



# Stimulation of the collective memory of the 1999 Turkey earthquake through the Turkish media coverage of the 2023 earthquake

Yasmin Aldamen <sup>1\*</sup>

 0000-0002-0808-5235

Dilana Thasleem Abdul Jaleel <sup>2</sup>

 0009-0009-6055-5802

<sup>1</sup> Department of Journalism, Media, and Digital Communication, Faculty of Arts, The University of Jordan. Amman, JORDAN

<sup>2</sup> Department of New Media and Communication, School of Communication, Ibn Haldun University, Istanbul, TÜRKİYE

\* Corresponding author: [y\\_aldamen@ju.edu.jo](mailto:y_aldamen@ju.edu.jo)

**Citation:** Aldamen, Y., & Abdul Jaleel, D. T. (2024). Stimulation of the collective memory of the 1999 Turkey earthquake through the Turkish media coverage of the 2023 earthquake. *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies*, 14(2), e202420. <https://doi.org/10.30935/ojcm/14407>

## ARTICLE INFO

Received: 28 Jun 2023

Accepted: 9 Feb 2024

## ABSTRACT

Turkey has been struck by several powerful earthquakes. Since the 1999 earthquake was the most recent and devastating earthquake before the last one happened in February 2023, many of these media channels' depictions of the 2023 earthquake in Turkey may have been impacted by the collective memory of the 1999 earthquake. Collective memory of disasters and conflicts frequently takes on special significance as a mechanism for society to cope with the catastrophic events they have witnessed. Collective memory aids societies in dealing with the consequences of such events by giving a feeling of continuity as well as a structure for interpreting and comprehending what occurred. The media and social media are important in developing and conveying collective memory. They play an important role in framing events, transmitting details, and providing a forum for public debate. Social media, in addition to traditional media, has emerged as an innovative platform for the construction and diffusion of collective memory. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether the Turkish media depicted the collective memory of the 1999 earthquake in the aftermath of the 2023 earthquake. If the collective memory of the 1999 earthquake is invoked in media coverage of the 2023 earthquake, how is it depicted in terms of lessons learned, public response, and influence on Turkish society? The study's findings indicate that the analysis of Turkish media coverage pertaining to the 2023 earthquake has demonstrated a restricted collective recollection of the 1999 earthquake.

**Keywords:** 1999 Turkey earthquake, 2023 Turkey earthquake, collective memory, mass communication, media depiction

## INTRODUCTION

Turkey, which is one of the most seismically active countries, has seen numerous severe earthquakes. The 1999 earthquake that hit the country was one of the strongest earthquakes. It killed over 17,000 people and displaced hundreds of thousands, leaving a lasting impact on the nation's cultural memory. An earthquake of a "magnitude 7.4" caused significant destruction in the Kocaeli and Sakarya provinces in northern Turkey on August 17, 1999. These provinces are located in a heavily populated area that serves as Turkey's industrial center. The earthquake occurred at a depth of around 15 kilometers, about 10 kilometers east of Gölcük. It is linked to a 120-kilometer crack made up of four separate fault segments in the northernmost part of the western growth of the 1,300-kilometer-long North Anatolian fault system. The fault had large right-lateral strike-slip offsets ranging from three to four meters (Sezen & Whittaker, 2006). The seismic gap in the earthquake zone has been identified as an area, where stress concentrations are present, indicating the likelihood of a significant earthquake occurring in the future. The collapse of another part at the eastern end

of the fault fracture on November 12 led to the occurrence of the MW 7.2 Düzce earthquake. The earthquake caused extensive damage to a large geographic area as well as a prosperous economic zone in Turkey (Erdik, 2001).

The most recent earthquake, which happened on February 6, 2023, also was one of the country's deadliest natural disasters. On February 6, 2023, a "magnitude 7.8" earthquake struck south-central Turkey and northern Syria early in the morning. Subsequently, after about nine hours, another seismic event of "magnitude 7.5" occurred in the vicinity of Kahramanmaraş Region. The epicenters of the two earthquakes were around 100 km apart. By March 20, 2023, the earthquake doublet and subsequent aftershocks had resulted in almost 50,000 reported fatalities in Turkey and 7,200 in Syria. It impacted a minimum of 13.5 million people, equivalent to almost 16% of Turkey's population, and caused the destruction of around 520,000 dwellings (Qu et al., 2023). This earthquake is the sixth worst of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Zilio & Ampuero, 2023). Eleven provinces in southeast Turkey were affected. About 17,000 aftershocks have affected 11 provinces, 50 of which were earthquakes with magnitudes greater than 5.0 (WHO, 2023).

## DISASTERS IN MEMORY

---

Disasters such as earthquakes have far-reaching consequences for individuals and civilizations. In disaster studies, catastrophes are increasingly understood as having varying consequences for diverse elements of society, such as property devastation and relocation, resulting in long-term effects on a community's social and cultural fabric. Such events also build a society's collective memory, leaving permanent marks on people's brains and becoming part of their common memories. Disasters are widely understood in academics as having different effects on different segments of society. Disasters, in fact, are best understood as a product of society. Race, age, gender, aptitude, and socioeconomic level all have an impact on the catastrophe experience, including sensitivity to the effects and capacity to recover from them (Dominey-Howes & Gorman-Murray, 2014).

Disasters are presented as both outcomes and drivers of society, with factors such as ethnic background, age, gender, and material circumstances shaping various scenarios and responses within the community. The development of collective memory arises as an essential tool for dealing with the ambiguities that arise after catastrophic occurrences, providing a feeling of connection and coherence. The catastrophe recollections are a form of learning and deliberate rebuilding across different levels of society. The crucial function of collective memory is to assist communities in negotiating the complex consequences of catastrophes, offering both historical importance and a common sense of belonging for those affected.

Disaster-related social memory can function at numerous scales, ranging from national or regional authorities to communities or families. At a broader level, memories of disasters and other traumatic events may be reconstructed to serve the collective memory of communities, cities, or nations (Simpson & Corbridge, 2006). Indeed, catastrophe memories may help to construct a country by including a commemoration of how a society coped with a tragedy or a recall of 'our' loss because of a disaster in the nation's mythology. These communal memories comprise a selective remembering and forgetting process in which acts of courage are linked to national attributes while negative reactions (such as failing crisis management tactics, looting, or violence) are purposely deleted (Dominey-Howes & Gorman-Murray, 2014).

The impact of disasters on individuals and communities is multifaceted, encompassing disruptions to social and daily routines as well as significant personal and financial losses. After the occurrence of a disaster, the recall process commences. Collective remembrance of disasters is attributed to the fact that a group of individuals encounters them. The significance of collective memory in disaster recovery lies in its ability to retrospectively provide significance to feelings of instability, fear, and grief while also functioning as a social connection among individuals in affected communities. The study of collective memory has generally focused on the themes of inter-subjectivity, embodiment of memory, and the dynamic production of memory. The concept of memory scape is based on Hobbins's (2021) concept of collective memory and is defined by the aforementioned characteristics. Memory is an important part of human identity.

Crisis memories may also be viewed as a method of learning from both mistakes and victories in previous crisis circumstances. "Collective memories may be thought of as a storehouse of information on how problems were confronted and solved in the past" (Neal, 2005). This type of memory may be considered

necessary in the development of community resistance frameworks (Wilson, 2013). As proven by research on humans' ability to learn information from technical or environmental disasters, collective memory may have a considerable effect on human and community decision-making. However, some research has demonstrated that this approach is flawed and that learning from the past has limitations (Fanta et al., 2019).

Early studies revealed the significance of disasters in and as memory sites, as well as substantial correlations between disaster damages and memory site dangers. Collective memory of catastrophes and wars frequently takes on special relevance as a coping strategy for society in the aftermath of terrible occurrences. Collective memory helps communities cope with the ramifications of such occurrences by providing a sense of continuity as well as a framework for understanding and comprehending what happened. This is especially noticeable in the aftermath of natural disasters, where there is often an unpredictability and uncertainty that may be difficult to reconcile.

## **COLLECTIVE MEMORY & THE SOCIETY'S COLLECTION OF SIGNS**

---

The words "collective memory" and "la mémoire collective" were originally used in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Philosopher and sociologist Halbwachs (1925) investigated the notion of collective memory in his work. As per the perspective of Halbwachs (1925), the formation of an individual's memory is influenced by the social structures and organizations within which they are situated. The speaker posited that comprehending individual memories in isolation is limited and that a collective framework, such as that provided by families, organizations, and nation-states, is necessary for a more comprehensive understanding. Halbwachs (1925) utilized an instrumental "presentist" approach to examine collective memory, positing that contemporary exigencies shape social constructions of memory. The speaker asserted that present-day concerns and interpretations have a significant impact on the formation of shared memories. Various recollections are selected by collectives to depict current issues and concerns (Halbwachs, 1925). The community leaders engage in a process of rationalization to select which historical events are retained and which are omitted. Additionally, they modify occurrences to align with the prevailing social narrative, thereby providing an explanation for the current state of affairs. Studies in social psychology have revealed that collective memory has a crucial and unique function in shaping group self-perception and intergroup relationships (Taffal, 2015).

