

# Religious Extremism, Bin Laden and Pakistan: A Content Analysis of the British and the US Mainstream Print Media

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\*Shahzad Ali

\*\*Rabia Sana

## Abstract

This research article presents an overview of the phenomena of religious extremism in the context of Pakistan. The study also aimed to divulge the nature and treatment of news and editorial coverage about political leadership and military top brass of Pakistan in the four selected newspapers, two each from the UK (the Telegraph & the Guardian) and the US (the New York Times and the Washington Post) one-month each pre and post of Operation Neptune Spear in the context of Osama Bin Laden (OBL) killing on May 2, 2011, at Abbottabad in Pakistan. This content analysis-based study was theoretically linked with the propaganda model of Herman and Chomsky and Shoemaker and Reese's theory of content effect. The ISI, a top spy agency was depicted as a rogue organization that was held responsible for sheltering bin Laden as well as painted as a state within the state. It was also explored that the four selected newspapers adopted a comparatively softer tone and depicted the pro-Western, liberals' individuals and ruling political parties in more favorable manners as compared to the right-wing groups which received more negative frames. The wholesome picture as the results expounds that both the British and American press painted Chief of Army Staff, General Kiyani as a hardliner for India and not showing any soft stance for American military tactics of drones and projected him as a supporter of domestic Jihadists. On the whole ISI, the top spy agency blamed for sheltering Bin Laden and the military establishment was criticized for her alleged support for extremist organizations. On the contrary, the civilian leadership of Pakistan especially the President and the Prime Minister were painted positively concerning Operation Neptune Spear as they were portrayed as more sincere towards the elimination of extremism and war on terror in comparison to the military establishment.

**Keywords:** Religious Extremism, Pakistan, Political Leadership, Military Establishment, War on Terror, Terrorism, Osama bin Laden, ISI.

## Introduction:

Religious extremism is on the rise lately. This has become a global issue now. It has been observed that the dogma of religion is the main source of violence and extremism. Regina Schwartz states that Monotheistic religions are essentially hostile because of exclusivism which promotes violence against those that are considered outsiders<sup>1</sup>. This explains that religions promote violence as a doctrine. On the contrary, Karen Armstrong argued that there is a very slight role of any religion in any violence and extremism<sup>2</sup>. All extremism and fanaticism are mainly because of bigotry. Conversely, the idea is that folklore and myths play a vibrant role in any kind of extremism. In recent years, there has been seeing enormous religious extremism. One

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\*Professor, Department of Communication Studies, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan.

\*\*Lecturer, University Institute of Physical Therapy, University of Lahore, Lahore.

<sup>1</sup> Regina Schwartz, *The Curse of Cain: The Violent Legacy of Monotheism*, (University of Chicago Press, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Karen Armstrong, "The Myth of Religious Violence." *The Guardian*, September 25, 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/25/sp-karen-armstrong-religious-violence-myth-secular>.

may wonder why religion is being objectified as a violent force. This whole concept of terrorism didn't have any valid existence before 1982. It started after the Soviet-Afghan war<sup>3</sup>. This conflict triggered the phase of extremism and most specifically jihad. Syed Nadir el edroos validated this assumption by writing an article named "Learn to be Taliban: K is for Kalashnikov" in the express tribune. He states that "After the 1980s millions of textbooks were funded by USAID and published in Peshawar<sup>4</sup>. Funds came from Saudi Arabia and were distributed in Afghanistan and madrassahs in Pakistan". He explained "These textbooks were prepared to indoctrinate. Specialists from the Afghanistan Centre at the University of Nebraska Omaha received nearly \$60 million to develop a curriculum, which glorified *jihad*, celebrated martyrdom, and dehumanized invaders" That's how a new generation had been born to celebrate death and violence. This is how the violent concept of jihad came into existence and eventually, the Taliban came into power with misdirected religious fanaticism. Acts of 9/11 gave global recognition to Osama bin laden. He emerged as a global threat. It was further discussed by Ibrahim Alqadri about mindset and ideology and verifies that "Ideology, which is the main basis of terrorist movements, according to the Al-Qaida members, is to struggle to destroy injustice and evil". During the 1980s, during the Soviet-Afghan war, the CIA funded the mujahideen in Afghanistan. President Ronald Reagan met with the mujahideen in 1983 and declared "To watch the courageous Afghan freedom fighters battle modern arsenals with simple handheld weapons is an inspiration to those who love freedom". That is how extremist freedom fighters like Osama bin laden were created and encouraged. This is exactly how jihad became a well-known global discourse. Jihadization is the name of a process followed by the definite idea of "Demarcation". So, whoever enters this process is likely to be determined to implement the stages of extremism because of religious factors being involved in the interpretations of Jihad.

