

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



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## Abstract:

*This research article presents an overview of phenomena of religious extremism in 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 UK (the Telegraph & the Guardian) and the US (the New York Times & 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 the Shoemaker and Reese's theory of content effect. The ISI, top spy agency was depicted as a rogue organization which 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 comparatively softer tone and depicted the pro-Western, liberals' individuals and ruling political parties in more positive and 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 Kayani 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, top spy agency blamed for sheltering Bin Laden and military establishment was criticized for her alleged support for extremists' organizations. On the contrary the civilian leadership of Pakistan especially the President and the Prime Minister were painted in positive way with regard to Operation Neptune Spear as they were portrayed more sincere towards the elimination of extremism and war on terror in comparison of the military establishment.*

**Key Words:** Religious extremism, Jihad, Pakistan, political leadership, military establishment; War on terror; Terrorism, Operation Neptune Spear; Osama bin Laden; ISI;

## Introduction:

Religious extremism is on rise lately. This has become a global issue now. It has been observed that dogma of religion is the main source of violence and extremism. Regina Schwartz states that Monotheistic religions are essentially hostile because of an 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, Scholar Karen Armstrong argued that there is a very slight role of any religion in any violence and extremism. All extremism and fanaticism is mainly because of bigotry. Conversely, the idea is that folklore and myths plays a vibrant role in any kind of extremism. Recent years have been seeing enormous religious extremism. One may wonder why religion is

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being objectified as a violent force. This whole concept of terrorism didn't have any valid existence before 1982. It started after soviet-Afghan war<sup>2</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 express tribune. He states that "After 1980s millions of textbooks were funded by USAID and published in Peshawar. Funds came from Saudi Arabia and were distributed in Afghanistan and madrassahs in Pakistan". He explained more that "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<sup>3</sup>". That's how new generation had been born to celebrate death and violence. This is how the violent concept of jihad came into existence and eventually Taliban came into power with misdirected religious fanaticism. Acts of 9/11 gave a global recognition to Osama bin laden. He emerged as a global threat. It was further discussed by Ibrahim Alqadri about mind set and ideology and verifies that "Ideology which is a main basis of terrorist movements, according to the Al-Qaidah members, is to struggle in order to destroy injustice and evil". During 1980s, in soviet afghan war, 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<sup>4</sup>.

Paul F.Mcnamra describes the few elements as a theory for religious extremism and how jihad is made legit and more violent. He explains that natural pluralism which means sects in sects cause problems and conflicts. Difference of 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<sup>5</sup>. R Scott (2011) 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 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 totally ignores the later part. "But if they should repent, establish prayer, charity, let them go on their way. Indeed, God is Forgiving and Merciful".

Subsequently, PaulMcNamara discusses further that extremist group leaders are always under the firm opinion that their religion is being lowered. As discussed earlier, leaders of extremist group 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, taking example of Osama bin laden, who was an engineer but had no formal religious training<sup>7</sup>. R. Scott (2011) 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 is a "Routine" for religion<sup>8</sup>.

According to research scholars and peace bearers, to discourage the terrorism, exposure and education is 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 dominance through power. Similarly, Fanatics use religious charms to attract volunteers. So religious extremism and emotional appeals are the key catalyst, working against the wisdom. However, religion and ideology encourages 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. According to Ben Norton (2015), a journalist and writer, "Islamic extremism was violently imposed upon the Middle East through a mixture of imperial machinations and individual radicalization under tyranny and extreme poverty".

However, the intriguing question of fighting against the religious extremism requires critical approaches<sup>9</sup>. The catastrophe of 9/11 made Pakistan known to the entire world as Osama Bin Laden, the master mind of attack of 9/11 was alleged to be sheltered in the mountains of Torabora, Afghanistan and then in Pakistan. In the name of war on terror America sought the assistance of Pakistan to diminish OBL and his proponent Taliban. Pakistan played a very significant role in war on terror besides this role it paid very heavy price for this war. The war on terror brought Pakistan on the edge of devastation. The economy of Pakistan has become flimsy and meager due to this war. The civil war and conflict is also the aftermath of this war on terror as this war has weaken the internal structure of Pakistan and risen the intensity in the sectarian conflict. The wholesome negative image about Pakistan was cultivated in the minds of readers by projecting her as untrustworthy, unreliable and double faced state which could not produce the desired results in the fight against terrorism and extremists organizations namely Al Qaida and Taliban. It is pertinent and significant to mention here that the US and Western media propagated that military establishment specially ISI was accused for sheltering Osama Bin Laden and declared suspected for 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 for Pakistan. This attack made the people to 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 the concept of image in the context of media so that the readers would conveniently understand significance of mainstream media in cultivating positive or negative image of people and nations. In this age of computer mediated communication, people of this world dominantly rely on any form of mass media for updating themselves about latest happenings in sphere of politics, culture or economics. In view of 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 & Allan emphasize that people by and large make up their national mind by relying on news media as they cultivate the image of people

