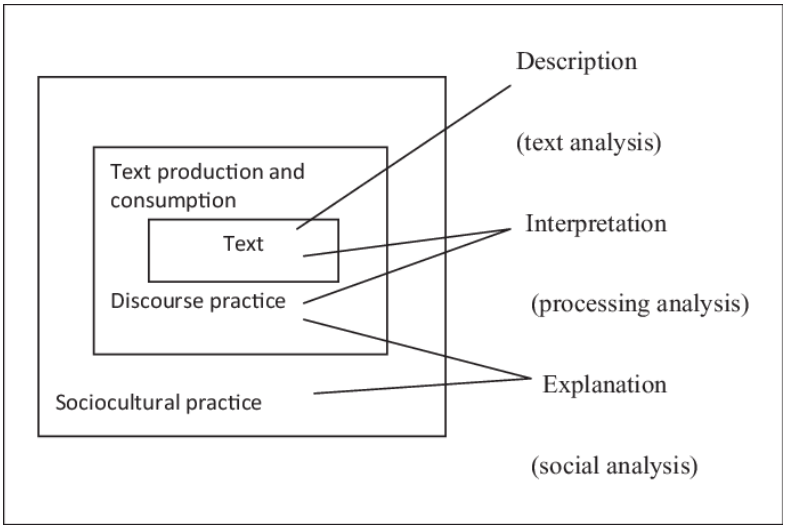
Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model is used to examine the data, and it divides discourse into textual, discursive, and social components. The stages of analysis are textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. This multi-level examination enables the researchers to progress from the surface structure of memes to the deeper sociocultural meanings contained within them.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on *Norman Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model of Critical Discourse Analysis (1992),* a foundational framework for investigating how language and discourse function as weapons of power and ideology in society. As this study explores Indo-Pak war memes, which are a combination of textual and visual digital discourse, Fairclough's model provides a strong analytical framework to look at how memes like these not only convey satire and humour but also influence public opinion, support or oppose nationalist beliefs, and create sociopolitical identities.

Fairclough defines discourse as a social practice and posits that every communicative event may be examined using three interconnected dimensions:

Figure 1: Fairclough's Model of CDA (Adapted from Fairclough, 1992)



i. Textual Analysis (Description)

The first dimension is textual analysis, which entails closely reading the meme text and graphics. This level focuses on the linguistic and semiotic aspects of conversation, including vocabulary, syntax, sentence structure, metaphors, and stylistic choices. In the context of memes, this entails looking at humour methods like sarcasm, satire, parody, and exaggeration, as well as the use of hybrid linguistic forms like Urdu-English or Hindi-English. The meme's visual components—images, emojis, facial expressions, and layout—are all equally significant. This approach reveals how words and imagery interact to produce humour, irony, or mockery, which can then be used to make deeper ideological points.

ii. Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

The second dimension, discursive practice, is concerned with the processes of discourse creation, dissemination, and interpretation. It looks at how memes are developed by individuals (memers), how they spread across platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, and Instagram, and how audience interact with them through likes, shares, and comments. This level is critical for understanding how memes are embedded in larger digital discursive networks. It also includes intertextuality, which refers to well-known political events, media narratives, or cultural symbols, and how audience decode these references based on their sociocultural position. This component connects the meme linguistic content and its communicative function in online conversation.

iii. Social Practice (Explanation)

The third level, social practice, is putting the meme within a larger social, political, and cultural framework. It looks at how memes reflect or challenge prevalent beliefs including nationalism, militarism, and gender norms. This level also demonstrates how comedy is utilized as a subtle form of resistance, especially in politically sensitive situations. This dimension examines memes as cultural objects, demonstrating how they can support or undermine societal norms, contribute to ideological debates, and impact public perception at stressful geopolitical events such as the Indo-Pak conflict of 2025.

Using this three-level approach, the study intends to conduct a comprehensive examination of Indo-Pak war memes—not simply as amusing content, but as complex discursive acts that connect with identity, ideology, and power. The model enables the researchers to shift from micro-level

textual elements to macro-level social dynamics, demonstrating the various ways in which digital discourse contributes to meaning-making during conflict scenarios.