Mcnamara describes the few elements as a theory for religious extremism and how jihad is made legit and more violent<sup>5</sup>. He explains that natural pluralism which means sects in sects causes problems and conflicts. The differences in ideas and beliefs among sects can be very fatal. The other major reason he explains is "Peremptoriness and religious illiteracy" which causes orthodoxy. Such ambiguity in religion creates fascism eventually. Appleby argues that Religious ambiguity becomes part of the problem when one group has a point of view that they believe to be authentic and flawless<sup>6</sup>. This is due to the ambiguity that fanatics retract the peace asking words of religion and only focus on the violent part. Anticipate the following verse from the Qur'an (9:5), "And when the sacred months have passed, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them and capture them and besiege them and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush". These lines are the ones that fanatics take out as a reference and ignore the later part. "But if they should repent, establish prayer, charity, let them go on their way. Indeed, God is Forgiving and Merciful".

<sup>3</sup> Armstrong, "The Myth of Religious Violence." 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Syed Nadir El Edroos., "Learn to Be Taliban: K Is for Kalashnikov." *The Express Tribune Blog RSS*, March 12, 2001, <https://blogs.tribune.com.pk/story/4877/learn-to-be-taliban-k-is-for-kalashinkov/>

<sup>5</sup> Paul F. McNamara, "*Violence and Religious Extremism*." (2016), 1–11.

<sup>6</sup> R. Scott. Appleby, "The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation," *Pro Ecclesia: A Journal of Catholic and Evangelical Theology* 12, no. 1 (2003): 116–118.

Subsequently, Mcnamara discusses further that extremist group leaders are always under the firm opinion that their religion is being lowered<sup>7</sup>. As discussed earlier, leaders of extremist groups lack moral aptitude and strongly believe in myths and folklores. Ironically most of the leaders of such extremist groups happened to be well educated. For instance, take an example of Osama bin Laden, who was an engineer but had no formal religious training. Appleby states that “they are familiar with various bits of verses from the holy texts; however, they are unacquainted with the methods to do meaningful research (of these religious texts). They are incapable of grasping anything beyond the portrayal of the "other" as wicked and threatening”. Such fascists perceive that violence and extremism are a “Routine” for religion<sup>8</sup>.

According to research scholars and peace bearers, to discourage terrorism, exposure and education are needed. Religious extremists’ lacks sophistication and they imagine the “other” as a force against them for the game of power. Their basic agenda is to fight against “others” as well as dominancy through power. Similarly, Fanatics use religious charms to attract volunteers. So religious extremism and emotional appeals are the key catalysts, working against the wisdom. However, religion and ideology encourage the “us versus them” ideology. The real question is how to stop religious extremism. This is all about the mindset. There are no simple answers to that. There happens to be a counter-argument too.

However, the intriguing question of fighting against religious extremism requires critical approaches. The catastrophe of 9/11 made Pakistan known to the entire world as Osama Bin Laden, the mastermind of the attack of 9/11 was alleged to be sheltered in the mountains of Toradora, Afghanistan, and then in Pakistan. In the name of the war on terror, America sought the assistance of Pakistan to diminish OBL and its proponent Taliban. Pakistan played a very significant role in the war on terror besides this role it paid a very heavy price for this war. The war on terror brought Pakistan to the edge of devastation. The economy of Pakistan has become flimsy and meager due to this war. The civil war and conflict are also the aftermath of this war on terror as this war has weakened the internal structure of Pakistan and risen the intensity of the sectarian conflict. The wholesome negative image of Pakistan was cultivated in the minds of readers by projecting her as an untrustworthy, unreliable, and double-faced state which could not produce the desired results in the fight against terrorism and extremist organizations namely Al Qaida and Taliban. It is pertinent and significant to mention here that the US and Western media propagated that the military establishment specially ISI was accused of sheltering Osama Bin Laden and declared suspected of keeping other militants like Mullah Umar and Haqqani in the safe houses of Quetta, capital of the province Baluchistan. The 9/11 attack brought defamation to Pakistan. This attack made the people believe that Pakistan is a terrorist land, a land of extremists and brutal. But this is only the negative flank of Pakistan that is been overdone by Western and US print and electronic media.

It would be relevant and conducive to precisely elaborate on the concept of image in the context of media so that the readers would conveniently understand the significance of mainstream media in cultivating a positive or negative image of people and nations. In this age of computer-mediated communication, people of this world

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<sup>7</sup> “*Violence and Religious Extremism.*” (2016), 1–11.

<sup>8</sup> Appleby, “The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation,” 116-118.

dominantly rely on any form of mass media for updating themselves about the latest happenings in the sphere of politics, culture, or economics. Given the various researchers, as it has been substantiated in the light of findings of the researches, the traditional mainstream media contribute a pivotal role in building the positive or negative image of communities and nations around the globe. As Zelizer and Allan emphasize that people, by and large, make up their national minds by relying on news media as they cultivate the image of people and nations<sup>9</sup>. Similarly, McNelly and Izcaray argue that role of mass media in building perception and misperception of men in the street about other countries cannot be overlooked<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, it can be said that role of media cannot be undermined concerning influencing the nature of the diplomatic relations among states. All the stakeholders engaged with foreign policy including diplomats and other foreign officials also utilized mainstream print and electronic media of their respective countries to apprise themselves despite their connectivity to other forms of alternative media or communication<sup>11</sup>.