and nations<sup>10</sup>. Similarly, McNelly and Izcaray argue that role of mass media in building perception and misperception of man in the street about other countries cannot be overlooked<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, it can be said that role of media cannot be undermined with regard to influencing nature of diplomatic relationship among states. All the stakeholders engaged with foreign policy including diplomats and other foreign office officials' also utilized mainstream print and electronic media of respective countries to apprise themselves despite their connectivity to other forms of alternative media or communication<sup>12</sup>.

In view of Hannan the other significant factors namely stereotypical image, prejudices, ideology of media organization, corporate sector and influence of the ruling political party which are handy and effective in creation and reinforcement of image of a nation in news and editorial coverage of mass media. He further described the different dimensions of positive or negative representation of a state or country through holistic perspective including political, diplomatic, historical, economics or religious context<sup>13</sup>. 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 technique construction by using strong language-, phrases, metaphors, similes, proverbs and 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, in order to confirm allegations against Pakistan, explicit that due to nearness of Pakistan Military Academy and bin Laden's compound, USA considering her prudent did not inform Pakistani government about the operation before the raid. Critics carped at Pakistan regarding hypocrisy and double standards towards the committers of Mumbai attacks of 2008. Wikileaks revealed that according to US officials that Pakistani security services warned bin Laden about US every plan and under the umbrella of ISI al Qaeda militants illegally entered into Afghanistan and fought against NATO forces. US officials were told by Tajikistan government that bin Laden's resident and location was in knowledge of Pakistani government.

CIA chief Leon Panetta told that CIA, s reservations about the involvement of Pakistan regarding 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 the targets<sup>14</sup>. However, Secretary of State [Hillary Clinton](#) 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 yet to probe how Bin Laden was able to hide so long<sup>15</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 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 Musharaf and possibly of then Chief of Army Staff General [Kayani](#) as well.

### **Pakistani response**

Pakistan negated all the afore-mentioned allegations and defending it by saying that USA was focusing on the information of raw phone-tape that was transferred to USA without scrutiny. The information about bin Laden and the compound's inhabitant had "slipped from" Pakistan's "radar". According to Pakistani High commissioner in UK Wajid Shamsul Hasan, the civilian government was on board and operation was done with consent of Islamabad. Husain Haqqani, Pakistani ambassador in Washington expressed his gratitude on 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 ally was grateful to their American partners<sup>16</sup>.

### **Literature Review:**

Since the dissipation of communism in majority of the countries and disintegration of 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 in accordance of principles as laid down in respective foreign policies as the studies of following researchers—Gans interacted 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>17</sup>. Gitlin, on the other hand identified the different factors which directly or indirectly effects on selection of mass media news content decisions<sup>9</sup>. Hackett, emphasized on prejudices and news bias through the lenses of empirical, methodological and epistemological methods<sup>18</sup>. McNelly&Izcaray concluded that lack of professional was the major reason behind the unfavorable coverage of certain countries in the mainstream media of the US which culminated in distorted image as media conglomerates and media moguls were responsible due to their hegemony and ownership regulations<sup>19</sup>. Dorman &Farhangargue argued that reporters of the mainstream media construct the news story about other states including Muslim countries in accordance of national ideological interest and safeguarding goals of foreign policy establishment<sup>20</sup>. Yu and Riffe sum up their research on this conclusion that the tilt of positive or negative representation of any leader or state in the US media was directly correlated with nature of relationship depending on cordial or hostile ties in the interest of Whitehouse<sup>21</sup>. Chang's stated that role of mainstream media have long been significant in process of foreign policy<sup>22</sup>. Paletz&Entman, emphasize media is able to construct the content and delimit the choices<sup>23</sup>. Entman focused on the power of communication text in his article fractured paradigm<sup>24</sup>. Pan &Kosicki argued that news media play an active role in framing public policy issues<sup>25</sup>. Entman&Rojecki, discussed the association framing of mainstream media in the context of anti-nuclear movement of the United States<sup>26</sup>. Merrill implies media frames used and favorability differences<sup>27</sup>. Mughees-uddin explored the impact of foreign policy on media coverage

and representation of the states in the western and the US media including <sup>28</sup>. Said discussed in his book the objectivity of the media<sup>29</sup>. Perlmutter examined the familiar outrageous/ dramatic photos that recycle in disparate media often outside their original context<sup>30</sup>. Mann argued that objective representation of foreign affairs would be possible with professional, skilled and well informed resourceful reporters<sup>31</sup>. Herman & Chomsky<sup>32</sup>, Karim<sup>33</sup>, Dorogi<sup>34</sup>, Khalid<sup>35</sup>, Zelizer & Allan<sup>36</sup>, Mishra<sup>37</sup>, Cohen & Tucker<sup>38</sup> argued that editorial policies and news contents have been molded in the light of national interests and in accordance of foreign policy agenda.

