Sources
(Terrorism Coverage)

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KEYWORDS
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BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Sources describe the actors quoted by journalists to support or refute their argumentation or to introduce new aspects into a discussion. Sources might be used for direct or indirect quotes and can be attributed to a variety of actors, such as government officials, witnesses or PR sources. In terrorism coverage, the media tends to mostly rely on official sources such as the government or police officials.

FIELD OF APPLICATION/THEORETICAL FOUNDATION
Content analyses focus on journalistic sources beyond terrorism coverage. Such analyses are often based on “Agenda-Setting” theories (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), models conceptualizing the relationship between journalists and PR, power hierarchies, or studies on working routines of journalists.

REFERENCES/COMBINATION WITH OTHER METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION
Similar analyses in the context of “Automated Content Analysis” try to grasp news “Actors”, of which news sources might be one, automatically (for example Burggraaf & Trilling, 2020). In addition, interviews with journalists can shed light on their sourcing routines (Larsen, 2018).

Two studies are of particular value when analyzing sources used in terrorism coverage since they analyze a large variety of different sources and will hence be discussed in the following section.

EXAMPLE STUDIES
Larsen (2019); Venger (2019)

INFORMATION ON LARSEN, 2019
Authors: Larsen
Research interest: How are radicalization and violent extremism framed in the news, including the sources used in these articles?
Object of analysis: Online news from four Norwegian news outlets (Aftenposten, NRK, TV2, and VG)
Time frame of analysis: 2014–2015

INFO ABOUT VARIABLE
Variable name/definition: Sources
Level of analysis: News stories
Values: 27 different values, namely (1) no source, (2) police, (3) security services, (4) national politician in position, (5) national politician in opposition, (6) local politician, (7) bureaucracyadministration, (8) lawyer, (9) military/intelligence, (10) expert/researcher, (11) journalist/editor, (12) “extreme Islamist”, (13) “right-wing extremist”, (14) acquaintances, (15) NGOs, (16) international organizations, (17) religious leaders/spokespersons, (18) members of the public, (19) health, (20) education/school, (21) private sector/business, (22) prison administration, (23) affiliation not mentioned (i.e. anonymous), (24) think tank, (25) public prosecutors, (26) judge/court of Justice, (27) other
Reliability: Cohen’s kappa: .895

INFORMATION ON VENGER, 2019
Authors: Venger
Research interest: How did the use of sources
in news on the London bombings differ across newspapers published in countries with different media systems?

**Object of analysis:** Newspaper coverage in the UK (The Guardian, The Times), the US (The Washington Post, The New York Times), and Russia (Izvestiya)

**Time frame of analysis:** July–August 2005

**INFORMATION ABOUT VARIABLE**

**Variable name/definition:** Sources

**Values:** 8 different values, including (1) local government officials of the newspaper’s country, (2) foreign government officials, including officials of international agencies, (3) local experts, (4) international experts, (5) foreigners not associated with any government, (6) private citizens (of the newspaper’s country), (7) citations for local newspapers, (8) citations for international newspapers.

**Reliability:** Rust and Cohen’s PRL reliability index, minimal value of any variable in study: .85

**REFERENCES:**


### Table 1. Measurement of „Sources“ in terrorism coverage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Manifestations</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
<th>Codebook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bennett (2016)</td>
<td>Online news articles</td>
<td>12 different sources, ranging from “domestic media” to “eyewitnesses”</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douai &amp; Lauricella (2014)</td>
<td>Newspaper articles</td>
<td>5 different sources, ranging from “Western media sources” to “official/government Muslim sources”</td>
<td>Percent agreement across all</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Du &amp; Li (2017)</td>
<td>Online news articles</td>
<td>7 different sources, ranging from “NGOs” to “laws, orders, and documents”</td>
<td>Scott’s pi for all variables in study:</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fahmy &amp; Al Emad (2011)</td>
<td>Online news articles</td>
<td>5 different sources, ranging from “US sources” to “Al Qaeda sources”</td>
<td>Scott’s pi: .92</td>
<td>Available under <a href="https://www.hope.uzh.ch/doca/article/view/2w/1785">https://www.hope.uzh.ch/doca/article/view/2w/1785</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner (2007)</td>
<td>Newspaper articles</td>
<td>7 different sources, ranging from “analyst/academic” to “friends”</td>
<td>Holsti across all variables:</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larsen (2019)</td>
<td>Broadcasting programs and online news articles</td>
<td>27 different sources, ranging from “security/intelligence” to “religious spokespersons”</td>
<td>Cohen’s kappa: .895</td>
<td>Available under <a href="https://www.hope.uzh.ch/doca/article/view/2w/1563">https://www.hope.uzh.ch/doca/article/view/2w/1563</a> and <a href="https://www.hope.uzh.ch/doca/article/view/2w/1564">https://www.hope.uzh.ch/doca/article/view/2w/1564</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Li (2007)</td>
<td>Broadcasting programs</td>
<td>10 different sources, ranging from “airlines officials” to “witnesses”</td>
<td>Scott’s pi: .84</td>
<td>Not available</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthews (2013)</td>
<td>Newspaper articles</td>
<td>16 different sources, ranging from “police sources” to “experts”</td>
<td>Minimal value for all</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>Manifestations</td>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Codebook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthews (2016)</td>
<td>Newspaper articles</td>
<td>7 different sources, ranging from “friends” to “survivors and witnesses”</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venger (2019)</td>
<td>Newspaper articles</td>
<td>8 different sources, ranging from “local experts” to “citations for international newspapers”</td>
<td>Rust and Cohen's PRL reliability</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhang &amp; Hellmüller (2016)</td>
<td>Online news articles</td>
<td>10 different sources, ranging from “ISIS/insurgent groups” to “ordinary people”</td>
<td>Krippendorf’s alpha: .8</td>
<td>Available under <a href="https://www.hope.uzh.ch/doca/article/view/2w/1786">https://www.hope.uzh.ch/doca/article/view/2w/1786</a> and <a href="https://www.hope.uzh.ch/doca/article/view/2w/1787">https://www.hope.uzh.ch/doca/article/view/2w/1787</a></td>
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