According to Hanan, the other significant factors namely stereotypical image, prejudices, the ideology of media organization, the corporate sector, and the influence of the ruling political party are handy and effective in the creation and reinforcement of the image of a nation in news and editorial coverage of mass media<sup>12</sup>. He further described the different dimensions of positive or negative representation of a state or country through a holistic perspective including political, diplomatic, historical, economic, or religious contexts. In simple words, the portrayal or image of any country, community, or a nation in print or electronic media is scrutinized through different procedures, one of the techniques by using strong language-, phrases, metaphors, similes, proverbs, adjectives, etc. which is used while depicting country or community in positive, negative and neutral manners, more specifically in the context of a country's vital policies and official stance on certain indigenous and global issues.

#### **Allegations against Pakistan:**

Critics, to confirm allegations against Pakistan, explicit that due to the nearness of Pakistan Military Academy and bin Laden's compound, the USA considering her prudent did not inform the Pakistani government about the operation before the raid. Critics carped at Pakistan regarding hypocrisy and double standards towards the committers of the Mumbai attacks of 2008. Wikileaks revealed that according to US officials that Pakistani security services warned bin Laden about the US plan and under the umbrella of ISI and Al-Qaida militants illegally entered Afghanistan and fought against NATO forces. US officials were told by Tajikistan government that bin Laden's residence and the location were in knowledge of Pakistani government.

CIA chief, Leon Panetta, told the CIA's reservations about the involvement of Pakistan in the operation that any sort of joint venture with Pakistani forces would jeopardize the mission to capture or eliminate. He suspected that Pakistanis might alert

<sup>9</sup> Barbie. Zelizer and Stuart. Allan. *Journalism After September 11*: 2nd ed., (London: Routledge, 2011).

<sup>10</sup> John T. McNelly and Izcaray. Fausto, "International News Exposure and Images of Nations," *Journalism Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (1986): 546–53, <https://doi.org/10.1177/107769908606300315>.

<sup>11</sup> Jim. Richstad and Michael Anderson. *Crisis in International News: Policies and Prospects*. First Edition, (Columbia: University Press, 1981)

<sup>12</sup> Mian Ahmad. Hanan, "The Media-Foreign Policy Relationship: Pakistan's Media Image and U.S. Foreign Policy," (Canada: York University, 2006).

the targets"<sup>13</sup>. However, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's perspective was different as she acknowledged the role of Pakistan in tracing OBL whereabouts through intelligence networking. Chief counterterrorism advisor, John O. Brennan directly blamed the country and was of the view without any internal support it was almost impossible for Bin Laden and his family to keep hiding in the compound in Abbottabad. He said the US agencies have yet to prove how Bin Laden was able to hide so long<sup>14</sup>.

The US spy novelist and security analyst Raelynn Hill wrote on her blog, 7<sup>th</sup> of August, 2011, that the top spy agency ISI was involved in providing shelter to Bin Laden by receiving 25 million US dollars as a bounty. The civilian government and ISI declared this allegation baseless. General retired Ziauddin Butt told a different story that Intelligence Bureau kept OBL in a safe house of Abbottabad under the instruction of then DG IB Brigadier Ijaz Shah. He was of the view that it was in the knowledge of Former President General Musharraf and possibly of then Chief of Army Staff General Kiyani as well.

#### **Pakistani response:**

Pakistan negated all the afore-mentioned allegations and defended it by saying that the USA was focusing on the information of raw phone tape that was transferred to the USA without scrutiny. The information about bin Laden and the compound's inhabitants had "slipped from" Pakistan's "radar". According to the Pakistani High commissioner in the UK, Wajid Shamsul Hasan, the civilian government was on board, and the operation was done with the consent of Islamabad. Husain Haqqani, Pakistani ambassador in Washington expressed his gratitude for targeting Bin Laden and acknowledged that the mission was accomplished safely due to superior technology and intelligence networking of the United States, and Pakistan as an ally was grateful to their American partners<sup>15</sup>.

#### **Statement of the Problem:**

This study has been designed to investigate news coverage and primarily focused on the nature, treatment, and portrayal of Pakistani civil and military establishment with special reference to Operation Neptune Spear in the four leading newspapers, two each from the UK (the Telegraph & the Guardian) and the US (the New York Times & the Washington Post) during one-month pre and post Scenario of Osama Bin Laden's (OBL) killing on May 2, 2011, at Abbottabad in Pakistan. Since the 9/11 incidents, it can be said conveniently that the Western mainstream media is extensively covering the international events in the context of the Muslim world. Especially the coverage of Pakistan in her role as an ally of the US in the war on Al-Qaida and Taliban has been focused extensively by the mainstream newspapers of the West.