Table 1: Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model

Dimension	Focus	Application in Meme Analysis
Textual Analysis	Linguistic and visual features: vocabulary, grammar, imagery, satire	Examines language choice, humour devices (e.g., sarcasm, satire), code-switching, and visuals used in the meme
Discursive Practice	Production, distribution, and interpretation of the discourse	Analyzes memer intent, social media sharing, intertextual references, and how meaning is negotiated by audience
Social Practice	Broader sociopolitical, cultural, and ideological context	Explores how memes reflect or challenge nationalism, gender roles, propaganda, and societal norms

Findings and Discussion

The dataset consists of selected memes from Indo-Pak war-like and war situation in April and May, 2025.

Figure 2: Meme 1



The textual analysis, elaborates the text. The text of the meme says that Lahoris (the people living in Lahore) always told the wrong directions and address but they hid the sea and seaport from us, we aren't going to forget this deception. The discursive strategy used in this meme is

comic satire; *"Comic satire utilizes playful humor and gentle mockery to expose absurdities and contradictions in society, politics, or behavior, encouraging critical thought without harsh condemnation."* (Abrams & Harpham, 2015, p. 330). The use of this figurative language has heightened the effect of the meme. The absurdities are surely highlighted but in a lighter tone that gives layered and metaphorical meanings to the meme along with verbal beauty and aesthetics.

The social discussion of the meme includes how the memer has magnificently taunted both the Lahoris and Indian media simultaneously that reminds of the idiom, "*to kill two birds with one stone*." Comic satire has created the hype of this Indo-Pak war meme. Lahoris always misguide you whenever you ask them about any address or any location. Their habit is always under discussion in one meme or the other whenever the subject is deliberate misguidance. This deliberate misguidance is an attributive feature of Indian media who has tried from head to toes to construct Modi narrative based on lies and false claims. The balloon of lies has been deflated many times by the spokesperson of Pakistani armed forces but Indian media and masses denied it every time. The meme and fake news got so trolled that even the navy spokesperson who is famous in the memes with the title of "The Silent Guy" also taunted Indian media for spreading fake news and propaganda against Pakistan, saying that Indian army had already captured Lahore port. Indian media has become a laughing stock in every nook and corner of the world.

Table 2: Fairclough's Three-Dimensional CDA Analysis of the Meme 1

Fairclough's model	**Explanation**
Textual analysis	Lahoris always misguide about locations but the way they concealed sea and sea port, that's an unforgettable sorrow.
Discursive strategy	Double comic satire
Social discussion	Misguidance of Lahoris about locations and misguidance of Indian media about fake war news, specially altering the geography

Figure 3: Meme 2



The textual analysis of the meme is simple yet whimsical which deals with the everyday issue in the disguise of the war meme. The text portrays a girl who wants to join war but her mother forbids her from joining war saying, go to war after marriage with your husband. The discursive strategy employed in this meme is sarcasm; *"Sarcasm is a form of verbal irony used to express contempt or scorn, often by stating the opposite of what is meant in a tone that conveys the speaker's actual attitude*." (Camp, 2012, p. 587). Apparently, the memer has quoted the routine quote of "desi" mothers always killing every yearning and associating it with the wedlock. The memer has, sarcastically, delineated the Pakistani and Indian (or one can say brown) baseless logic.

The social discussion of this meme is gender roles and challenging the stereotypes related to gender roles. The brown society usually gives undue freedom and rights to the male folk and redundant confinement to the female folk. Women are considered weak, frail and fragile who cannot face the ferocious patriarchal society alone.

Table 3: Fairclough's Three-Dimensional CDA Analysis of the Meme 2

Fairclough's model	**Explanation**
Textual analysis	A girl wants to join war but her mother forbids her ordering to join war with husband, obviously after marriage
Discursive strategy	Sarcasm

Social discussion	Gender roles that barricade the free flight of women in the patriarchal society and still stick to the traditional brown stereotypes

Figure 4: Meme 3



The textual analysis is the memer wants to celebrate the mayoon (marriage) ceremony of the Bollywood star, Salman Khan, in Nida Yasir's morning show who is a host of Pakistani morning show. The discursive strategy employed is horatian satire; *"Horatian satire is tolerant, amused, and witty, gently ridiculing the absurdities and shortcomings of human behavior in a way that encourages laughter and reflection rather than scorn."* (Abrams & Harpham, 2015, p. 331). The digital audience must have burst into laughter with this unique Indo-Pak combo.