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

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

### **Theoretical Framework**

This research article is theoretically based on the propaganda Model of Herman and Chomsky and the Shoemaker and Reese's theory of content effect. It analyzed influence of the government policy on the news contents of the selected newspapers of the UK and the US in the transnational perspective. Several research studies in the context of Islam, Muslims and Muslim world endorsed and substantiated the 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 UK and the United States

### **Objectives of the Study:**

This research study is aimed:

- To explore the nature and extent of coverage and portrayal of 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 context of OBL killing issue.
- To investigate different slants and frames attributed to civil and military establishment by the four selected newspapers in pre and post scenario of Operation Neptune Spear.

### **Research Design:**

The study would be primarily based on research method of content analysis. It would analyze the coverage and image of Pakistani civil and military establishment with special reference to OBL in both the qualitatively and quantitatively manner for

the period of one month each pre and post of Operation Neptune Spear in Pakistan. It is a census study because the entire population has been selected as a sample for the purpose of analysis. The all types of news items related to the issue as well as the articles and the editorials would be analyzed during the specified period. The study would investigate nature of story slant and frame of the published content about the said issue in the context of OBL. Moreover the Frames chosen for the study Pakistan 'image as projected favorable, unfavorable, neutral and pejorative depiction. These Frames would be identified in the published unit of analysis from the contextual perspective. In this connection the complete story would be the context unit in order to measure these frames, whereas headline and lead would be applied as the coding unit for identifying the nature of the news items/editorials etc.

### **Research Questions**

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

- I. Did the quantity of coverage about political leadership and military top brass in the four selected newspapers of UK and the US differ between the pre-and post of Operation Neptune Spear?
- II. How the Armed Forces/ ISI vs. political leadership were comparatively portrayed by the newspapers 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 appeared in the selected newspapers regarding 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 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 time period of the three months i.e. April-June, 2011.

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

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

H4: The cumulative ratio of unfavorable frames based 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.

### **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 of 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 from by utilizing the two data bases- Factiva & the Lexis-Nexis electronic database by using the key words like Pakistan, OBL, Operation Neptune Spear, ISI , Asif Ali Zardari ,YousafRazaGillani, Pakistan Army ,General Ishfaq Pervez Kiani ,General Shuja Pasha etc. In the light of initial scrutiny & calculation it was explored that 289 relevant items about Pakistan were published of which of the selected unit of analysis were considered for the study. Furthermore the entire population was taken as a sample, in other words the census study was applied in order to analyze the entire population.

### **Variables**

For the purpose of 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 initial reading and assessment of the contents about political leadership and military top brass in the four newspapers, the relevant items of unit of analysis were sort out. Subsequently all the published contents were classified into the following two broadcategories:

1. Pakistani Government
2. Pakistan Armed Forces & ISI

### **Pakistani Government:**

It comprised of all sort of published items which communicate about official activities namely cabinet meetings, public statements of President, Prime Minister, federal ministers regarding any domestic or foreign issue related to Pakistan including terrorism, OBL, war on terror etc; and stories and articles which reflect controversies, scandals, scams of ruling political coalition parties and public representatives and officials.

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

It includes all sort of contents appeared in the four selected newspapers about official engagements of armed forces of Pakistan especially of Pakistan army; visits and statements of Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Pervaz Kiyani, DG ISI, General Shuja Pasha and other forces chiefs on its role in war on terror or violation of sovereignty of Pakistan in the result of assault of Operation Neptune Spear; the stories, articles and features which highlight negative image of ISI, spy agency of Pakistan as well as propaganda campaign against the forces.

### **THE UNIT OF ANALYSIS:**

The four units of the published contents were selected in order 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 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 in order 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:** Length of the unit- news story, article, and editorial etc- of analysis in the four mainstream newspapers was decided on the basis of 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 foreign correspondent, Pakistani reporter, joint contribution of Pakistani & foreign correspondents and other sources like news agency 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 impression regarding the portrayal of Pakistan with special reference to Operation Neptune Spear during the specific time period of three month i.e. April- June 2011 in the four leading newspapers of UK & the United States.

**Positive Slant:** Sentences of each paragraph which narrates positive and productive developments in different spheres of state policies would be coded as positive. Moreover, the sentences which show the acknowledgement as well as appreciation of the steps taken by the political and military establishment of Pakistan in combating terrorist groups would also be coded as positive slant.