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<sup>13</sup> Massimo Calabresi, "CIA Chief: Pakistan Would Have Jeopardized bin Laden Operation." TIME Com, May 3, 2011, <https://swampland.time.com/2011/05/03/cia-chief-breaks-silence-u-s-ruled-out-involving-pakistan-in-bin-laden-raid-early-on>.

<sup>14</sup> Ewen MacAskill and Declan Walsh, "Osama Bin Laden: Dead, but How Did He Hide so Long?" *The Guardian*, May 3, 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/may/02/osama-bin-laden-pakistan-awkward-questions>.

<sup>15</sup> Peter and Baker, "Bin Laden Is Dead, Obama Says." *The New York Times*, May 01, 2011, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/02/world/asia/osama-bin-laden-is-killed.html>.

**Objectives of the Study:**

This research study is primarily aimed

- To explore the nature and extent of coverage and portrayal of the political and military leadership of Pakistan in the mainstream newspapers of the UK and the US
- To analyze the nature of the coverage of ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) and Pakistan Armed Forces in the context of the OBL killing issue
- To investigate different slants and frames attributed to the civil and military establishment by the four selected newspapers in pre and post scenario of Operation Neptune Spear

**Literature Review:**

Since the dissipation of communism in a majority of the countries and the disintegration of the former USSR, the Western mainstream media and scholars of communication and other related disciplines diverted their beam of research on Islam, Muslims, and Islamic states. Precisely speaking, in the wake of September eleven, much of the research work has been accomplished by applying quantitative and qualitative approaches. Numerous studies have proved in substantive manners that media conglomerates of the United States and European countries cultivate or paint the image of foreign states following principles as laid down in respective foreign policies as the studies of following researchers—Gans interacted with media persons in the newsrooms of the four mainstream TV and news magazines. His findings were based on observation of the gatekeepers who select the national news stories that inform the US about itself and other people of the globe apprise themselves regarding features of on aired or published news<sup>16</sup>. John T, McNelly, and Izcaray concluded that lack of professionalism was the major reason behind the unfavorable coverage of certain countries in the mainstream media of the US which culminated in a distorted image as media conglomerates and media moguls were responsible due to their hegemony and ownership regulations<sup>17</sup>. Dorman and Farhang argued that reporters of the mainstream media construct the news story about other states including Muslim countries under national ideological interest and safeguarding goals of foreign policy establishment<sup>18</sup>. Chang stated that the role of mainstream media has long been significant in process of foreign policy<sup>19</sup>. Entman focused on the power of communication text in his article fractured paradigm<sup>20</sup>. Pan and Kosicki argued that news media play an active role in framing public policy issues<sup>21</sup>. Entman and Rojecki discussed the association framing of

<sup>16</sup> Herbert J. Gans. *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time*, (1979).

<sup>17</sup> McNelly and Fausto, "International News Exposure and Images of Nations," 546.

<sup>18</sup> William Dorman and Mansour Farhang. *The U.S. Press and Iran*. (Amsterdam University Press, 1988)

<sup>19</sup> Tsan-Kuo Chang, "The Impact of Presidential Statements on Press Editorials Regarding U.S. China Policy, 1950–1984," *Communication Research* 16, no. 4 (1989): 486–509, <https://doi.org/10.1177/009365089016004002>.

<sup>20</sup> Robert M. Entman, "Framing U.S. Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the KAL and Iran Air Incidents," *Journal of Communication* 41, no. 4, (1991): 6–27, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1991.tb02328.x>.

<sup>21</sup> Zhongdang Pan and Gerald Kosicki, "Framing Analysis: An Approach to News Discourse," *Political Communication* 10, no. 1, (1993): 55–75, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.1993.9962963>.

Religious Extremism, Bin Laden and Pakistan: A Content Analysis of the British and the US Mainstream Print Media mainstream media in the context of the anti-nuclear movement in the United States<sup>22</sup>. Merrill implies media frames used and favorability differences<sup>23</sup>. Perlmutter examined the familiar outrageous/ dramatic photos that recycle in disparate media often outside their original context. Allan argued that editorial policies and news contents have been molded in the light of national interests and under the foreign policy agenda<sup>24</sup>.

### **Theoretical Framework:**

This research article is theoretically based on the propaganda Model of Herman and Chomsky and Shoemaker and Reese's theory of content effect. It analyzed the influence of the government policy on the news contents of the selected newspapers of the UK and the US from the transnational perspective. Several research studies in the context of Islam, Muslims, and the Muslim world endorsed and substantiated both theories as mentioned above on solid grounds that the US and European news media by and large covered the international issues and manipulate to paint the image of people, communities and nations in accordance of their respective foreign policy which is determined by the civil and military stakeholders of global powers including the UK and the United States.