The social discussion of the meme is quite interesting and multidimensional. This meme is replete with meanings and teeming with dimensions that needs to be explained. One can say the memer is a die-hard fan of the acclaimed Bollywood star, Salman Khan, the legend. He wants him to get married even at this ripe age. He doesn't want to miss even a single jiffy of his most awaited (or may be never happening) marriage ceremony. The memer wants the Salman Khan's marriage to be aired live so that the whole world can witness and behold the legendary Bollywood star getting married.

The second hidden wish of the memer is capturing India by Pakistani armed forces and he has manifested this longing in the disguise of meme i.e. Salman Khan's marriage, an Indian star, to be telecast live on Pakistani morning show hosted by Nida Yasir. She is famous for showing unique, peculiar and eccentric content in her morning show which sometimes feels impossible to the audience and so does Salman Khan's marriage, an eccentric and impossible thing. An Urdu proverb is, "shadi aisa ladu hai jis ny khaya wo Bhi pachtaya or jis ny Nhi khaya wo Bhi pachtaya".

The memer must have thought that Salman Khan is lamenting without tasting the ladu of marriage, now it must be his turn to taste it and mourn the single and happy life. The standards are just like Salman Khan's marriage, can be met but seem impossible in this era.

Table 4: Fairclough's Three-Dimensional CDA Analysis of the Meme 3

Fairclough's model	**Explanation**
Textual analysis	Wants to host Slaman Khan's wedding in Nida Yasir's morning show
Discursive strategy	Horatian satire
Social discussion	The memer wants to capture the India and enjoy the marriage ceremony, he is either a die-hard fan of Salman Khan who wants to eye each moment or wants every single to get married. The memer is delineating the issue of match-making for wedlock too.

Figure 5: Meme 4



In the textual analysis, the meme revolves around India and Pakistan's ongoing water conflict, using humor and symbolic references to tea—a culturally loaded metaphor rooted in the 2019 Abhinandan incident. During that incident, Indian Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman was arrested by Pakistani forces and offered tea, prompting his famous comment, "The

tea is fantastic," which has since become an enduring Internet meme. The meme in question revives this narrative during the Indo-Pak tensions of 2025. The main caption reads: *"Tum ne paani band kar diya... Hum iss baar, doodh patti chai pilaayenge!*" ("If you've turned off the water, so what? This time, we'll serve strong milk tea instead!"). The image depicts a parody of Abhinandan wearing a shirt with his iconic line, *"I am not supposed to tell you this,"* which adds to the mocking tone.

In terms of discursive strategy, the meme combines political humor and satirical irony. It employs iconic intertextuality by referencing Abhinandan's composed demeanor and a memorable comment from 2019, which has now become a cultural meme in Pakistan. The meme also exemplifies reverse victim storytelling, transforming a potentially dangerous situation—the Indian attempt to restrict water—into a lighthearted declaration of power and welcome. Furthermore, it employs cultural irony by changing tea, which is traditionally a sign of warmth and calm, into an icon of political resistance and contempt. This strategy enables the meme to straddle the line between serious national dispute and humorous digital expression. As Abrams and Harpham (2015) point out, *"Satire uses wit to ridicule the shortcomings of individuals, institutions, or societies in the hope of bringing about improvement"* (p. 330). By ridiculing Indian aggression with symbolic satire, the meme transforms geopolitics into relatable, shareable fun, allowing viewers to participate critically without expressing anger.

Figure 6: Meme 4 continuation



The meme is additionally strengthened by Shahid Afridi's additional comment: "By shutting off water, you are simply harming yourself. "Who will prepare tea for your guests?" This

statement sharply parodies India's position while reinforcing the meme's theme. This gives celebrity legitimacy and a sarcastic edge to the message.