As per sociological studies pertaining to collective memory, there is no static or homogeneous collective memory of a given culture. Rather, collective memory is subject to contestation. The interpretation of a historical event may vary significantly among different societal groups (Ariely, 2021). The significance of historical memory lies in its potential to be utilized for partisan objectives, the construction of a nation's identity, the establishment of hegemony, or the shaping of individuals' comprehension of their surroundings. The concept of collective memory is significantly associated with national identity; however, it holds equal significance for local, communal, and individual identity, along with the perception of place (Merrin, 2014). Collective memories are formed through the exchange of shared communications regarding the interpretation of past events, which are firmly rooted in the experiences of individuals who participate in the communal existence of the corresponding group.

Collective memories are established through a society's collection of signs and symbols. The phenomenon of memory appears to be rooted in the material realm rather than in the realm of conscious perception. Specifically, memory is embedded within the social and psychological practices and institutions that operate within individuals, and curiously, these processes do not appear to necessitate explicit participation or allegiance on the part of the individual. Collective memories are present across various levels of society, including families, occupations, political generations of people, ethnic and regional groups, social strata, and nations. At one end of the continuum, it is possible to explore the shared recollections of limited cohorts, such as familial units, wherein constituents construct a unified perception of their lineage and selfhood. In contrast, there is an increasing interest in transnational communal memories, as demonstrated by the notion of a European collective memory. "Collective memory" operates at any level by merging individual memories within cultural settings that make them understandable and so meaningful (Kansteiner, 2002).

Memory retrieval, memory triggers, and memory recall all have an impact on the identity building process. However, memories are more than just personal recollections. Shared experiences are another option. The

notion of collective memory is critical in establishing a community's identity, ensuring its perpetuity, and acting as the essential foundation for its cultural manifestations, customary behaviors, ceremonial observances, and ethical precepts. Collective memories are essential resources for society because they contribute to community members' emotional connections, the preservation of group cohesion, and the direction of future behavior (Ferron & Massa, 2012).

Collective memory is not history, despite the fact that it is occasionally constructed from identical materials. It is a communal phenomenon, yet it only reveals itself through individual acts and comments. It may grasp historical and socially distant events, yet it frequently prioritizes the concerns of the present. It is the consequence of both conscious and unconscious manipulation, and it is constantly mediated. In addition, it can only be detected indirectly, through its consequences rather than its qualities. Collective memory studies, in essence, constitute a novel approach to "that hardest to define of phenomena, popular consciousness" (Kansteiner, 2002). Collective memories are largely positioned on the "floating gap" between memory and history (Niethammer, 1980). The individualistic view, based on psychology, sees collective memory as a "aggregation of socially established individual memories" with a focus on "neurological and cognitive elements," whereas the collectivistic view, based on the Durkheimian sociological tradition, "refers to collective phenomena sui generis" with a focus on "the social and cultural patterning of public memory." This distinction is based on "two drastically different views of culture": "one that sees culture as a subjective group of meanings contained in people's minds compared to one that sees culture as a system of publicly available signs objectified in society" (Olick, 1999).

As a whole, sociological research emphasizes the ever-changing and conflicting character of collective memory among various social groupings. Historical recollection, which goes above its association with national identity, plays a crucial role in shaping personal and community identities. The creation of collective memories is closely intertwined with shared communication, rooted in the individual recollections of persons involved in communal living. This phenomenon surpasses distinct socioeconomic brackets and involves the interchange of signals and meanings.

## **MEDIA & COLLECTIVE MEMORY**

---

### **Collective Memory & Traditional & Social Media**

The media emphasize the most significant concerns facing society, but this is especially true during times of crisis and disaster. People observe that when it comes to following up on matters pertaining to people's rights, nontraditional media are far more effective than traditional media (Aldamen, 2017). The media has a wider reach than museums, allowing people to have personal and emotional ties with historical events. The act of reporting current events through journalism contributes to the collective historical memory, potentially serving as a valuable resource for future generations as historical documents and memory triggers. The contemporary journalism is influenced by historical events. Throughout history, the press has been instrumental in shaping collective consciousness and memory, drawing heavily upon historical events and recollections in its narrative construction (Kitch, 2005). Journalistic storytelling possesses a mythic quality that holds significant implications for the preservation of tradition and collective memory as per some studies. The discursive material produced by the media holds significance in the examination of public memory, akin to its relevance in the realm of social movement studies (Lule, 2001).

The media plays an important role in establishing and shaping a movement's identity, typically employing a narrative framework that is largely recognized as the dominant format of modern media. The ability to adapt to a story framework is a critical attribute for attaining success in public memory projects and effectively interacting with social cause supporters. The format in question is not the result of haphazard media production, but rather of a lengthy history of storytelling norms. The perceptions shaped by media can subsequently become integrated into the shared cultural framework, which can then be utilized by journalists in an ongoing dialectical process. The placement of remembrance practices in a mediatised public space is imperative. The media, being a dominant platform for public discourse, serves as the primary source of social representations of historical events that individuals rely on when necessary (Bird & Dardenne, 1988).

Media significantly influences public perception and opinion on topics, shaping agenda development through various channels like radio, television, newspapers, magazines, and social media, providing essential information on issues (Aldamen, 2023d).

Media are crucial in the formation and transmission of collective memory. They are critical in framing events, communicating facts, and providing a venue for public debate. Because of its potential to affect public opinion and generate narratives, the media is an effective weapon for influencing collective memory, particularly in the context of a natural catastrophe like the 2023 earthquake. Memory scholars are increasingly emphasizing the media's importance as a source of captivating pictures of the past, as well as a vital source of knowledge and attitudes concerning the past.

Because of its huge reach and pervasive messaging, efficient use of narrative forms, and mnemonic coordination with other social actors, the media is claimed to have an "enormous influence" on the formation of collective memory (Huyssen, 2000). Media memory scholars believe that the media is a potent weapon for shaping people's impressions of the past. The media's critical role may be explained by its capacity to grab large audiences while simultaneously giving difficult-to-avoid historical interpretations (Edy, 1999). Furthermore, mass media depictions of the past take on a narrative form, emphasizing an emotional element, making them more accessible than academic education. This is true for both dramatic and news depictions. While we would expect news to be completely focused on the present, the past is regularly included in the media (Meyers, 2007). In addition to traditional media, social media has arisen as an innovative medium for the building and dissemination of collective memory.

Numerous studies demonstrate how social media's function has evolved in a number of areas, including political polarization, learning, and crisis management (Wazzan and Aldamen, 2023; Aldamen, 2023a; Aldamen, 2023b; Aldamen, 2023c; Mohammad and Aldamen, 2023). Individuals can use social media platforms to contribute their own experiences and memories, resulting in a communal repository of lived events. In times of crisis, social media platforms have become crucial instruments for information transmission and communication. Additionally, there are a wide range of uses for multiple media tools, such as education, learning, work, business, access to information, cultural and social interests, networking with families and friends, forming friendships, learning new skills, self-expression, conducting business, and finding work (Aldamen, 2023c).

They enable individuals to contribute their experiences, feelings, and points of view, resulting in a collective narrative that represents the diversity of voices and points of view. 20th century media created new types of mass imaginations and associations that were either admired or despised for their ability to absorb, think, and perform simultaneously. This new mass was also expected to recall, to envision a shared past, and to create and reconstruct collective memory. However, the previous century's dominant vision of media and audiences, as well as the associated conceptions and frameworks, are thought to confound today's understanding of the revolutionary transition to post-broadcast or interactive media. Furthermore, a comparable 20th century legacy is hampering certain memory studies now, in the form of a failure to recognize that digital technologies and media have revolutionized remembering and forgetting to such a degree and scale that the canon should have been abolished (Merrin, 2014).

### **Disasters in Digital Memory & Emergence of New Modes of News**

Erll (2011) proposed a new perspective on traveling memory, arguing that globalization and technological advancements have transformed localized memories into cultures of memory. Understanding how trans-local mnemonic forms and practices are integrated into local repertoires, helps comprehend people's understanding of these experiences. The concept of digital memory involves the integration of systematic storage mechanisms with an interactive and dynamic presence. Across the entirety of human civilization, the act of retaining information has proven to be a more arduous and expensive task than the act of letting go of it. The advent of technology has facilitated equitable access to information through the provision of extensive storage capacity and effortless retrieval mechanisms, thereby establishing a culture of remembrance.

In contemporary times, individuals have transitioned from merely selecting items to actively and persistently obtaining, documenting, and retrieving all available information due to the vast storage capabilities at our disposal. Technology has the potential to enhance human memory by providing an

enduring, easily accessible, and open archive with limitless capacity. Instead of relieving individuals from the responsibility of remembering, technology offers an enhanced level of involvement with memory (Gibson & Stones, 2021). The majority of individuals now rely on mass media as their primary source for comprehending historical events. Scholars in journalism and public communication have contributed to the enormous body of literature on communal memory during the previous two decades.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the introduction of new technologies of news and information broadcast had a tremendous impact on society's common culture and recall. The role of the "national mainstream news media" in molding popular memory has received a lot of attention. However, this function has been called into doubt during times of political turbulence or violence (Volkmer & Lee, 2014). The advent of new platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter has resulted in the formation of a "new memory ecology" that has disrupted traditional techniques of examining media and memory (Hoskins, 2011).