### **Research Questions:**

The study has been designed to dig out answers to the following research questions:

- I. Did the quantity of coverage differ about political leadership and military top brass in the four selected newspapers of the UK and the US differ between the pre and post-Operation Neptune Spear?
- II. Did the quantity of coverage differ of Armed Forces/ISI vs. political leadership regarding OBL hiding in Pakistan?
- III. Did the slant of the coverage attributed in the selected newspapers about Pakistan differ between the pre and post-phase of Operation Neptune Spear?
- IV. Did the frames used in the selected unit of analysis appear in the selected newspapers regarding the portrayal of political leadership and military top brass with special reference to OBL differ during the specific period of the study?

### **Hypotheses:**

With the help of a review of the relevant literature as well as by considering the initial assessment of the pilot study, the following hypotheses have been developed and tested:

H1: Pakistan armed forces and ISI would receive more coverage as compared to the political leadership during the selected period of the three months i.e. April-June, 2011.

H2: The ratio of unfavorable frames regarding the portrayal of armed forces & ISI would be greater in comparison to the political leadership of Pakistan in the four selected newspapers.

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<sup>22</sup> Robert Entman and Andrew Rojecki, "Freezing out the Public: Elite and Media Framing of the U.S. Anti-Nuclear Movement," *Political Communication* 10, no. 2, (1993): 155-73, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.1993.9962973>.

<sup>23</sup> John Merrill. *Global Journalism: Survey of International Communication*. 3rd ed., (Longman Pub Group, 1995).

<sup>24</sup> David Perlmutter. *Photojournalism and Foreign Policy: Icons of Outrage in International Crises*. (Praeger, 1998).

H3: The overall coverage of favorable frames of the Pakistani government & political leadership would be greater than the cumulative ratio of unfavorable frames during the specific time.

H4: The cumulative ratio of unfavorable frames based on coverage of Pakistan armed forces & ISI would be greater as compared to the total score of the favorable frames in the four selected newspapers during the pre and post-Operation Neptune Spear.

#### **Research Design:**

The study was primarily based on the research method of content analysis. It analyzed the coverage and image of Pakistani civil and military establishment with special reference to OBL in a quantitative manner for the period of one month during pre and post-Operation Neptune Spear in Pakistan. It is a census study because the entire population has been selected as a sample for analysis. All types of news items related to the issue, articles, and editorials have been analyzed during the specified period. The study has investigated the nature of the story slant and frame of the published contents about the said issues in the context of OBL. Moreover, the frames were chosen for the study of Pakistan's image as projected favorable, unfavorable, neutral, and pejorative depictions. These Frames have also been identified in the published unit of analysis from the contextual perspective. In this connection, the complete story was the context unit to measure these frames, whereas headline and lead were the coding units for identifying the nature of the news items/editorials, etc.

#### **Population and Sampling of the Study:**

The population for the study was news stories, articles, features, editorials, and letters to the editor related to Pakistan in connection with OBL published in the four selected newspapers i.e. the Telegraph, the Guardian, the New York Times & the Washington Post one month each pre and post i.e. April –June 2011 of Operation Neptune Spear in Pakistan. The required news, editorial, and other contents of the four newspapers were retrieved by utilizing the two databases- Factiva & the Lexis-Nexis electronic database by using the keywords like Pakistan, OBL, Operation Neptune Spear, ISI, Asif Ali Zardari, Yousaf Raza Gillani, Pakistan Army, General Ishtaq Pervez Kiyani, General Shuja Pasha, etc. In the light of initial scrutiny and calculation, it was explored that 289 relevant items about Pakistan were published in the selected unit of analysis that was considered finally for the study. Furthermore, the entire population was taken as a sample, in other words, a census study has been conducted to analyze the entire population.

#### **Variables:**

For analysis, the variables-subject/topic of the contents, slant, frames, and sources of the published contents were chosen as a yardstick of this research study.

#### **Categories:**

In the light of the initial reading and assessment of the contents about political leadership and military top brass in the four newspapers, the relevant items of a unit of analysis were sorted out. Subsequently, all the published contents were classified into the following two broad categories.

#### **Pakistani Government:**

It comprised of all sorts of published items that communicated about official activities namely cabinet meetings, public statements of the President, Prime Minister, and federal ministers regarding any domestic or foreign issue related to Pakistan



including terrorism, OBL, war on terror, etc.; and stories and articles which reflected controversies, scandals, scams of ruling political coalition parties and public representatives and officials.

### **Pakistan Armed Forces & ISI**

It included all sorts of content that appeared in the four selected newspapers about official engagements of the armed forces of Pakistan especially of Pakistan army's visits and statements of Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Pervaiz Kiyani, DG ISI, General Shuja Pasha, and other forces chiefs on their role of war on terror or violation of the sovereignty of Pakistan in the result of assault of Operation Neptune Spear, the stories, articles, and features which highlighted the negative image of ISI, spy agency of Pakistan as well as propaganda campaign against the forces.