Table 5: Fairclough's Three-Dimensional CDA Analysis of the Meme 4

Fairclough's model	**Explanation**
Textual analysis	"Tum ne paani band kar diya toh kya hua… hum doodh patti chai pilaayenge!" with cartoon of Abhinandan and his line "The tea is fantastic!"
Discursive strategy	Political satire using iconic intertextuality and symbolic resistance
Social discussion	Satirical response to India's water blockade threat and recall of 27 Feb 2019 incident; it humorously undermines Indian aggression while reinforcing Pakistani cultural resilience during the 2025 tensions

Figure 7: Meme 5



In the textual analysis, this meme displays a tiger, which is traditionally a sign of strength and ferocity, sitting with a frustrated and exhausted expression. *"Bhai Maghrib se pehle jang karna, Maghrib ke baad Ammi bahar nahi nikalne deti"* ("Bro, if you want to fight, do it before sunset prayer—after that, Mom doesn't allow me to go outside"). The sarcastic juxtaposition between the majestic and terrifying picture of the tiger and the pitiful tone of a young boy restricted by his

mother's curfew provides the humor. This smart juxtaposition undermines martial masculinity with domestic weakness, employing contrast and irony as primary strategies for generating laughter and criticizing performance nationalism.

In terms of discursive strategy, the meme uses satirical infantilization and anthropomorphism. It humanizes the tiger by giving it the actions and excuses of a young child, emphasizing the ridiculousness and immaturity of many internet war narratives. This method reveals the hollowness of aggressive social media posturing, particularly in war-like settings. The satirical tactic undermines the confidence associated with combat adulation by presenting it through the prism of common domestic constraints. As Abrams and Harpham (2015) state, *"Satire uses wit to ridicule the shortcomings of individuals, institutions, or societies in the hope of bringing about improvement." (A Glossary of Literary Terms, 2015, p. 330)*.

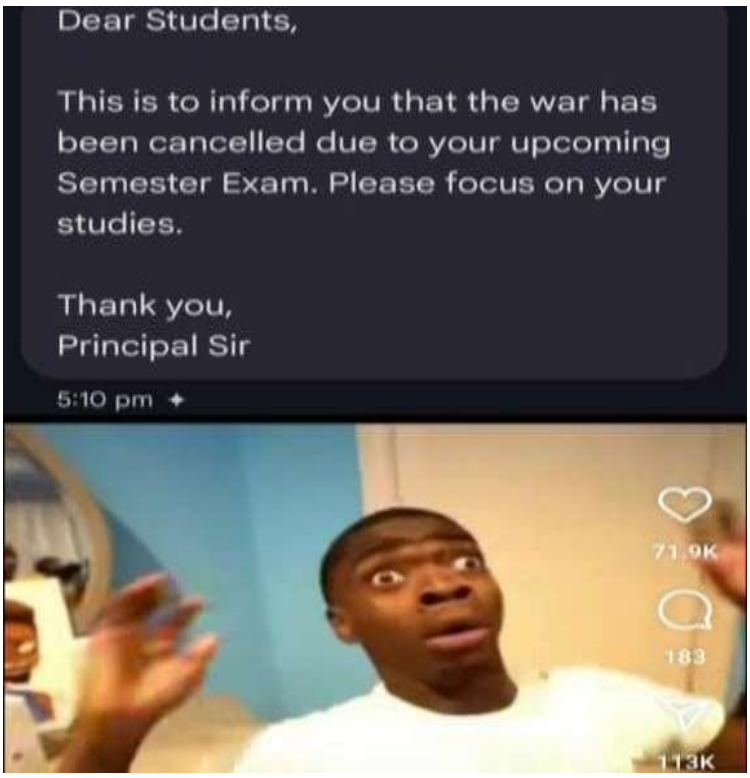
Regarding the social discussion, the meme criticizes the tendency of performative nationalism, particularly among younger social media users who frequently advocate for war from the safety and comfort of their own homes. It highlights the disparity between the Internet celebration of war and the daily circumstances of those promoting it—often minors still under parental supervision. The meme mocks inflated egos and undermines the idea of dominance by depicting the tiger, a traditional symbol of strength and national pride, as being constrained by his mother's laws. This follows Bakhtin's carnivalesque theory, which holds that comedy reduces powerful symbols to a more earthly, approachable level. As Bakhtin (1965) states, *"Laughter has a deep philosophical meaning... it destroys fear and piety before an object, before a world, making of it an object of familiar contact*." (Rabelais and His World, 1965, p. 23). Through humor and mockery, the meme reshapes mainstream narratives about war and nationalism, making them more open to criticism and discussion.