Virtual memorials have the potential to promote worldwide connectedness through a single item while also facilitating a cultural exchange of communal experiences that beyond traditional modalities of memory. The Internet's accessibility enables for mass participation in the production and evolution of communal memory, culminating in a democratic recollection process (Gibson & Stones, 2021). The "connective turn," as characterized by Hoskins (2017), is the overall transformational movement under discussion. This phenomenon is distinguished by the strong mix of digital technology's immediacy, volume, and ubiquity, which has given rise to a fresh knowledge foundation—an "information infrastructure" (Bowker & Star, 2000) that has reshaped the interactions between humans and machines.

The connecting turn's transforming influence extends beyond the processes of remembering and forgetting to the valuation attributed to each. This tendency is typified by the third 'memory boom' in which the act of remembering is raised to a high status in the context of the 'passion for memorialization,' as well as the rise of the idea of the 'right to be forgotten' (Ghezzi et al., 2014). The connective turn's revolutionary influence on the interaction between media and collectives has resulted in the creation of a new multitude, defined by two interconnected and defining characteristics.

One significant change in the media landscape is the transition from a broadcast era, where the public lacked the ability to respond to media to a contemporary era characterized by widespread participation. In this new era, individuals frequently engage in activities such as snapping, posting, recording, editing, liking, linking, forwarding, and chatting within a digital media ecosystem. The second consequence, which arises directly from the first, is that the recollection of the masses is widely dispersed yet concurrently and systematically retrievable. It is interlinked, interconnected, and stored in an archive. The contemporary phenomenon of the economy of attention or distraction, characterized by the prevalence of multiple and frequently concurrent modes of hyper-connectivity, has become the prevailing modus operandi of everyday communication. The various forms of communication, such as links, likes, messages, tweets, emails, and texts, are systematically recorded and stored as a chain of media memory. The act of archiving oneself has the ability to modify the structure of society, establishing the current moment in a profound state of immediacy. Unforeseeable, frequently imperceptible, and inconceivable paths and interconnections characterize this state. The collective memory of society is constructed through the interweaving of human communication utilizing digital technologies and interconnected systems. In contemporary society, social entanglements have become an inescapable aspect of human interaction, regardless of their positive or negative implications.

## METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

---

### Problem of the Study

In the aftermath of the 2023 earthquake in Turkey, social media has become critical for situational consciousness and humanitarian relief. Following the earthquake, social media served as an important communication medium (Aldamen & Hacimic, 2023). Many people who were buried under the debris used mobile devices to access social media and pleaded for aid via Twitter. Many family members and friends used the platform to report missing people. In the hours that followed, the need for various types of goods and donations was highlighted (Toraman et al., 2023). Furthermore, social media platforms have developed distinctive channels for the generation and dissemination of collective memories about previous catastrophic

earthquakes. The majority of Turkish news networks and newspapers shown diligence and devotion on their social media accounts and websites in order to disseminate earthquake news, hence integrating traditional media platforms with contemporary digital media. The recollection of the 1999 earthquake could have influenced the portrayal of the 2023 earthquake in Turkey by various media outlets due to its status as the most recent and devastating earthquake prior to the current one that took place in February 2023. Collective memory serves communities by providing a sense of continuity and a framework for grasping and deciphering the consequences of events. Nevertheless, there is a dearth of research on the digital media's portrayal of the Turkish population's shared recollection of the 1999 earthquake in relation to the 2023 earthquake. This study seeks to fill that void by examining whether the collective memory of the 1999 earthquake is invoked in media coverage of the 2023 earthquake, as well as how it is depicted in terms of lessons learned, public response, and influence on Turkish society. The study topic is crucial because it may reveal how individuals remember and make sense of natural catastrophes, as well as how the media frames and depicts these events in the public awareness.

### Study's Purpose & Questions

The research aims to investigate the potential wide-ranging consequences of media coverage that evokes the communal memory of the 1999 earthquake after the 2023 earthquake in Turkey. Gaining insight into this phenomenon has the possibility of not only providing clarity on how to prepare for disasters but also impacting how the public perceives these events and helping to develop future policies.

The study hypothesizes that the media coverage of 2023 earthquake invokes the collective memory of the 1999 earthquake. Depending on the above hypotheses, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. To what extent does the earthquake that happened in 1999 affects the way, online news outlets cover the earthquake that happened in Turkey in 2023?
2. What is the manner in which the portrayal of the 2023 earthquake in the Internet media evokes a collective memory of the 1999 earthquake?

### Sample & Methods

The qualitative content analysis method was applied. The content collected for analysis span from February 7 to April 7, 2023, ensuring a comprehensive representation of media responses in the immediate aftermath of the 2023 earthquake. Similarweb (2023), which is a specialized website in web traffic and performance analysis, was used in collecting the data. Similarweb (2023) uses an assortment of data sources and computational methods to estimate web traffic and assess the online visibility of websites. It is a provider of web analytics and market intelligence. Similarweb's (2023) web traffic estimation and performance analysis method uses multiple data sources to provide insights into website traffic, user engagement, and other metrics. It directly measures web traffic for websites with its measurement code, collecting data on page views, unique visitors, and referral sources.

As per the findings of Similarweb (2023), it shows that Sabah.com and Hurriyet.com will become known as the most frequently visited online news portals in Turkey in the year 2023. TRT News Online and BBC News Online were the only platforms that offer news in English and have secured a position in the top ten most viewed online news platforms in Turkey in the last year (Newman, 2021). As well, the selected online media sources are limited to the platforms that reports news in Turkish and English languages.

Depending on that, four major news platforms in Turkey were chosen to be the study sample for the content analysis:

- (1) dailysabah.com,
- (2) hurriyet.com,
- (3) TRT news online, and
- (4) BBC news online.

The qualitative analysis was used to entail the examination and interpretation of the substance and context of media coverage with the aim of identifying implicit meanings, patterns, and associations while considering the notion of collective memory. Employing a systematic coding scheme is crucial for maintaining

**Table 1.** Online news content from dailysabah.com, hurriyet.com, TRT news online, & BBC news online over period of February 7 to April 7, 2023

Daily Sabah	TRT World	Hürriyet	BBC Online
Time to unite against the massive catastrophe	Turkish people have track record for rebuilding quickly: Chinese rescuers	Disaster report from AFAD; There are 14 active fault lines	Turkey earthquake: Why helping means so much to this family
Post-quake period in Türkiye: Fallacies, political insensitivity	120,000 search and rescue workers continue efforts in Türkiye	All of the destroyed buildings in Osmaniye were built before 1999	Turkey earthquake: Death toll could increase eight-fold, WHO says
Disaster Areas Affecting General Life' status given to 6 more Turkish cities	Over a thousand dead as magnitude 7.7 earthquake strikes southern Türkiye	Can anyone hear my voice	
Exhibit of past, recent Turkish quakes opens in unique library	Türkiye's twin quakes not a common phenomenon: Geophysicist	Let's not leave them there alone	
545 historic Istanbul buildings restored to resist earthquakes	Will Türkiye earthquakes renew interest in Ottoman-era wooden housing?	Istanbul earthquake warning from CNN International: They announced the painful balance sheet	
Türkiye's recovery through lessons learned at quake-hit southeast	Rescue workers race to locate survivors under ruined buildings		
Türkiye ready to heal wounds after major quakes			
Türkiye issues quake rebuild rules as new housing construction starts			
Quake impact on Türkiye's growth unlikely to be as much as in 1999			
How to finance post-quake reconstruction in Türkiye?			
Triangle of life': Possible quake strategy to save your life			
Science behind Türkiye's twin quakes that took over 30,000 lives			
Istanbul's urban transformation picks pace after Feb. 6 earthquakes			

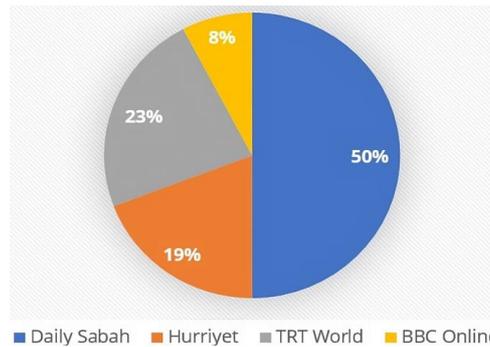
validity and reliability. The coding scheme should be developed in a rigorous and systematic manner, aligning with the research objectives and research questions. It should include clear definitions and operationalizations of codes and categories. Researchers should engage in discussions and iterations to refine the coding scheme, ensuring it captures the nuances and complexities of the data. Cross-referencing is employed to manage duplicates or overlapping material from several sources in order to avoid repetition.

The method of retrieving news content involves the utilization of specific keywords such as **"1999 earthquake," "Turkey earthquake," "earthquake memory,"** and **"collective memory."** The data obtained from the online platforms of the aforementioned news agencies, utilizing the corresponding keywords, is subjected to content analysis.