### **Unit of analysis:**

The four units of the published contents were selected to analyze the portrayal of political leadership and military top brass of Pakistan with special reference to Operation Neptune Spear in the selected newspapers of the UK and the United States. The units of analysis of the study were:

1. News stories
2. Articles/ Features
3. Editorials
4. Letters to the Editor

Subsequently, the paragraph(s) of selected items was used as a yardstick of analysis to explore the image of the said categories in the four newspapers in the mirror of positive, negative, and neutral slant which systematically culminated in the final assessment by exploring the overall impression (favorable, unfavorable and neutral) of the published news items, articles, editorials, and letters to the editor were determined in the light of framing coding rules.

### **Length of Story:**

The length of the unit- news story, article, editorial, etc.- of analysis in the four mainstream newspapers was decided based on the total number of paragraph(s) of the selected publication.

### **Source of the Published Contents:**

It was determined whether the published item was filed by a foreign correspondent, Pakistani reporter, joint contribution of Pakistani & foreign correspondents, and other sources like news agencies or electronic media monitoring report(s), etc.

### **Category Construction of Slant:**

Each paragraph of the selected publication was coded as one of three main slant categories-positive, negative and neutral by considering the likelihood of their cultivation of positive, negative, or neutral impressions regarding the portrayal of Pakistan with special reference to Operation Neptune Spear during the specific time of three months i.e. April- June 2011 in the four leading newspapers of the UK and the United States.

#### **(a) Positive Slant:**

Sentences of each paragraph that narrated positive and productive developments in different spheres of state policies were coded as positive. Moreover, the sentences which reflected the acknowledgment, as well as appreciation of the steps taken by the

political and military establishment of Pakistan in combating terrorist groups, were coded as a positive slant.

**(b) Negative Slant:**

Sentences of each paragraph that described bad governance, mismanagement, connivance of the government officials, corruption allegations, poor law and order conditions, political instability, conflicts, and disputes in Pakistan were coded as the negative slant. If the published paragraph about political leadership and military establishment communicated that they were not sincere in implementing the US strategy against the alleged terrorist organizations namely Al-Qaida, Taliban, Haqqani group, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Lashkar-e-Taiba, and other groups, all such paragraphs were coded as negative. If the military establishment and ISI were held responsible for supporting and sheltering OBL, Mullah Umar, and Haqqani, criticism of military and ISI leadership, and ISI as a rogue organization, such paragraphs without any ambiguity have been coded as negative.

**(c) Neutral Slant:**

The sentences of each published paragraph that did not depict either a positive or negative image of Pakistan lucidly concerning her coverage in the context of civil and military leadership, ISI, OBL operation, society, culture, art, sports, political, economic and social life, relations with other countries, nuclear program, terrorism, and Islam were coded as the neutral slant.

### Results

**Table 1: Distribution of Subjects of the contents by Slant in the Telegraph (April-June 2011).**

	Positive N (%)	Negative N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Total
Pakistani Govt.	13 (59.1)	9 (40.9)	Nil	22
Pakistan Army & ISI	4 (0.8)	36 (72)	10 (20)	50

The overall results based on the content analysis of the daily Telegraph depict in following categories, Pakistan Army & ISI, OBL, Terrorism, Pak-UK relations, Pak-US relations, and Nuclear Program- the ratio of negative slant was found to be greater as compared to positive slant.

**Table 2: Distribution of Subjects of the contents by Slant in the Guardian (April-June 2011).**

	Positive N (%)	Negative N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Total
Pakistani Govt.	25 (75.8)	5 (15.1)	3 (9.1)	33
Pakistan Army & ISI	10 (10.4)	64 (66.6)	22 (23)	96

The cumulative analysis of daily Guardian reveals that out of 430 paragraphs the ratio of contents with a blend of more negative flavor (179, 41.6) was observed greater in comparison to ingredients of positive contents which were 107 (24.9). It would be more relevant and appropriate to present the gist of the results of various categories in

particularizing context for the convenience and understanding of the readers. The similarity was found in both UK newspapers concerning the portrayal of the Pakistani government and society, the Guardian too presented both categories in more positive manners in terms of distribution of positive slant as compared to negative slant. Whereas armed forces & ISI, OBL, Terrorism, Pak relations with the US, India, Saudi Arab, and Afghanistan received more negative slants.