**Negative Slant:** Sentences of each paragraph which describe bad governance, mismanagement, connivance of the government officials, corruption allegation, poor law and order conditions, political instability, conflicts and disputes of Pakistan would be coded as negative slant. If the published paragraph about political leadership and military establishment communicate that they were not sincere in implementing the US strategy against the alleged terrorist organizations namely Al Qaida, Taliban, Haqqani group and *Tehrik Taliban Pakistan*, *LashkarTaiba* and other groups, all such paragraphs would be coded as negative. If the military establishment and ISI were held responsible for supporting and sheltering OBL, Mullah Umar, and Haqqani; criticism on military and ISI leadership; ISI as a rogue organization, such paragraph without any ambiguity would be coded as negative.

**Neutral Slant:** The sentences of each published paragraph which did not depict on either positive or negative image of Pakistan in lucid manner with regard to 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 would be coded as 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 daily Telegraph depicts in following categories -Pakistan Army &ISI, OBL, Terrorism, Pak-UK relations, Pak-US relations and Nuclear Program- the ratio of negative slant was found 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 blend of more negative flavor (179, 41.6) was observed greater in comparison of 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 particularize context for the convenience and understanding of the readers. The similarity was found in both UK newspapers with regard to portrayal of 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 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 image of Pakistan in connection of Operation Neptune Spear that the newspaper has paid extensive attention to the issue in comparison of the rest of the three papers; as results shown in above-mentioned table that 725 paragraphs related to Pakistan and the issue were published during the specific time period of three months i.e. April-June, 2011, out of which 334 paragraph with 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 Pakistani government and civilian leadership relatively in softer tone whereas on the contrary armed forces and ISI, the secret top spy agency of Pakistan was 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 image of Pakistan by the Washington Post highlights that out of 422 total number of 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 more critical stance towards the government of Pakistan as the ratio of negative slant was observed greater in the specific time period. While the other categories namely armed forces & ISI, OBL, Pakistan relations with India and Afghanistan received more negative slants.

**Table: 5**

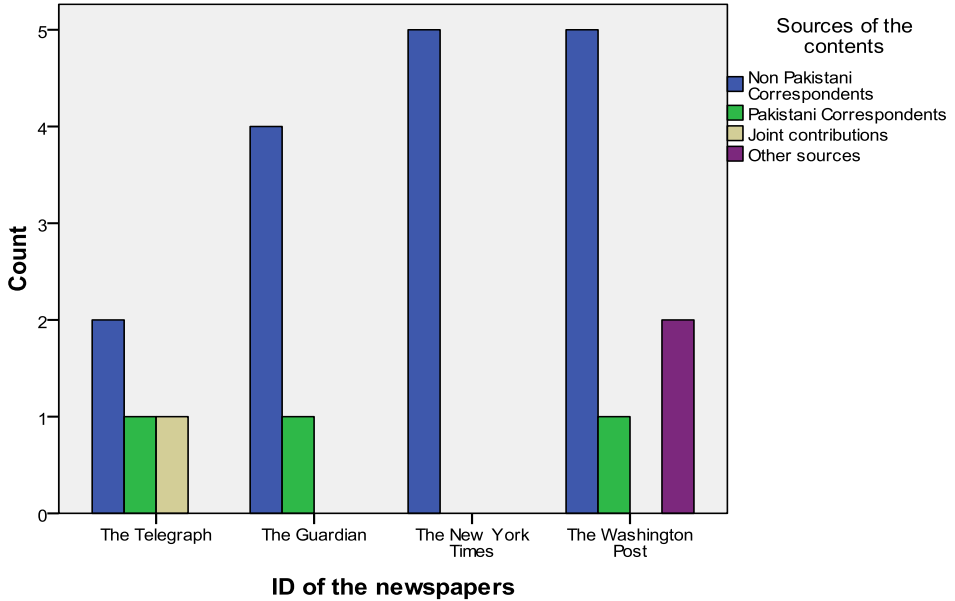
**Cumulative Distribution of Subjects of the Contents by Slant in the Four selected Newspapers (April-June 2011)**

	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 distribution of various slants of most of the categories were not different approximately of the four selected newspapers. It can