## FINDINGS

The present study involved the collection and analysis of online news content from major news platforms in Turkey, including dailysabah.com, hurriyet.com, TRT news online, and BBC news online, over the period of February 7 to April 7, 2023 (Table 1).

The analyzed media websites have exhibited limited utilization of the 1999 earthquake as a conceptual framework in their coverage of the 2023 earthquake. Upon analysis of the collected data, it was found that



**Figure 1.** Media websites exhibited utilization of 1999 earthquake in coverage of Turkey 2023 earthquake (Source: Authors)

dailysabah.com accounted for 50% of the news coverage pertaining to the 1999 earthquake. TRT World and Hürriyet contributed 23% and 19% of news coverage in this regard, respectively.

In contrast, BBC.com had a considerably smaller percentage (8%) of coverage regarding the 1999 earthquake (as illustrated in **Figure 1**).

The coverage of news pertaining to the earthquake, specifically the earthquake of 1999 and the collective recollection of said event is relatively scarce across most online platforms of these media outlets. However, the Daily Sabah has provided greater coverage of the 1999 earthquake news in comparison to the other three media platforms that were examined. Thirteen news articles pertaining to the 1999 earthquake have been documented in the Daily Sabah, spanning from February 7 to April 7. The Daily Sabah has published four articles, which feature the accounts of several individuals who were affected by the 1999 earthquake in Turkey. **Table 2** shows the main points from the Daily Sabah.

**Table 2.** Main points from Daily Sabah (published the most articles)

No	Article	Main points
1	Time to unite against massive catastrophe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two earthquakes in Türkiye/natural disaster with significant casualties</li> <li>- Unity and collaboration/crisis management among various stakeholders</li> <li>- International assistance/global solidarity</li> <li>- Importance of swift response</li> <li>- Search and rescue efforts and coordination by authorities</li> <li>- Need for setting aside/political rivalries</li> <li>- Politics and focusing on recovery efforts</li> <li>- Criticism of politicizing</li> <li>- Ethical considerations</li> <li>- the earthquake on social media</li> <li>- Future precautions and</li> <li>- Disaster preparedness transformations in Türkiye</li> <li>- Condolences for the lost</li> <li>- Compassion and empathy and wishes for recovery</li> </ul>
2	Post-quake period in Türkiye: Fallacies, political insensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Urgent need to break free from political blame games</li> <li>- Distinguishing between deliberate inaction and lack of capacity</li> <li>- Lack of political tact and spread of misinformation</li> <li>- Fallacies and false narratives after the earthquake</li> <li>- Importance of accurate information and critical thinking</li> <li>- Anti-Syrian campaign and prejudice</li> <li>- Scapegoating and allegations of neglect</li> <li>- Shifting towards unity, solidarity, and critical mindset</li> </ul>
3	'Disaster areas affecting general life' status given to six more Turkish cities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Six Turkish cities designated as "disaster areas"</li> <li>- Cities affected: Bingöl, Kayseri, Mardin, Tunceli, Nigde, &amp; Batman</li> <li>- "Disaster areas affecting general life" status granted</li> <li>- State subsidies to compensate for financial losses</li> <li>- Updates on building demolitions and evacuations</li> <li>- Three-day appeal period for owners</li> <li>- Establishment of AFAD</li> <li>- Introduction of the integrated disaster management system</li> <li>- Devastating earthquakes occurred on February 6</li> <li>- High human casualties, building destruction, and infrastructure damage</li> </ul>

**Table 2 (Continued).** Main points from Daily Sabah (published the most articles)

No	Article	Main points
4	Exhibit of past, recent Turkish quakes opens in unique library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exhibition of past and recent Turkish earthquakes</li> <li>- Unique library in Kocaeli</li> <li>- Collection of books, photographs, and newspapers</li> <li>- Focus on major tremors from the past to the present</li> <li>- Information about earthquakes in Istanbul in the 1800s</li> <li>- Over 500 earthquake-related headlines in newspapers</li> <li>- Personal experience of the Marmara earthquake in 1999</li> <li>- Importance of learning from earthquakes</li> <li>- Library as a valuable resource for academics and students</li> <li>- Ongoing collection of documents related to earthquakes</li> </ul>
5	545 historic Istanbul buildings restored to resist earthquakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 545 historic Istanbul buildings restored</li> <li>- Buildings made earthquake-resistant</li> <li>- Restoration by General Directorate of Foundations</li> <li>- Collaboration with Ministry of Culture and Tourism</li> <li>- Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality's role</li> <li>- Use of techniques like fiber-reinforced polymer wrapping and steel tensioners</li> <li>- Notable restored buildings/Ongoing restoration work</li> </ul>
6	Türkiye's recovery through lessons learned at quake-hit southeast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Türkiye's recovery efforts after a devastating earthquake</li> <li>- Solidarity and support shown by the Turkish people</li> <li>- Coordinated relief efforts led by local authorities and organizations</li> <li>- Importance of learning from the experience to defend cities against future disasters</li> <li>- Criticism of the main opposition leader for politicizing the situation</li> <li>- Focus on urgent needs of survivors rather than destructive statements</li> <li>- Impact of the event on upcoming elections and opposition's political strategies</li> </ul>
7	Türkiye ready to heal wounds after major quakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Türkiye's swift response/preparedness disaster management to earthquake and relief efforts</li> <li>- Comparison to previous historical context Impact of past earthquakes in Türkiye earthquakes</li> <li>- Magnitude and death toll severity of quake scale of devastation</li> <li>- Challenges faced in humanitarian crisis Syrian situation managing crisis in Syria &amp; assistance</li> <li>- International aid and global support solidarity and aid support received from the world</li> <li>- President Erdoğan's leadership effective crisis/leadership and efforts management</li> <li>- Türkiye's history of humanitarian aid track record of helping</li> <li>- Long-term rehabilitation recovery and reconstruction plans</li> <li>- plans for affected areas rehabilitation for affected areas</li> </ul>
8	Türkiye issues quake rebuild rules as new housing construction starts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Türkiye issues regulations for earthquake rebuilding</li> <li>- Construction of new housing units in Gaziantep/devastating earthquakes on February 6</li> <li>- President Erdogan commits to rebuilding within a year</li> <li>- Temporary accommodations provided for survivors</li> <li>- UNDP estimates 1.5 million homeless, 500,000 new homes needed</li> <li>- Presidential decree allows participation from companies/charities</li> <li>- TOKI initiates construction of first homes in Gaziantep</li> <li>- Plans for geological surveys and tenders for reconstruction</li> <li>- Investigations into building code violations/UNDP appeals for funds for rubble clearing</li> </ul>
9	Quake impact on Türkiye's growth unlikely to be as much as in 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impact of recent earthquakes on Türkiye's economic growth</li> <li>- Comparison to the 1999 earthquake in terms of severity</li> <li>- Devastation in southeastern Türkiye and northern Syria</li> <li>- Collapse of buildings, damage to roads and pipelines</li> <li>- Strain on Türkiye's budget due to the rebuilding process</li> <li>- Potential boost to future GDP growth from reconstruction</li> <li>- Optimism expressed by IMF &amp; experts/challenges of inflation &amp; currency depreciation in Türkiye</li> <li>- Shift towards a current account surplus as an economic model</li> <li>- Low debt levels compared to others/potential impact on production &amp; economic growth</li> <li>- Estimated decline in GDP growth if production drops in the region</li> <li>- Limited impact on Türkiye's trade balance/decrease in both exports and imports</li> </ul>
10	How to finance post-quake reconstruction in Türkiye?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need for significant investments in post-quake reconstruction</li> <li>- Traditional funding mechanisms are insufficient</li> <li>- Exploration of earthquake-resilient housing retrofitting or reconstruction</li> <li>- Green finance options, blockchain-based models, ICOs, Islamic financial instruments</li> </ul>

**Table 2 (Continued).** Main points from Daily Sabah (published the most articles)

No	Article	Main points
11	'Triangle of life': Possible quake strategy to save your life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Triangle of life strategy TOL earthquake preparedness</li> <li>- Identification of safe SGS risk mitigation</li> <li>- Formation of voids during FVD survival tactics/building collapse/resistant buildings</li> <li>- Importance of earthquake-EAB structural resilience</li> <li>- Need for emergency kits NEK emergency preparedness</li> <li>- Türkiye's susceptibility to TSE geographical risk</li> </ul>
12	Science behind Türkiye's twin quakes that took over 30,000 lives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Twin earthquakes in southeastern Türkiye resulted in over 30,000 lives lost</li> <li>- Affecting over 14 million people, nearly 16% of the national population</li> <li>- Quakes occurred along major fault lines in Adana, Adiyaman, Diyarbakir, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kilis, Malatya, Osmaniye, and Sanliurfa</li> <li>- Strong tremors felt in neighboring countries like Syria and Lebanon</li> <li>- Geophysics engineer Professor Murat Utkucu explains the geophysics of the earthquakes</li> <li>- Earthquakes occurred along the East Anatolian Fault Zone (EAFZ)</li> <li>- Anatolian plate movement is the main cause of earthquake generation in Türkiye</li> <li>- Recent earthquakes had a larger fault length &amp; released more seismic energy compared to previous quakes</li> <li>- The second major tremor broadened the damaged area, complicating relief efforts</li> <li>- Renewed interest in geophysics among Türkiye's citizens to understand earthquake causes and potential future tremors</li> </ul>
13	Istanbul's urban transformation picks pace after Feb. 6 earthquakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Urban transformation</li> <li>- Devastation after earthquakes</li> <li>- Ministry's collaboration with municipalities and private sector</li> <li>- Transformation progress in Istanbul</li> <li>- Target to rebuild unstable structures by 2035</li> <li>- Specific neighborhoods undergoing transformation</li> </ul>

