

## THE EXTENT AND METHOD OF REFLECTION OF TEHRAN DEC. 20, 2017 (MALARD) EARTHQUAKE NEWS IN MEDIA

Parvaneh PISHNAMAZI  
Researcher, IIEES, Tehran, Iran  
*p\_pishnamazi@yahoo.com*

Zeinab MIRKHALAFZADE  
Public Relation Expert, Tehran Municipality, Tehran, Iran  
*zmirkhalafzade2@gmail.com*

Ali Ehsan SEIF  
Responsible Expert of Public Education, IIEES, Tehran, Iran  
*seife8@yahoo.com*

**Keywords:** Crisis, Earthquake, Television, Cyberspace, Press

An earthquake was felt in Tehran on Wednesday, Dec. 20, 2017, sending hundreds of people running out into the streets. The quake measuring 5.2 magnitude struck shortly before 11:30 pm (08:00 GMT), according to the seismological center of the University of Tehran.

The epicenter of the tremor was located about 40 km (25 miles) west of the capital.

The earthquake was also felt in the cities of Karaj, Qom, Qazvin and Arak. In parts of Tehran, residents flooded into streets and parks, fearing a stronger aftershock.

Since media play an important role in crisis management of an earthquake, the purpose of this study was to investigate the extent and the way of reflection of Tehran earthquake news in the media (Shabake Khabar, The 20 o'clock news section, Khabar e Foori Telegram channel, Keyhan and Shargh newspapers). The research method is quantitative and based on the technique of content analysis. The statistical population of the present study includes all news, articles and materials related to Tehran earthquake in the mentioned media through the period of Dec. 29 to Feb. 30, 2017 (Approximately 2 months). Due to the massive amount of news items, a random sampling of 20 days was selected and the obtained data was analyzed.

*Table 1. Distribution of the frequency and percentage of news and content separated from the studied media.*

Media	Redundancy	Percent	Cumulative percent
Shabake Khabar, the 20 o'clock news section	14	9.6	9.6
Khabar e Foori (Telegram channel)	68	46.6	56.2
Keyhan daily newspaper	22	15.1	71.2
Shargh daily newspaper	42	28.8	100.0
Total	146	100	100

Based on inferential findings, there is a significant difference between the coverage of the news of the Tehran earthquake in the the 20 o'clock news section, the reformist and mainstream newspaper of the SHARGH and Keyhan, as well as the instant news channel. Also, given the abundance and frequency, we found that the largest share of the news is instantaneous news channel with 46.4%. The Shargh Daily is ranked second with 28.8 percent. On the other hand, according to the findings, the majority of the news that was published in the 20 o'clock news section of Shabake Khabar, the Keyhan and Shargh newspapers, was about the news values and the magnitude and frequency were 28.6 percent, 28.6 percent, 31.8 percent, 22.7 percent, 31.0 percent, 31 percent. In contrast, most of the news that has been published in the Khabar e Foori channel of the Tehran earthquake, news and novelty values have been 41.2% and 23.5%, respectively. On the other hand, the findings indicate that the majority of news and events (35.7%) reported in the news network were quoted by the responsible institutions of the crisis. In contrast, news stories (44.1%) are reported by newsmakers in the

Khabar e Foori channel. On the other hand, in the Kayhan and Shargh newspapers, more news and content (45.5%) and (40.5%) are exclusive of the newspaper. Also the results of the research show that the Khabar e Foori channel has been able to provide significant news coverage of the Tehran earthquake. One of the features of this media that draws the attention of the audiences is the speed of the news, and providing different perspectives on various events and issues. It seems that other media, such as fundamentalist and reformist newspapers, and national media (IRIB), should be inclined to tolerate and has to deal with different views and ideas, and reflect them on various news sections.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the present study showed that the news section of the Shabake Khabar at 20:00 has played a lesser role than other media in covering the Tehran earthquake news. Therefore, considering that audience perception plays a decisive role in the ratings of news programs, based on the results of the present study, it is suggested that the national media influence the perceptions and dimensions of audience perception in order to improve and enhance the credibility, use news programs. The audience is the target of any media endeavor, so they must make sure that the media communicates their interest and need. If the respondents are suspected that the media is inattentive and alien to their wishes or deceives them, the message will be ignored. Accordingly, audiences can be considered as one of the main elements in maintaining the credibility of news programs and those involved in the national media sector can increase the credibility of their news programs with special attention to this section. The results also show that the Shabake Khabar has been able to provide significant news coverage of the Tehran earthquake. One of the features of this media that attracts the audience is the speed of news as well as presenting different views on various events and issues. It seems that other media, such as the Shargh and Keyhan newspapers, as well as the national media, must tolerate different opinions and reflect in various news sections. In addition, other findings of the study indicate that the Khabar e Foori telegram channel received most of the news and information about the Tehran earthquake through citizen journalists. Given the importance of citizen journalism, it is suggested that newspapers as well as national media devote a column or section to social media and social media photos, and so on to enable citizen journalists to interact with their audience and space, create a virtual one. Other results from the research showed that the 20pm news section of the Shabake Khabar, the Khabar e Foori News Channel, and the Shargh Newspaper covered most of the news related to the performance of Tehran earthquake crisis officials. In contrast, the Keyhan newspaper has mostly covered the public's expectations of the authorities regarding crisis management. In addition, the Khabar e Foori News Channel and Shargh Newspaper have devoted a considerable amount of news to Tehran earthquake safety structures. According to experts, damages and casualties of earthquakes that have so far occurred in Iran, was the main reason for the weakness of the structures. Therefore due to the extent of media coverage, it is expected that media such as television will be more concerned with this issue and will invite officials and experts to inform citizens about the contexts and strategies for securing structures in Tehran.

## REFERENCES

- Dominick, J.R. (1996). *The Dynamics of Mass Communication*. New York, McGraw Hill.
- Harder, R.A., Sevenans, J., and Van Aelst, P. (2017). Intermedia agenda setting in the social media age: How traditional players dominate the news agenda in election times. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 22(3), 275-293.
- Howard, P.N., Kollanyi, B., Bradshaw, S., and Neudert, L.M. (2018). Social Media, News and Political Information during the US Election: Was Polarizing Content Concentrated in Swing States?. arXiv preprint arXiv, 1802.03573.
- Kahn, H. and Wiener, A. J. (1967). *Year 2000; a framework for speculation on the next thirty-three years*.
- McCarthy, P. (1997). *The Crisis of the Italian State: From the Origins of the Cold War to the Fall of Berlusconi and Beyond*. Palgrave Macmillan.