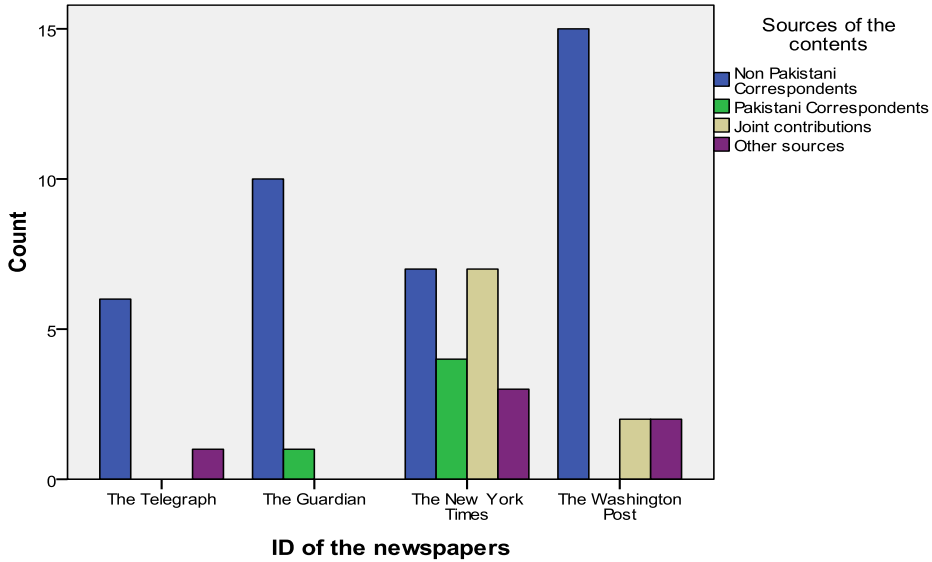
be concluded in convenient manner that the three categories which came first, second and third in terms of maximum ratio of negative slants were Pak-India relations, Pakistani media and armed forces plus ISI with the cumulative score of negative slant in percentile 67.8, 66.6 and 58.7 respectively.

**Subjects of the contents=Pakistani Govt.**



This bar graph communicates clearly that most of the contents related to the category of Pakistani government of 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 Pakistani government in daily Guardian and the Washington Post were bylined by the non Pakistani correspondents whereas all the items(5, 100%) in the New York Times were belonged to foreign correspondents.

**Subjects of the contents=Pak Army & ISI**



This graph about the category of Pakistan armed forces and ISI convey this comprehensive message that the Washington Post stood first among the newspapers; the ratio of the category with non Pakistani source was found greater. The findings describes that the Guardian and Telegraph stood first and second with regards to most number of contents were bylined by non Pakistani correspondent with the 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 armed forces and ISI would receive more coverage as compared to the political leadership during the given time period of the three months i.e. April-June, 2011. The results of the study communicates 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 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 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 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 time 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 total 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 unfavorable frame(39, 67.2%) was found greater as compared to favorable frame items(16, 27.5). In the light of above-mentioned results it is easier to conclude that the hypothesis was significantly supported.

### **Discussion & 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 total 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 quantitative and qualitative 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 in accordance of the policy of the US and UK during the specific time period i.e. pre and post period of Operation Neptune Spear. As it was also supported in the light of findings of following studies that the media persons in the West and the US by and large follow the foreign policy agenda and national interests while covering international affairs and constructing news stories about people, communities and nations, in this regards the studies of Mann<sup>39</sup>; Yu & Riffe<sup>40</sup>; and Atheide<sup>41</sup>, Gans<sup>42</sup>, Gitlin<sup>43</sup>, Hackett<sup>44</sup>, Dorman & Farhang<sup>45</sup>, Chang's<sup>46</sup> and other studies namely Entman<sup>47</sup>, Pan<sup>48</sup>, Merrill<sup>49</sup>, Mughees-uddin<sup>50</sup>, Said<sup>51</sup>, Perlmutter<sup>52</sup>, Herman & Chomsky<sup>53</sup>, Karim<sup>54</sup>, Dorogi<sup>55</sup>, Khalid<sup>56</sup> endorsed and supported this argument.

The in-depth qualitative analysis of the published contents about Pakistan in both the newspapers of UK vividly establishes the dark and bright aspects of picture of civilian and military establishment of Pakistan in the minds of the readers.

### **Pre OBL Operation: Positive Image of Pak Army:**

Both the US newspapers acknowledged and appreciated the contributions of armed forces of Pakistan in fighting the militants regarding the war on terror in border areas adjacent to neighboring country, Afghanistan. The newspaper adopted softer tone while covering Pakistan army before the killing of OBL. Precisely speaking the newspaper reflected and follow the same stance which was in accordance of White House foreign policy. See the excerpt of the positive news, appeared in the Washington Post about contributions of Pakistan army as affront line coalition partner in war against Taliban:

**The report.... praises Pakistan's military for confronting the insurgency in several border regions, which Taliban forces use as training and staging areas to attack U.S. forces in Afghanistan** (Washington Post, April 6, 2011)