1. **Time to unite against the massive catastrophe:** The article emphasizes the need for unity and solidarity in the face of a massive catastrophe. It highlights the impact of two powerful earthquakes in Türkiye, resulting in numerous casualties and injuries. The response to the disaster has been a collective effort involving public agencies, the military, NGOs, and private citizens. The crisis management approach, led by the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), has been effective. The article also calls for setting aside politics and rivalries during such times of crisis. It criticizes the tendency of some individuals to engage in politically-charged discussions on social media. The focus should be on helping, healing wounds, and rebuilding affected cities. Finally, the article expresses gratitude to foreign leaders who have offered condolences and aid, while remembering the lives lost and wishing a speedy recovery for the injured.
2. **Exhibit of past, recent Turkish quakes opens in unique library:** The article discusses an exhibit in a unique library curated by journalist Ismail Kahraman. The exhibit focuses on past and recent Turkish earthquakes and features books, photographs, and newspapers related to major tremors. Kahraman, who experienced the Marmara earthquake in 1999, believes that learning from past earthquakes is crucial and aims to raise awareness about their impact. The exhibit serves as a valuable resource for researchers and emphasizes the importance of being prepared for future disasters.
3. **Turkey's recovery through lessons learned in quake-hit southeast:** In this thought-provoking article, Burhanettin Duran discusses Turkey's recovery efforts following a devastating earthquake in the southeastern region. The author emphasizes the importance of learning from this tragedy and implementing measures to better protect cities against future disasters. Duran praises the nation's solidarity and resilience but criticizes the main opposition leader for politicizing the situation instead of focusing on supporting the affected communities. The article concludes by highlighting the need for unity and a nonpartisan approach in overcoming challenges and rebuilding stronger than before.
4. **Turkey ready to heal wounds after major quakes:** Türkiye is prepared to heal the wounds caused by a major earthquake that struck the country and Syria. While not among the deadliest earthquakes in history, the recent quake has had a significant impact, with a death toll exceeding 1,000 and many still trapped under debris. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has called it the country's largest disaster since 1939. Türkiye has quickly mobilized its resources, including search and rescue operations and

medical assistance. The country's history of providing humanitarian aid during previous disasters demonstrates its resilience. The challenges ahead include recovering those still trapped, providing temporary accommodations, and formulating long-term rehabilitation plans. Despite the difficulties, Türkiye is determined to overcome this crisis and rebuild.

5. The news article entitled **"Triangle of life: Possible quake strategy to save your life"**: In this article by Daily Sabah with IHA, the concept of the "triangle of life" is explored as a potential strategy to increase survival rates during earthquakes. It explores the psychological impacts of earthquakes especially regarding the **"crush syndrome,"** which was first introduced to the literature following the 1999 earthquake. Emergency Medicine Specialist Dr. Ekrem Musalar explains that when buildings collapse, objects or furniture inside creates voids or spaces, where individuals can seek shelter. These voids, shaped like a triangle, can provide a safe haven amidst the debris. It is emphasized that determining emergency gathering spots within households is crucial for preparedness. Additionally, the article highlights the importance of constructing earthquake-resistant buildings and taking necessary precautions to ensure safety during seismic events.
6. In the article titled **"Disaster areas affecting general life's status given to six more Turkish cities"**: It is reported that following the recent earthquakes, six additional cities in Turkey have been classified as "disaster areas affecting general life." These cities include Bingol, Kayseri, Mardin, Tunceli, Nigde, and Batman. This designation enables affected cities to receive financial support from the government to compensate for losses and facilitate necessary updates, such as demolition or evacuation of buildings. The article also highlights the role of AFAD in coordinating disaster response and promoting risk management strategies. The recent earthquakes in the southeastern region of Turkey and neighboring Syria resulted in significant loss of life, destruction of buildings, and damage to infrastructure.
7. **"How to Finance Post-Quake Reconstruction in Turkey?"**: The Turkish Parliament's decisions to establish AFAD and enact earthquake solidarity taxes following the 1999 earthquake were discussed. The concern about Istanbul's city planning and buildings is addressed in two news articles by Daily Sabah, headed
8. **"545 historic Istanbul buildings restored to resist earthquakes"** and
9. **"Istanbul's urban transformation picks up pace after Feb. 6 earthquakes"**, as another earthquake is expected to occur in Istanbul in the near future.  
In addition, one story addresses accusations of post-disaster (1999) charity actions, while another, titled
10. **"Science behind Türkiye's twin quakes that took over 30,000 lives,"** does a comparison analysis of the recent earthquake and the 1999 earthquake.  
In the aftermath of the 2023 earthquake, Hürriyet and TRT have reported more news pertaining to the 1999 earthquake in comparison to the BBC. During the specified period, TRT World featured six news reports that referenced the earthquake of 1999. The magnitude and strength of the 2023 earthquake and the 1991 earthquake are compared and analyzed in two of the news articles reported with the headings.
11. **"Over a thousand dead as magnitude 7.7 earthquake strikes southern Turkey"**: According to this article, a powerful magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck Southern Türkiye, resulting in a tragic loss of life. The earthquake, centered in the Pazarcik District of Kahramanmaraş Province, caused significant damage and casualties in both Türkiye and Syria. AFAD reported that at least 912 people have been confirmed dead and 5,385 others injured in Türkiye, while over 500 people lost their lives in Syria. The earthquake, which occurred at a depth of seven kilometers, was followed by numerous aftershocks, including two with magnitudes of 6.6 and 6.5. The tremors were felt in neighboring countries such as Lebanon. Rescue and relief efforts are underway, with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expressing his support for the affected citizens and emphasizing that AFAD and other relevant units are on high alert. This tragic event serves as a reminder of Türkiye's vulnerability to earthquakes due to its location on major fault lines.

According to the article

12. **"Turkey's twin quakes not a common phenomenon: Geophysicist"**: geophysicist Saskia goes from Imperial College in London discusses the uncommon phenomenon of twin earthquakes in Türkiye's southeastern region. The first earthquake, measuring 7.7 on the Richter scale, lasted for 65 seconds, while the second earthquake, with a magnitude of 7.6, lasted for 45 seconds. Goes explains that it is rare for an earthquake to trigger another one of similar magnitude, as aftershocks are typically smaller. The destructive power of these earthquakes, which were three times stronger than the 1999 Marmara earthquake, can be attributed to their shallow depth. The region experienced a two-minute period of intense shaking, affecting over 13 million people across 10 provinces. The impact extends beyond Türkiye, with millions potentially left homeless in northern Syria. Goes emphasizes that the occurrence of twin quakes is not common and highlights the challenges scientists face in predicting future earthquake frequencies in specific regions.
13. The article titled **"Will Turkey earthquakes renew interest in Ottoman-era wooden housing?"** delves into sustainable construction techniques aimed at mitigating the demolition of buildings during seismic events. A video news report featured on the website of TRT World under the heading
14. **"Rescue workers race to locate survivors under ruined buildings"**, highlights the account of an emergency response specialist who had also participated in the rescue mission of 1999.
15. In the other news report, titled **"120,000 search and rescue workers continue efforts in Turkey"**, TRT World reported on the rescue experience and memory of the international rescuers who were part of both the 1999 earthquake and the 2023 earthquake.

Between February 7 and April 7, 2023, Hürriyet's online platform disseminated five articles pertaining to the 1999 earthquake. Two of the reports,

16. titled **"Let's not leave them there alone"** and
17. **"Can anyone hear my voice?"**, document the recollections of an individual who endured the 1999 earthquake as a child and another who participated in the rescue mission for the aforementioned earthquake. One article discusses an expected upcoming earthquake in Istanbul under the title
18. **"The Istanbul earthquake warning from CNN International; they announced the painful balance sheet"** and the other discussing cases of collapsed buildings in the current earthquake
19. **"All of the destroyed buildings in Osmaniye were built before 1999"** have mentioned the 1999 earthquake in their content. Another news article has been published by Hürriyet, which provides a list of past earthquakes that have occurred in Turkey, highlighting the 1999 earthquake as one of the fatal earthquakes in history.

The BBC Online has exhibited only a very limited degree of coverage pertaining to previous earthquakes that have occurred in Turkey subsequent to the most recent earthquake. The media coverage of the earthquake that occurred in 2023 by BBC Online contains a mere two mentions of the earthquake that took place in 1999. During the specified timeframe, BBC Online released a solitary news article that commemorated the 1999 earthquake.

20. The article, entitled **"Turkey earthquake: Why helping means so much to this family,"** narrated the account of an individual who survived the aforementioned earthquake and currently resides in the United States. In the other news report, the 1999 earthquake is listed and described, along with the 1939 earthquake, as the two deadliest earthquakes in the history of Turkey.