**Table 3: Distribution of Subjects of the contents by Slant in the New York Times (April-June 2011).**

	Positive N (%)	Negative N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Total
Pakistani Govt.	11 (61.1)	5 (27.8)	2 (11.1)	18
Pakistan Army & ISI	41 (27.5)	82 (55.1)	26 (17.4)	149

The overall results of the New York Times communicate the panorama of an image of Pakistan in connection with Operation Neptune Spear that the newspaper has paid extensive attention to the issue in comparison to the rest of the three papers; as results shown in the above-mentioned table that 725 paragraphs related to Pakistan and the issue were published during the specific time of three months i.e. April-June, 2011, out of which 334 paragraph with a blend of negative flavor were explored and measured while the ratio of positive and neutral slant was 182 (25.1) and 209 (28.8) respectively. Like both UK newspapers, the New York Times also portrayed the Pakistani government and civilian leadership relatively in a softer tone whereas, on the contrary, the armed forces and ISI, the secret top spy agency of Pakistan were depicted in negative manners.

**Table 4: Distribution of Subjects of the contents by Slant in the Washington Post (April-June 2011)**

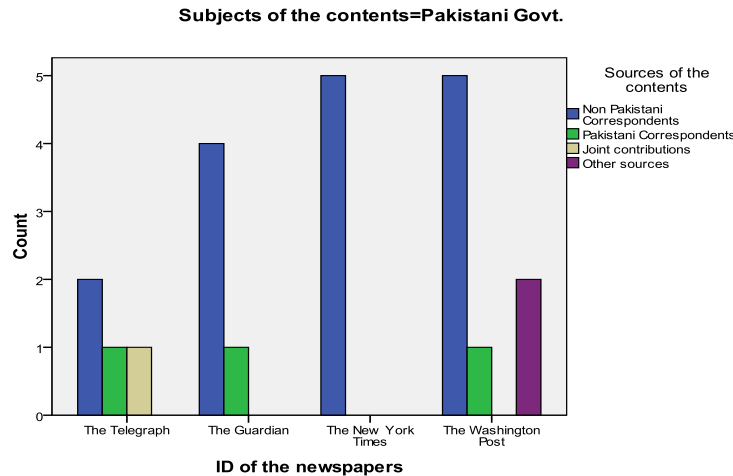
	Positive N (%)	Negative N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Total
Pakistani Govt.	16 (40)	20 (50)	4 (10)	40
Pakistan Army & ISI	31 (30.4)	51 (50)	20 (19.6)	102

As mentioned earlier that the Washington Post stood second in terms of the cumulative ratio of the coverage, the complete picture of the image of Pakistan by the Washington Post highlights that out of 422 total paragraphs, like the rest of the three papers, the ratio of negative slant 40.7 percent was found greater in comparison of positive coverage of Pakistan which was calculated 31.5 percent. It is pertinent and significant to highlight here that unlikely the three other newspapers, the Washington Post adopted a more critical stance towards the government of Pakistan as the ratio of negative slant was observed greater in the specific period. While the other categories namely armed forces & ISI, OBL, and Pakistan relations with India and Afghanistan received more negative slants.

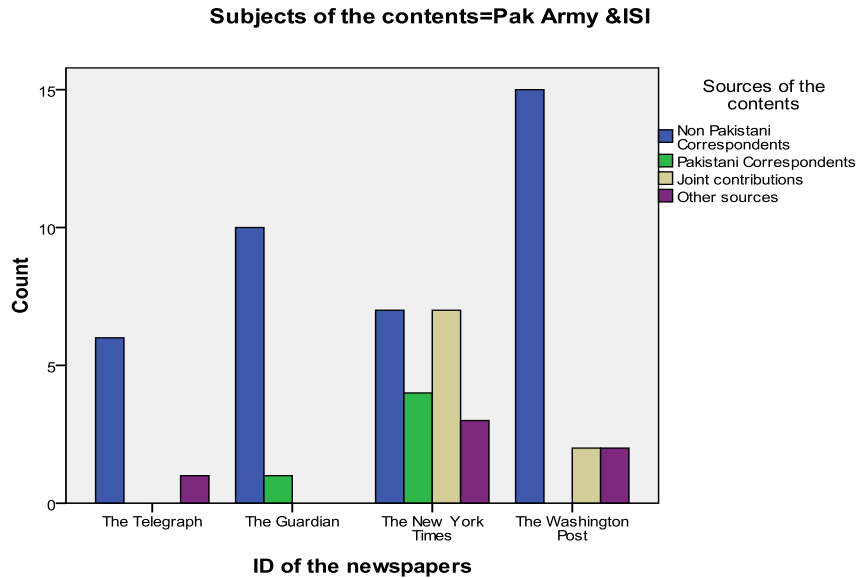
**Table 5: Cumulative Distribution of Subjects of the Contents by Slant in the Four selected Newspapers (April-June 2011)**

	Positive N (%)	Negative N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Total
Pakistani Govt.	65 (57.5)	39 (34.5)	9 (8)	113
Pakistan Army & ISI	86 (21.7)	233 (58.7)	78 (19.6)	397

The cumulative or aggregated results related to the distribution of various slants of most of the categories were not different approximately in the four selected newspapers. It can be concluded conveniently that the three categories which came first, second and third in terms of a maximum ratio of negative slants were Pak-India relations, Pakistani media, and armed forces plus ISI with the cumulative score of negative slant in percentile 67.8, 66.6 and 58.7 respectively.