### **Post OBL Operation: Negative Image of Pakistan Armed Forces:**

While on the other hand, both the newspapers of UK portrayed armed forces of Pakistan in negative sense and tried to cultivate the image of Chief of Army Staff, General Kayani as a hardliner for India and not possessing soft corner for American military tactics of drones and depicted him as a supporter of domestic Jihadists. The newspaper also tried to communicate the readers that establishment of Pakistan army was willing to support and accommodate the *Jihadi* forces as well as initiated the process for reestablishing the relations. See the following extract of article of daily Telegraph

**Gen Kayani took a hard line posture on Pakistan's traditional rival, India - a concession to domestic jihadists, who he hoped would again turn their attentions outwards...Finally, Gen Kayani sought to heal the rupture between Pakistan's army and jihadist allies like the *Lashkar-e-Taiba*, *Jaish-e-Mohammad*, and *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi* ...** (Telegraph, May4,2011)

### **Portrayal of Pak Army in the Washington Post:**

The Washington Post also portrayed armed forces of Pakistan in negative manner; the newspaper propagated that the military personnel once used to be secular, became sympathetic toward the Islamists insurgents including Taliban & Al Qaida. The newspaper further described anti Americanism in army due to the tendency of military personnel towards Islam. The Washington Post writes on June 22, 2011

**Pakistan's military is penetrated by Islamists who are sympathetic to insurgent groups that have declared war on the state.....**(Washington Post, June 22,2011)

### **Post OBL Killing scenario: Unfavorable Portrayal of General Kayani**

The New York Times in publication of June 16, 2011 described Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Pervaz Kayani as a rigid and stubborn person who adopted more firm stance while dealing with the high ups of the United States. It can be said conveniently that the tone and diction of the US newspapers became more critical, unfavorable and hostile in the wake of killing of OBL in the result of Operation Neptune Spear on May 2, 2011. The newspaper further described him the most powerful person in the country as the chief of the strongest organization who dictates his terms to pigeon hearted civilian government. The newspaper portrayed people at the helm of affairs i.e. democratically elected leaders helpless in front of the military establishment which imposed her decision on the elected representatives. The newspaper highlighted that key decisions related to foreign affairs and other domestic and overseas issues of national interests were taken by the military junta instead of the civilian government.

### **The image of Security Forces in the mirror of the New York Times:**

While analyzing or even simple reading of the published item about security forces of Pakistan in daily New York Times on June 10, 2011, no need to be analyst or researcher of media contents, even the lay man would perceived the contents without any difficulty, the way the newspaper portrayed the security forces as a violator of rule of law and perpetrator of extra judicial killings in military operation in valley of Swat. The newspaper further accused the personnel that they did not pay any heed as well as bypass the laws and judicial system and misuse their power and authority. In the same

paragraph, the newspaper also described and tagged the judicial system of the country sluggish and corrupt.

### **The Image of ISI, Inter Services Intelligence Agency in the mirror of the four selected newspapers:**

Both the newspapers of UK used negative language while writing and publishing any content about the top spy agency of Pakistan. The Telegraph in its publication of May 27, 2011 maneuvered and manipulated, without providing any substantive evidence, tagged and bracketed ISI as a terrorist organization whose officers and personnel backed and provided all sort of support to militants and terrorist group namely *LashkarTaiba*, *Al Qaida* and *Taliban*, as accused by the newspaper. Besides the newspaper also accused that ISI was harboring dens of terrorists and leaked the information in prior of American attacks on the camps. The CIA efforts regarding elimination and fixing of terrorist groups could not produce desired results due to non cooperative role and double game strategy of ISI. In view of the newspaper ISI gave a tough time to CIA in the case of Raymond Davis as well as proved to be a stumbling block in the way of stamp out the terrorist group *Lashkar*. See the following three self explanatory excerpts in which the Telegraph endorses the US private stance about ISI labeling her terrorist organization and tried to cultivate this propaganda that OBL, the most wanted man of the world was sheltered and harbored by ISI, without furnishing any solid evidence, the newspaper became the mouth piece and low cost loud speaker and custodian of American foreign policy:

**“The United States privately labels the ISI as a terrorist organization (according to a recent Wiki leaks revelation) and if complicity with bin Laden is established it would lead to a breakdown of trust”** (The Telegraph, May3, 2011)

**“Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISID) also allegedly smuggled al-Qaeda terrorists through airports and sent a unit into Afghanistan to fight alongside the Taliban”** (The Telegraph, May 3, 2011)

**“the US Congress is asking whether America should continue to send billions of dollars in aid while suspicions remain that Pakistan knowingly harbored the world's most wanted man”**(The Telegraph, May27, 2011)