To summarize the main points from the collected data:

- The coverage of the 1999 earthquake and collective recollection of the event is relatively scarce across most online media platforms.
- The Daily Sabah provided greater coverage of the 1999 earthquake compared to other media outlets examined.

- The Daily Sabah published several articles featuring accounts of individuals affected by the 1999 earthquake, as well as discussing topics such as psychological impacts, city planning, and post-disaster charity actions.
- Hürriyet and TRT reported more news pertaining to the 1999 earthquake in the aftermath of the 2023 earthquake compared to the BBC.
- TRT World featured news reports comparing the 2023 earthquake to the 1999 earthquake, discussing sustainable construction techniques, and highlighting the experiences of rescue workers involved in both disasters.
- Hürriyet published articles that included personal recollections of the 1999 earthquake, discussions on an expected earthquake in Istanbul, and cases of collapsed buildings.
- The BBC Online had limited coverage of previous earthquakes in Turkey, with only two mentions of the 1999 earthquake in the context of the 2023 earthquake coverage.

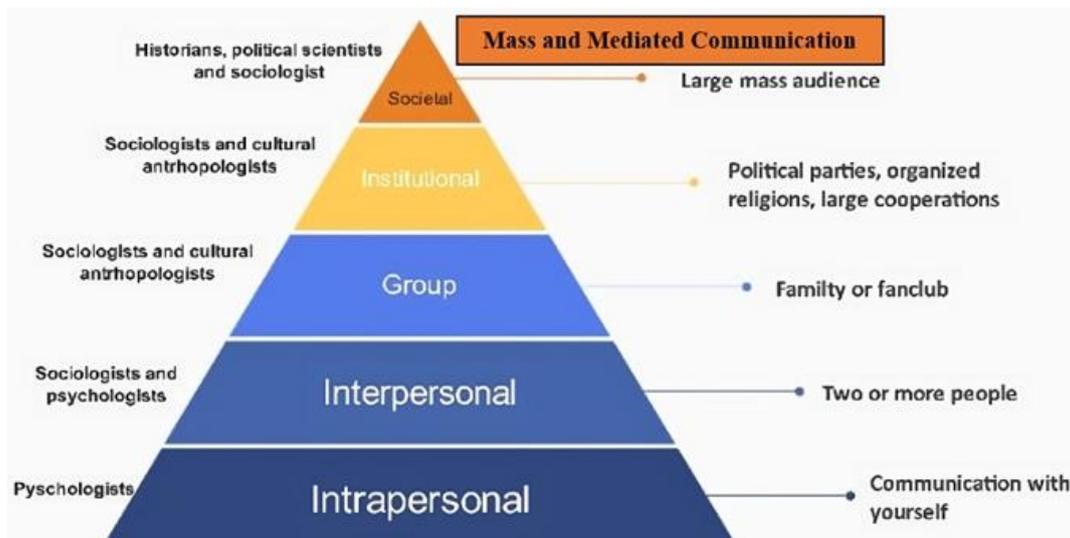
These main points highlight variations in media coverage and the extent to which the 1999 earthquake was discussed across different online media platforms.

## DISCUSSION

---

The media has a big duty to bring attention to the most pressing social concerns. The media created popular concern for quake victims both in Turkey and abroad by regularly emphasizing their everyday problems. The media provided voice to survivors' concerns and fury, as well as their calls for greater responsibility from the state, by reporting on mismanagement, corruption, and incompetence within the administration. The transition from conventional to social media in disaster response was visible in the aftermath of the 2023 earthquake. After the 1999 earthquake paralyzed the local and national administrations, survivors and the rest of the country depended on radio and television for news pertaining to the magnitude of the devastation and the different government help packages available. 76% of individuals polled said they got their daily news from the media (TV, radio, and newspapers) following the earthquake. In addition, out of a list of several social and government organizations, over 45% of those polled claimed that TV and newspapers enabled them to learn about the government's benefits for earthquake victims (Jalali, 2002). However, after the recent earthquake, social media has played a crucial role in raising awareness of the situation and facilitating humanitarian aid. Individuals trapped under debris utilized mobile devices to seek assistance on platforms like Twitter, while others employed social media to report missing persons, emphasizing the urgent need for diverse goods and donations in the subsequent hours (Toraman et al., 2023). The traditional media outlets were also engaged in reporting the latest earthquake through their digital and social media platforms. Considering the fact that the 1999 earthquake was not the only devastating earthquake in the history of Turkey, the limited act of recalling the collective memory of it on a few of the studied media platforms cannot be regarded as an unfavorable conclusion to the research question posed in this study. Other than the BBC, the international media source, the other three Turkish-based media platforms have reported a considerable number of news stories evoking the 1999 earthquake's collective memory in a condensed two-month period.

As evidenced by numerous scholarly works on the subject of collective memory spanning several decades, the significance of memory cannot be overstated. The significance of cultural representation extends beyond the creators of physical structures, visual media, and print publications and encompasses the perspectives of both individuals and groups (Merrin, 2014). The importance of the media in reflecting the collective memory of previous events or tragedies is essential. As historical consumption becomes increasingly intermittent and fragmented across temporal and spatial dimensions, the formation of memory communities may occur infrequently and rely on limited consensus regarding particular events. There is a growing trend, where consumers are primarily connected through media channels that they selectively and individually access. The media, along with their structure and associated consumption rituals, may be regarded as a crucial element of individuals' historical consciousness (Kansteiner, 2002). The media performs a function beyond the mere portrayal of pre-existing historical perspectives within a given society.



**Figure 2.** Pyramid of communication levels & their characteristics (Source: Authors)

According to McQuail (1985), the study of communication must be multidisciplinary and use a variety of methodologies and methods. Stimulating the collective memory publicly is a type of communication between the sender and the receiver of the message, and it represents in the hierarchy of levels of communication the upper level, the level in which communication with the mass enters through a medium, as shown in [Figure 2](#). Mass communication is the process of creating and transmitting a message to a large, anonymous, heterogeneous audience through a medium. In this study, the sample of the study stimulated the collective memory of the Turkish people about the 1999 Earthquake in the news published on the 2023 earthquake.

The media possesses the ability to co-construct visions of history through the utilization of mechanisms such as Selection and narrative, frames and salience, and the right logic of the media creation process are all important considerations. While this is only one component, it is a crucial factor in the shaping of historical perspectives. An early scholar in this field Zelizer (1995) noted that journalism extends beyond being a mere profession with its own set of operational procedures; rather, it offers society historical interpretations. The interactive and discursive nature of collective memory reflection has been amplified by the widespread adoption of social media and online platforms. Numerous academics, such as Haskins (2007), have emphasized the significance of new media in influencing the formation of collective memory. The capacity for order and storage, immediacy, and interactivity of digital technology have the potential to obscure the boundaries between archival and living memory. However, these platforms also present challenges to the formation of collective memory due to their vulnerability to the dissemination of misinformation, fake news, and polarized narratives.

As proposed in various studies, media, regardless of its form, plays a significant role in both preserving a society's historical memory and influencing individuals' perspectives on past events. Le Goff (1992) identifies five distinct periods in memory history, starting with prehistoric oral memory and progressing to writing systems, printing presses, archives, libraries, and museums, culminating in electronic information transmission in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The study's results indicate that the examination of media coverage of the 2023 earthquake has shown little collective recollection of the 1999 earthquake. However, this limited manner of remembering is mostly evident on the analyzed international media platform. The study demonstrates that not all of the examined media outlets have used the 1999 earthquake as a conceptual framework in their reporting of the 2023 earthquake. The recent catastrophic event has not been much compared, specifically with regard to the 1999 earthquake, which is the most recent deadly earthquake in the country. However, Turkish media platforms, particularly 'Daily Sabah', have extensively covered the earthquake in 2023, evoking memories of the 1999 earthquake, highlighting the need to be prepared for disasters and the pressing need to quickly deliver aid to the devastated population. And some reports on all of these platforms seem to include the 1999 earthquake among the other earthquakes while commemorating the country's history of devastating disasters.

Social media plays a crucial role in articulating individuals' experiences and memories, reshaping collective memory in the process. Users share personal narratives, contributing to a dynamic and evolving collective narrative (Zhao & Liu, 2015). Memory study scholars highlight the media's significance in shaping collective memories. The constant interaction between culture, individual memory, and media contributes to the transformation of collective memory in the digital age (García-Gavilanes et al., 2017).

Edy (1999) posits three archetypal forms of journalistic representation of historical events that have the potential to affect the collective memory based on theoretical analysis. These forms are, as follows: The topic of discussion pertains to commemorations. One example of commemorative practices is the reporting of historical events on their anniversary. Commemorations serve as a means for journalists to act as public historians, who are responsible for the selection and interpretation of historical events for a wider audience. However, it is important to note that such commemorations may not always establish a connection between the past and present. In scholarly discourse, the usage of historical parallels the explicit link between past and present is frequently used to explain historical trends or occurrences and to highlight comparisons. In this situation, the typical objective is to glean insights from previous events or to foresee future occurrences.