This bar graph communicates clearly that most of the contents related to the category of the Pakistani government in the four newspapers were sourced by non-Pakistani correspondents i.e. Americans and British reporters. It is explored that the four out of the five (80%) and 5 out of 8 (62.5) published items on the Pakistani government in the daily Guardian and the Washington Post were bylined by the non-Pakistani correspondents whereas all the items (5, 100%) in the New York Times belonged to foreign correspondents.



This graph about the category of Pakistan armed forces and ISI conveys this comprehensive message that the Washington Post stood first among the newspapers; the ratio of the category with the non-Pakistani source was found greater. The findings describe that the Guardian and Telegraph stood first and second with regards to the most number of contents were bylined by non-Pakistani correspondents with a total ratio of 10 out of 11 (90.9) and 6 out of 7 (85.7) respectively. Similarly, the total score of non-Pakistani correspondents was 15 (78.9) in the Washington Post. The ratio of non-Pakistani correspondents and joint contributions were found equal, 7 each (33.3) out of 21 total published items on Pak army & ISI.

The first hypothesis predicted that Pakistan's armed forces and ISI would receive more coverage as compared to the political leadership during the given period of the three months i.e. April-June, 2011. The results of the study communicate that Pakistan armed forces and ISI relatively received more coverage (with the total frequency/percentile of 58, 20.1%) as compared to the overall coverage of political leadership (22, 7.6%). In the light of the above-mentioned results, it is convenient, to sum up, that the hypothesis was supported. The second hypothesis stated that the ratio of unfavorable frames regarding the portrayal of armed forces & ISI would be more as compared to the political leadership of Pakistan in the four newspapers. The hypothesis was supported as the findings revealed that the total ratio of unfavorable coverage was calculated at 146 out of 289 news items of which the top category in terms of ranking which received maximum unfavorable coverage (39, 26.7%) was Armed forces & ISI while the total score of unfavorable frame of Pakistani government was 8, 5.5%. The third hypothesis harbingered that the overall coverage of favorable frames of Pakistani government & political leadership would be greater than the cumulative ratio of unfavorable frames during the specific period. The prediction came true as the result communicated that Pakistani political leadership & government received more favorable frames(14,63.6%) than unfavorable frames(8,36.4%) out of a total of 22 items published about the category

The fourth hypothesis foretold that the cumulative ratio of unfavorable frames based coverage of Pakistan armed forces & ISI would likely to be greater than the total score of the favorable frames in the four selected newspapers during the pre and post-Operation Neptune Spear. The findings of the study related to this hypothesis revealed that out of 58 items on the whole published about armed forces & ISI, the ratio of the unfavorable frame (39, 67.2%) was found greater as compared to favorable frame items (16, 27.5). In the light of the above-mentioned results, it is easier to conclude that the hypothesis was significantly supported.

#### **Discussion and Conclusion:**

This study presented the content analysis of 289 items about Pakistan with special reference to Operation Neptune Spear regarding the killing of OBL on May 2, 2011. It was explored that the more than half of the published items out of a total of 289 total items appeared in the four selected newspapers i.e. the Telegraph, the Guardian, the New York Times, and The Washington Post about Pakistani political leadership and military top brass in the context of the two identified categories were framed in unfavorable manners. The cumulative results in the light of a quantitative analysis of the published contents significantly endorsed and supported the arguments of the propaganda model of Herman and Chomsky and the Shoemaker and Reeve's theory of content effect that Pakistan was dominantly framed following the policy of the US and UK during the specific period i.e. pre and post period of Operation Neptune Spear. As it was also supported in the light of findings of the following studies that the media persons in the West and the US by and large followed the foreign policy agenda and national interests while covering international affairs and constructing news stories about people, communities, and nations. In this regard, the studies of Gans<sup>25</sup>, Dorman and Farhang<sup>26</sup>, Chang<sup>27</sup>, Pan and Kosicki<sup>28</sup>, Allan<sup>29</sup>, and Merrill<sup>30</sup> endorsed and supported this argument.

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<sup>25</sup> Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, *Newsweek and Time*, (1979).

<sup>26</sup> Dorman and Farhang. *The U.S. Press and Iran*. (Amsterdam University Press, 1988)

<sup>27</sup> "The Impact of Presidential Statements on Press Editorials Regarding U.S. China Policy, 1950–1984," 486.

<sup>28</sup> Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis: An Approach to News Discourse," 55.

<sup>29</sup> Stuart Allan, *Journalism After September 11*. (Routledge, 2002).

<sup>30</sup> *Global Journalism: Survey of International Communication*, (1995).