The Washington Post was not lagging behind in this race of propaganda against ISI as the newspaper like her fellow newspaper harped on the same string by bracketing the top spy agency as the custodian of OBL and sheltering him near the military academy in Abbotabad. See the following excerpt of the published content about ISI in the Washington Post of May 8, 2011:

**“Bin Laden's compound was in the Pakistani city of Abbottabad .....and is the home of the country's top military academy. The location has fueled suspicion that Pakistan's intelligence service was complicit in protecting bin Laden”.**

Apart from the cultivating the bugbear of ISI as a mafia of supporting and of harboring terrorists, the Washington Post in its publication of June 12, 2011 also mentioned the official statement of government of Pakistan that her top secret agency neither leaked



the information of American raid nor colluded with insurgents. While on the contrary in the same published content of June 12, 2011, the newspaper tried to paint this negative picture that ISI used to leak information to the insurgents. See this excerpt of June 12, 2011 of Washington Post:

**“...the information was inadvertently leaked inside Pakistan or that insurgents were warned directly by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency or ISI”**

On April 25, 2011, the Guardian in its published article tried to establish this impression on the mind of the reader that the rogue faction of ISI routinely defies the policy of the government. The newspaper also painted this negative picture that the top spy agency was allegedly involved with Islamists organizations those were responsible of Mumbai attacks in 2008 by colluding with militant organizations namely the Taliban, al-Qaida, the *Lashkar-e-Taiba* and the *Hezb-e-Islami* led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

Moreover, daily Guardian, the other leading newspaper of UK superseded the other newspapers in the propaganda campaign against ISI, in her publication of May 12, 2011, the Guardian leveled several charges against ISI including kidnapping, torturing, extra judicial killings of the opponents, financing and patronizing the Islamists terrorists' organizations namely *Lashkar-e-Taiba*, the *Afghan Taliban*, and the *Haqqani network* as well as the colossal accusation of rigging in the elections. The newspaper bypassing objectivity, fairness and impartiality, the universal principles of journalism while describing and tagging **ISI as a dirty tricks department of Pakistan army**. In this connection, the newspaper did not prove the accuracy and truthfulness of charges because the newspaper could not furnish any concrete and substantive evidence with regards to her long list of accusations against ISI. See the following excerpt of daily Guardian of May 12, 2011:

**“...the ISI was still covertly supporting the Afghan Taliban, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and the Haqqani network, as part of its decades-old grudge match with India....”**

A few sentences were published in daily Guardian on May 12, 2011 by describing General Ahmed Shuja Pasha, DG ISI as capable, brilliant and intelligent officer. See the following favorable excerpt of the Guardian:

**“One American counterpart describes him as "brilliant and extremely intelligent . . . Thoughtful, pensive and extremely well read; if he was in the US military he would be a very successful officer”**

The New York Times also contributed her share in this propaganda campaign against Pakistan by portraying her as a broken reed because of double dealing. The newspaper on May 8, 2011 wrote that Pakistan absorbed the US and Western support of twenty billion dollars aid since September Eleven but in return failed to come up the expectations of the Western world.

### **The portrayal of Civilian government and Politicians:**

The analysis of the published stories about the civilian administration- led by Mr. Asif Ali Zardari as President of Pakistan and Mr. Yousaf Raza Gillani as head of the government – precisely paint the picture in favor of the civilian government of Pakistan

People's Party, PPP as compared to the military establishment in the context of presence of OBL in Pakistan, as it was highlighted by the New York Times in its publication of May 3, 2011 that the secular leadership of PPP always expressed their antipathy for the extremism and opposed the activities and presence of OBL in this part of South Asia. Both the leaders felicitated the US administration on the success of the operation regarding the killing of OBL in Abbotabad.

The Washington Post in its publication of May 15, 2011 appreciated and eulogized the meritorious contribution of Benazir Bhutto, BB former prime minister and chairperson of PPP for revival of democracy and her efforts for respect of human rights. She was described as progressive, secular leader and a ray of hope for a country like Pakistan which suffered a lot in the hands of religious extremists, those also took her life. The author of the article seconded perceptions of BB about hideout of OBL under the umbrella of Pakistani intelligence. See the following extract of the published article of the Washington Post of May 15, 2011 in which the author quoted BB about sheltering and whereabouts of OBL:

**...She was virtually certain that Osama bin Laden was not living in a cave in the mountainous region of Afghanistan or Pakistan. "He's living comfortably somewhere in Pakistan," she would say. "He's being supported and protected by Pakistani intelligence. You can bet on it."**

Similarly, the newspapers also framed her husband Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, President of the country in more positive and favorable manner. His efforts to bringing the military under the civilian control were acknowledged by the newspapers. See the extract of the editorial of the Guardian published on May 14, 2011:

**“Asserting the primacy of civilian control over a failing military is, however, the last thing on the mind of President Asif Zardari”**

The Guardian in its publication of May 5, 2011 acknowledged the contributions of Mr. Zardari and the civilian officials for defending the image of Pakistan which was questioned in the western world for the alleged sheltering of OBL and implications linked to OBL operation on Pakistani soil. See the following self explanatory extract of the story:

**“In recent days President Asif Ali Zardari, several ambassadors and the foreign ministry have staunchly defended their country's reputation”**

The New York Times in its publication of April 6, 2011 suggested various proposals to Mr. Zardari in order to improve the economic policies of her government including economic and fiscal reforms as well as expansion of taxpayer network by the systematic tax reforms in Pakistan. Apparently, the newspaper did not highly criticize the performance of the civilian government in the sphere of economics. Surprisingly, the question of good or bad governance was never raised or identified. The civilian government received more favorable coverage, more appreciation whereas the military establishment received more negative description, more criticism and bagged more defaming. The political leadership was described more pro western, sincere and proactive towards playing her role in fulfillment of Western and the US agenda in order

to eliminate terrorism and extremists factors linked to Al Qaida and Taliban in comparison of the military establishment of the country. It was overemphasized on umpteen times that civilian leadership under the aegis of Mr. Zardari and Gillani were depicted as helpless in front of powerful military Junta, they just became the mouthpiece of the intelligence agencies. See the following extract of the article of Fareed Zakariya published in the Washington Post on May 8, 2011 which communicates that both the leaders were dictated by the military establishment:

**“The military has also, once again, been able to cow the civilian government. According to Pakistani sources, the speech that Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani gave at a recent news conference was drafted by the military. President Asif Ali Zardari continues to appease the military rather than confront the generals...”**

See the following extract of the positive framed published story of the New York Times published on May 4, 2011, by quoting the British Prime Minister the newspaper acknowledged the role of the political leadership in fight against terrorism:

**.... And we do know that the Pakistan political leadership is fighting terrorism. We do know that country has suffered.....His assessment seemed likely to hearten President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan "**

The bottom line about the favorable portrayal of both the leaders in the newspapers also establish this picture, as the analysis of the contents clearly communicate that enough space had been given to Mr. Zardari and Mr. Gillani, their point of view and statements on various issue were covered favorably. Precisely Speaking, it can be said safely that hardly any material was published in the context of any, scams, scandals of corruption of the cabinet members and above all the alleged mismanagement of the political leadership in resolving the burning issue of energy crisis in the country.

As far as the image of other political leaders of the national stature is concerned, it would be relevant to mention here that the former foreign minister, Shah MahmmodQuarshi was painted as close to the military establishment who was sidelined by his party. Mr. Qurashi demanded the resignation of Mr.Zardari with regard to OBL operation on Pakistani soil. Later on he joined Pakistan Tehrik Insaf , PTI, the political party of Imran Khan.

Both the US newspapers published news stories about rallies of PTI under the leadership of Imran Khan against drone strikes and anti NATO supply protests. He was depicted as emerging outspoken leader against drone attacks and significantly vocalist against the US policies of war on terror. It can be concluded that PTI, although at that specific time it was a small political party, by and large receive more space and objective coverage regarding their sit-in and rallies aimed to blockade NATO supplies in future as a protest against the drone attacks.

Both the US newspapers adopted softer tone while covering the diplomatic activities of Hussain Haqqani, Pakistan former ambassador in the US. The right wing political parties in Pakistan considered him pro American. His statements regarding OBL operation, issue of Raymond Davis and other mutual aspects of Pak-US relations were published with the flavor of neutrality and objectivity. While, Maulana Fazalur Rehman,

leader of the religious political party was described as a pragmatic politician and father of the Taliban who has always maintained cordial relations with military establishment and also knew the art to remain the part of every government.

Mr. Shahbaz Sharif- chief minister of the province Punjab, also younger brother of Mr. Nawaz Sharif, former Prime Minister and president of Pakistan Muslim League (N) - was portrayed in unfavorable manner as the New York Times in its publication of May 21, 2011 revealed that he was not in favor of restoration of Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, dysfunctional chief justice of Pakistan. See the following self explanatory extract of the published story in the New York Times about Shahbaz Sharif:

**Shahbaz Sharif... was willing to have the controversial Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry removed from his position after the judge was granted a "face saving" restoration. ...**

The civilian leadership of Pakistan especially the President and Prime Minister of the country were painted in positive way as they were described as more sincere towards the policy of West and the US of war on terror in comparison of the military establishment . More and above, the civilian leadership was projected as helpless, spineless which was constantly pressurized and dictated by the military establishment.

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