The topic at hand pertains to historical contexts. He refers to a unique form of memorial journalism that aims to provide a historical perspective on current events. This approach involves contextualizing ongoing events within a broader historical framework, as exemplified by the analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in relation to the recent elections in Israel.

People depend on media for various gratifications, such as educational reasons during crises and conflict times, work, and business; information access; cultural and social aspects; establishing friendships; learning new skills; making business; and finding work, in addition to connecting with networks and families. Self-expression and building the collective memory. The commemoration of historic events through the media, including the coverage of milestone anniversaries and the commercialization of press coverage, particularly photographs, offer valuable insights into collective memory.

The media has an essential role in molding people's collective memory. The concern today is whether the shift to online media, particularly social media, will interfere with this process. Is it feasible that the fact that we get our news through social media platforms explains why events that have not been in the news for years have suddenly become prominent? Understanding the answers to these questions and how collective memory is formed is not only intriguing scientifically, but it may also have implications in journalism, media development, government, and even advertising (Yasseri et al., 2022).

The primary providers of content for nostalgia projects have been media outlets in the field of journalism. The recycled images implicate the audience, as their significance is contingent upon being recollected and comprehended as possessing communal import. Individuals are guided by influential metaphors and cultural constructs that are shaped, in part, by media and recollection. Certain academics posit that fictional genres possess a greater potential to influence social cohesion than journalistic genres. Television appears to exert a significant influence on the collective memory and recollection of a given society, particularly with respect to the content and manner in which information is retained. While the possibility of this assertion holds merit, it is imperative to note that the absence of empirical data necessitates the collection of extensive surveys. It may be more productive to inquire about the ways in which various media formats contribute to the management of collective memory. As the author suggests, news media may serve as an initial representation of public memories, while made-for-television movies may serve as a secondary representation (van Dijck, 2004). The assertion posited is that only those occurrences that transform into a (journalistic) narrative have the potential to subsequently evolve into historical events. The result can be considered "media memory products" (Birkner & Donk, 2020). While the field of memory studies is rapidly expanding our understanding of the importance of collective memories to our identities, meaning-making processes, and even our sense of security, much of that effort has been directed toward understanding the interaction between nation-states and the collectives governed by those states (Yasseri et al., 2022). Even though in general the stimulation of the 1999 earthquake was limited in most of the studied platforms other than Daily Sabah, the news stories that addressed the 1999 earthquake memory have, as seen in the analysis, appeared to utilize the visual selection and the framing of sentences, particularly the headings of those articles, in a way to commemorate the aspect of "collectiveness" in dealing with past earthquakes. During the limited duration of the research,

the media sources examined, excluding the international platform BBC, have shown a worthy of note extent of attention towards reporting on the collective remembrance of the 1999 earthquake.

## CONCLUSIONS

Collective memory of catastrophes and wars frequently takes on special relevance as a coping strategy for society in the aftermath of terrible occurrences. Collective memory helps communities cope with the ramifications of such occurrences by providing a sense of continuity as well as a framework for understanding and comprehending what happened. Collective memory is often seen as beneficial for social resilience since it facilitates the transmission of life experience and communal information from a particular generation to another. This knowledge could then be used to anticipate and alleviate the detrimental consequences of unfavorable occurrences, such as natural catastrophes. It is anticipated that a media event would help people recollect the catastrophe. Bringing together and establishing the bounds of the communal consciousness were important tasks for the media (Kanayama & Ogawa, 2020). The media and social media are critical in framing events, communicating facts, and providing a venue for public debate. In addition to traditional media, social media has arisen as an innovative medium for the building and dissemination of communal memory.

"The history of earlier times will always be partially a narrative based on what the media opted to recall, and how those recollections have subsequently shaped the present." The term "media memory" has also been used to refer to it, and it denotes "the methodical look into the shared histories that are told by, using, and concerning the media" (Zelizer, 1992). Turkey, one of the most seismically active nations, has experienced a number of devastating earthquakes in the past. Since the current earthquake in February 2023 was fatal, the collective memory of the 1999 earthquake, which was the most recent and deadly earthquake prior to the present one, has the potential to be observed in the news reports of the news outlets studied.

This study highlights the essential significance of media, in its many forms, in both preserving a society's collective recollection of the past and molding people's perspectives on past occurrences. However, the analysis of media coverage of the 2023 earthquake in general highlights a constrained communal recollection of the 1999 earthquake, particularly on the international media stage. Notably, the BBC, a prominent international media outlet for the Turkish audience, exhibited limited utilization of the 1999 earthquake as a conceptual framework in reporting on the 2023 earthquake. Despite the recent calamity's severity, especially when compared to the 1999 earthquake, which stands as the nation's most recent deadly earthquake, Daily Sabah emerged as a noteworthy platform, extensively covering news stories that evoke memories of the 1999 earthquake. These narratives emphasized the imperative for disaster preparedness and the urgent need to extend assistance to the affected population. Whereas Turkish-based platforms like TRT World and Hürriyet, while being among the most relied upon, did not seem to significantly stimulate collective recollection of past catastrophes, even though the given coverage is worthy of note. It is essential to note, however, that the study's timeframe spans only two months, and therefore, any observed lack of collective recollection on Turkish-based media platforms during this period should not be extrapolated as a broader trend.

The transition from conventional to social media in disaster response was observed after the 2023 earthquake. In the aftermath of the 1999 earthquake, traditional media such as radio and television played a crucial role in providing news and raising awareness about the devastation and government aid. However, in the recent earthquake, survivors to seek help and report missing persons used social media platforms like Twitter. The media, both traditional and social, also reported on mismanagement and corruption in the government's response. While traditional media outlets covered the earthquake, social media platforms played a significant role in facilitating awareness and aid. The study emphasizes the importance of media in reflecting collective memory and historical consciousness. It notes that media consumption has become fragmented and selective, and the media's role extends beyond portraying existing historical perspectives. The study also highlights the challenges posed by social media, such as the spread of misinformation and polarized narratives. Media, in various forms, contributes to preserving historical memory and shaping individuals' perspectives on past events. The study suggests that not all media outlets covered the recent earthquake in relation to the 1999 earthquake, but Turkish media platforms like 'Daily Sabah' extensively covered the event, evoking memories of the previous disaster. The study discusses different forms of

journalistic representation of historical events and their influence on collective memory. It also raises questions about the impact of online media, particularly social media, on collective memory formation. The media's role in nostalgia projects and the potential influence of fictional genres are mentioned.

The findings regarding media coverage and collective recollection of the 1999 earthquake have several practical implications for media organizations, government agencies, and disaster response teams. The practical implications of these insights emphasize the importance of accurate and comprehensive media coverage, collaboration between media organizations and government agencies, and leveraging various communication channels to enhance disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. By incorporating these strategies, stakeholders involved in disaster management can improve their communication approaches and effectively engage with the public, ensuring a more coordinated and informed response to natural disasters.

### Limitations

The study aims to expand its scope by incorporating additional media outlets, including those that operate outside of the online realm. It included a sample of online website content from major news platforms in Turkey, such as *dailysabah.com*, *hurriyet.com*, TRT news online, and BBC news online. However, it did not include all platforms, which may not fully represent the diversity of media sources in Turkey. The study's temporal scope was limited to a two-month period, and data collection was confined to the online platforms of four Turkish media outlets. The study concludes by emphasizing the need for further research on the relationship between media and collective memory and its implications for journalism, media development, and other fields.

**Author contributions:** All authors were involved in concept, design, collection of data, interpretation, writing, and critically revising the article. All authors approved the final version of the article.

**Funding:** The authors received no financial support for the research and/or authorship of this article.

**Ethics declaration:** The authors declared that the study did not require approval from ethics committee since it did not include participation or experimentation on humans or animals, and was a study of articles published in the press.