Table 6: Fairclough's Three-Dimensional CDA Analysis of the Meme 5

Fairclough's model	**Explanation**
Textual analysis	A tiger expresses his inability to fight after sunset because his mother doesn't allow him to go outside.
Discursive strategy	Satirical infantilization and anthropomorphism

Social discussion	A critique of performative nationalism and online war rhetoric rooted in domestic restrictions and youthful fantasy

Figure 8: Meme 6



In the textual analysis, the meme depicts a sarcastic mimic notification from a school principal. The note reads: *"Dear Students," This is to inform you that the war has been cancelled due to your upcoming Semester exam. Please focus on your studies. Thank you, Principal Sir."* Below this statement is a picture of a shocked student with a look of humorous disbelief or annoyance. The ridiculous idea that school officials may have power over issues of national war lends the humour. This exaggerated authority of *"Principal Sir"* playfully implies that the academic system rigidity overcomes even international conflict, emphasizing the overwhelming importance that education-related stress plays in students' lives.

In terms of discursive strategy, the meme employs absurdist satire and institutional parody. It creates a hypothetical but plausible scenario in which the bureaucratic structure of education is shown as more powerful than military or political actions. This satirical portrayal highlights institutional authority's overreach in the academic domain and mocks how little room is left for

personal autonomy or societal events outside of the examination cycle. Satire is defined by Abrams and Harpham as: *"A literary manner which blends a critical attitude with humor and wit to improve humanity by ridiculing its follies and abuses." (*Abrams and Harpham, 2015, p. 330). The meme fits squarely within this criterion, mocking both the overemphasis on school examinations and the histrionic social media reactions to Indo-Pak war threats.

Moving on to the social discussion, this meme depicts the lived reality of Pakistani students, for whom semester examinations are an unavoidable and consuming force. It criticizes the school system rigorous, exam-driven structure, which promotes rote memorization and strict discipline above innovation and flexibility. *"Principal Sir,"* as mentioned in the meme, is more than simply a comical figure; he represents the authoritarian educational figure infamous for sending out brusque and forceful notices. The idea that a conflict could be *"cancelled"* because of exams exemplifies how disconnected and unreal war rhetoric can appear to students dealing with academic stress. This absurdity recalls Albert Camus' concept from The Myth of Sisyphus, in which he writes: *"The absurd is born of this confrontation between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world" (Camus, 1955, p. 28)*. The meme captures this contradiction by combining small, human hardships with turmoil on a national scale, revealing the existential exhaustion experienced by a generation caught between institutional authority and historical conflict.

Table 7: Fairclough's Three-Dimensional CDA Analysis of the Meme 6

Fairclough's model	**Explanation**
Textual analysis	A fake official school message declaring war canceled due to exams; followed by a visual of exaggerated student shock.
Discursive strategy	Absurdist satire and parody of educational authority
Social discussion	Reflects the oppressive exam culture in Pakistani schools and humorously contrasts it with national war hysteria; critiques how seriously school systems dominate students' lives

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study finds that memes are not just digital jokes; they are strong discursive artefacts that reflect, resist and modify sociopolitical narratives during times of conflict. Using Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model (1992), the analysis of selected Indo-Pak war memes demonstrates how humour, satire, sarcasm, and irony are discursive strategies used strategically to challenge dominant ideologies, mock political propaganda and highlight deeply embedded cultural and gender norms. Memes have emerged as strong responses to war hysteria, misinformation, and media manipulation. They enable digital people to influence public conversation in a lighthearted yet politically significant way. The memes investigated in this study, the attack of Indian media narratives and political aggression while also reaffirming Pakistani identity, hospitality, and wit through complex meaning, cultural references (such as the Abhinandan tea incident) and intertextuality (such as Shahid Afridi's statement). Furthermore, the memes represent public opinion during geopolitical crises, which lean toward comedy and derision rather than fear and panic. This Internet phenomena exemplifies how comedy can be a weapon, a coping technique, and a type of digital nationalism. Consequently, war memes are active cultural texts that reflect the digital age's response to militarism, political follies, and societal paradoxes, demonstrating that humour can still prevail even in the face of danger.

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