**Declaration of interest:** The authors declare no competing interest.

**Data availability:** Data generated or analyzed during this study are available from the authors on request.

### REFERENCES

---

- Aldamen, Y. (2017). The role of print and electronic media in the defense of human rights: A Jordanian perspective. *Jordan Journal of Social Sciences*, 10(1), 119-131. <https://doi.org/10.12816/0040694>
- Aldamen, Y. (2023a). Can a negative representation of refugees in social media lead to compassion fatigue? An analysis of the perspectives of a sample of Syrian refugees in Jordan and Turkey. *Journalism and Media*, 4(1), 90-104. <https://doi.org/10.3390/journalmedia4010007>
- Aldamen, Y. (2023b). Understanding social media dependency, and uses and gratifications as a communication system in the migration Era Syrian refugees in host countries as a case study. *Social Sciences*, 12(6), 322. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci12060322>
- Aldamen, Y. (2023c). Xenophobia and hate speech towards refugees on social media: Reinforcing causes, negative effects, defense and response mechanisms against that speech. *Societies*, 13(4), 83. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc13040083>
- Aldamen, Y. (2023d). How the media agenda contributes to cultivating symbolic annihilation and gender-based stigmatization frames for Syrian refugee women. *Language Discourse & Society*, 11(2), 22. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10291208>
- Aldamen, Y. (2023e). Refugee journalist phenomenon as a consequence of migration and refugee crises: The role of social media in transferring refugees role from "has been affected" to "has affected". *Studies in Media and Communication*, 11(6), 358-370. <https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v11i6.6202>
- Aldamen, Y., & Hacimic, E. (2023). Positive determinism of Twitter usage development in crisis communication: Rescue and relief efforts after the 6 February 2023 earthquake in Türkiye as a case study. *Social Sciences*, 12(8), 436. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci12080436>
- Ariely, G. (2021). Collective memory and attitudes toward asylum seekers: Evidence from Israel. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47(5), 1084-1102. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2019.1572499>

- Bird, S. E., & Dardenne, R. W. (1988). Myth, chronicle, and story: Exploring the narrative qualities of news. In J. W. Carey (Ed.), *Media, myths and narratives: Television and the press*. SAGE.
- Birkner, T., & Donk, A. (2020). Collective memory and social media: Fostering a new historical consciousness in the digital age? *Memory Studies*, 13(4), 367-383. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698017750012>
- Bowker, G. C., & Star, S. L. (2000). Invisible mediators of action: Classification and the ubiquity of standards. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 7(1-2), 147-163. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2000.9677652>
- Dominey-Howes, D., & Gorman-Murray, A. (2014). Queering disasters: On the need to account for LGBTI experiences in natural disaster contexts. *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 21(7), 905-918. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2013.802673>
- Edy, J. A. (1999). Journalistic use of collective memory. *Journal of Communication*, 49(2), 71-85. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1999.tb02794.x>
- Erdik, M. (2001). Report on 1999 Kocaeli and Duzce Turkey earthquakes. *Structural Control for Civil and Infrastructure Engineering*, 2001, 149-186. [https://doi.org/10.1142/9789812811707\\_0018](https://doi.org/10.1142/9789812811707_0018)
- Erll, A. (2011). Travelling memory. *Parallax*, 17(4), 4-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13534645.2011.605570>
- Fanta, V., Salek, M., & Sklenicka, P. (2019). How long do floods throughout the millennium remain in the collective memory? *Nature Communications*, 10, 1105. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-019-09102-3>
- Ferron, M., & Massa, P. (2012). Psychological processes underlying Wikipedia representations of natural and manmade disasters. In *Proceedings of the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual International Symposium on Wikis and Open Collaboration* (pp. 1-10). ACM. <https://doi.org/10.1145/2462932.2462935>
- García-Gavilanes, R., Mollgaard, A., Tsvetkova, M., & Yasseri, T. (2017). The memory remains: Understanding collective memory in the digital age. *Science Advances*, 3(4), e1602368. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.1602368>
- Ghezzi, A., Pereira, A. G., Vesnic-Alujevic, L. (2014). *The ethics of memory in a digital age: Interrogating the right to be forgotten*. Palgrave Macmillan. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137428455\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137428455_1)
- Gibson, P. L., & Stones, S. (2021). Remediation and remembrance: "Dancing Auschwitz" collective memory and new media. *Journal for Communication Studies*, 5(10).
- Halbwachs, M. (1925). *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* [Social frameworks of memory]. Librairie Félix Alcan [Félix Alcan Bookstore].
- Haskins, E. (2007). Between archive and participation: Public memory in a digital age. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 37(4), 401-422. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02773940601086794>
- Hobbins, J. (2021). Collective memories and professional ideals: Teachers' experiences of a disaster. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 64, 102479. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdr.2021.102479>
- Hoskins, A. (2011). 7/7 and connective memory: Interactional trajectories of remembering in post-scarcity culture. *Memory Studies*, 4(3), 269-280. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698011402570>
- Hoskins, A. (2017). Memory of the multitude: The end of collective memory. In A. Hoskins (Ed.), *Digital memory studies: Media pasts in transition*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315637235>
- Huyssen, A. (2000). Present pasts: Media, politics, amnesia. *Public Culture*, 12(1), 21-38. <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-12-1-21>
- Jalali, R. (2002). Civil society and the state: Turkey after the earthquake. *Disasters*, 26(2), 120-139. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-7717.00196>
- Kanayama, T., & Ogawa, A. (2020). Collective memories of disaster through community radio: A case study of the great East Japan earthquake. *Journal of the Institute of Information and Communication Engineers*, 38(1-2), 134-135.
- Kansteiner, W. (2002). Finding meaning in memory: A methodological critique of collective memory studies. *History and Theory*, 41(2), 179-197. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0018-2656.00198>
- Kitch, C. (2005). *Pages from the past: History and memory in American magazines*. University of North Carolina Press.
- Le Goff, J. (1992). *History and memory*. Columbia University Press.
- Lule, J. (2001). *Daily news, eternal stories: The mythological role of journalism*. The Guilford Press.
- McQuail, D. (1985). Sociology of mass communication. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 11, 93-111. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2083287>

- Merrin, W. (2014). *Media studies 2.0*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203083581>
- Meyers, O. (2007). Memory in journalism and the memory of journalism: Israeli journalists and the constructed legacy of Haolam Hazeh. *Journal of Communication*, 57(4), 719-738. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2007.00365.x>
- Mohammad, R., & Aldamen, Y. (2023). Media dependency, uses and gratifications, and knowledge gap in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic: The case of Afghanistan and Turkey. *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies*, 13(3), e202324. <https://doi.org/10.30935/ojcm/13097>
- Neal, A. G. (2005). *National trauma and collective memory: Extraordinary events in the American experience*. Routledge.
- Newman, N. (2021, 23 June). *Turkey*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism University of Oxford. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2021/turkey>
- Niethammer, L. (1980). *Oral history*. <https://doi.org/10.14765/zzf.dok-2478>
- Olick, J. K. (1999). Collective memory: The two cultures. *Sociological Theory*, 17(3), 333-348. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0735-2751.00083>
- Qu, Z, Wang, F., Chen, X., Wang, X., & Zhou, Z. (2023). Rapid report of seismic damage to hospitals in the 2023 Turkey earthquake sequences. *Earthquake Research Advances*, 3(4), 100234. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eqrea.2023.100234>
- Sezen, H., & Whittaker, A. S. (2006). Seismic performance of industrial facilities affected by the 1999 Turkey earthquake. *Journal of Performance of Constructed Facilities*, 20(1). [https://doi.org/10.1061/\(ASCE\)0887-3828\(2006\)20:1\(28\)](https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)0887-3828(2006)20:1(28))
- Similarweb. (2023). Top websites ranking. *similarweb*. <https://www.similarweb.com/top-websites/turkey/news-and-media/>
- Simpson, E., & Corbridge, S. (2006). The geography of things that may become memories: The 2001 earthquake in Kachchh-Gujarat and the politics of rehabilitation in the pre-memorial era. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 96(3), 566-585. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.2006.00706.x>
- Taffal, A. (2015). Collective memory: A universal phenomenon the Palestinian collective memory as a case study. *Central European Political Studies Journal*, 3(15), 204-220.
- Toraman, C., Kucukkaya, I. E., Ozelik, O., & Sahin, U. (2023). Tweets under the rubble: Detection of messages calling for help in earthquake disaster. *arXiv*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2302.13403>
- van Dijck, J. (2004). Mediated memories: Personal cultural memory as object of cultural analysis. *Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 18(2), 261-277. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1030431042000215040>
- Volkmer, I., & Lee, C. (2014). Shifting the politics of memory: Mnemonic trajectories in a global public terrain. In B. Zelizer, & K. Tenenboim-Weinblatt (Eds.), *Journalism and memory* (pp. 50-65). Palgrave Macmillan. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137263940\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137263940_4)
- Wazzan, A., & Aldamen, Y. (2023). How university students evaluate the role of social media in political polarization: Perspectives of a sample of Turkish undergraduate and graduate students. *Journalism and Media*, 4(4), 1001-1020. <https://doi.org/10.3390/journalmedia4040064>
- WHO. (2023). Türkiye earthquake: external situation report no.5: 13-19 March 2023. *World Health Organization*. <https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/WHO-EURO-2023-7145-46911-68823>
- Wilson, G. A. (2013). Community resilience, social memory and the post-2010 Christchurch (New Zealand) earthquakes. *Area*, 45(2), 207-215. <https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12012>
- Yasseri, T., Gildersleve, P., & David, L. (2022). Collective memory in the digital age. In S. O'Mara (Ed.), *Progress in Brain Research* (Part of volume: *Collective memory*, Volume 274, Issue 1, pp. 203-226). Elsevier. <https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.pbr.2022.07.001>
- Zelizer, B. (1992). *Covering the body: The Kennedy assassination, the media, and the shaping of collective memory*. University of Chicago Press.
- Zelizer, B. (1995). Reading the past against the grain: The shape of memory studies. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 12(2), 214-239.
- Zhao, H., & Liu, J. (2015). Social media and collective remembrance. The debate over China's great famine on weibo. *China Perspectives*, 2015(2015/1), 41-48. <https://doi.org/10.4000/chinaperspectives.6649>

Zilio, L. D., & Ampuero, J.-P. (2023). Earthquake doublet in Turkey and Syria. *Communications Earth & Environment*, 4, 71. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43247-023-00747-z>

