

Image of Civil and Military Establishment of Pakistan in Perspective of Combating Terrorism and Extremism: A Qualitative Analysis of Mainstream British and American Print Media

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Abstract

Since the 9/11 incident, a new fragile image of Pakistan has been reflected around the globe, and the effort of the 'War on Terror' by Pakistan has never been appreciated by Western societies (e.g., America & Europe). Another side, Pakistan conducted several military operations for combating terrorism in the post-9/11 era, and the country suffered a lot on socio-economic and humanitarian grounds before the killing of Osama Bin Laden (OBL) in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The international media played a significant role in presenting the terrorism discourse of Pakistan in front of the world. However, the civil and military establishment of the country has failed to gain the utmost acknowledgment over the last two decades, and this phenomenon got a substantial amount of attention from media scholars. Therefore, the present study was based on the propaganda model of Herman and Chomsky and Shoemaker and Reese's theory of influence on media content. Through a qualitative approach, 289 published contents, including news stories, articles/features, editorials, and letters to the editors were analyzed that were published one-month pre and post-Operation Neptune Spear in the four selected newspapers of the UK (the Telegraph & the Guardian) and the USA (the New York Times & the Washington Post). It has been analyzed that Western mainstream print media criticized Pakistan's civil and military establishment regarding terrorism and the OBL killing issue precisely. The Armed forces' activities in Pakistan have been painted unfavorable because both the British and the American print media have always safeguarded their national interest and followed their foreign policy regarding OBL killing while projecting the image of Pakistan.

Keywords: Pakistan, Operation Neptune Spear, Osama Bin Laden, War on Terror, ISI

Introduction

After the attack on the twin towers (World Trade Center & Pentagon) in the United States in September 2001, the issue of terrorism became a grave concern of global debates (Smith & Zeigler, 2017), and a new deteriorated image of the state of Pakistan has emerged as a 'safe haven' for terrorists and militant organizations before the world. It provided diplomatic and moral support to the Taliban before the 9/11 incident (Hilali, 2012), which highlighted the phenomenon of terrorism among all the countries and affected their policies in both the territorial and international geopolitical landscape (Afzal, Iqbal & Inayat, 2012). In the wake of 9/11, Al-Qaeda was declared a terrorist organization, and Bin Laden and his associates were framed as prime suspects who, later on, perpetrated and master-planned this tragic incident (Schmitt & Shanker, 2005). Due to its geostrategic position, Pakistan was forced by the US to join this war which was opposed by the people, organizations, and religious groups of Pakistan. Consequently, this alliance with the US has resulted in severe consequences faced by the state and society in this region as many terrorist attacks have occurred, which caused a rise of deaths in different times, i.e., 38 in 2001 to 11704 in 2009, 5496 in 2014 (Afridi, Yousufi & Khan, 2014).

Pakistan has suffered a lot of innermost social, economic, and political instability due to ever-increasing incidents of terrorism since the Pakistan army began its operation to nip the evil in the bud of the militant wings and terrorist organization sanctuaries in tribal areas of the country (Malik, He & Rafay, 2019). Several major operations have been initiated by the armed forces of Pakistan for combating terrorism such

as 'Operation Al-Mizan'¹ (2002-2006), 'Rah-e-Haq'² (2007), 'Sher-e-Dil'³ & 'Sirat-e-Mustaqeem'⁴ (2008), 'Operation Zalzalā'⁵ (2008-2009), 'Rah-e-Rast'⁶ & 'Rah-e-Nijat'⁷ (2011), 'Koh-e-Sufaid'⁸ (2014), 'Zarb-e-Azab'⁹ and 'Rad-ul-Fasad'¹⁰ (2017), etc. (Abbasi, Khatwani & Hussain, 2018). Consequently, Pakistan has also suffered on economic fronts with an approximate financial loss of 126.79 billion US dollars because of its continuous engagement in WoT from 2001 to 2018 (Zakaria, Jun & Ahmed, 2019). Furthermore, recent observations by FATF (Financial Action Task Force) have decided to retain Pakistan on a grey list as the country has failed to monitor terrorism financing (Mohan, 2021). However, Pakistan has made significant progress and addressed 26 out of 27 points that were committed with FATF back in 2018 (Rana, 2021). It has been reported that more than 52,000 people lost their lives during terrorist activities in Pakistan between 2002-2013, including troops, civilians, and personnel of security enforcement agencies (Abbasi, 2013), which has increased to almost 65,000 by 2021 (South Asian terrorism portal, 2021).

Although consistent efforts of the civil and military establishment in the shape of a holistic military and political line of action for combating terrorist activities proved fruitful over some time (Afzal, 2021), regardless of this, the country was not projected positively and constructively (Ali, Safwan & Bhutta, 2021). It is an admitted reality that Western media plays a significant role in shaping and building the image of any society before the world. In this regard, the phenomenon of terrorism in the context of Pakistan has been misrepresented by the media conglomerates of the Western world (Singh, 2003). Sometimes, rather than safeguarding national interests, the media of a few countries try to protect their business interests, whereas the prime responsibility of any media outlet should be to publish and disseminate information to the public in an objective and unbiased manner (Malik & He, 2018).

Pakistan is a country with plenty of natural and historical places, which could be a great attraction for global tourists, but negative reporting by the Western media has badly affected its image globally. It is significant and relevant to mention here that the continuous over-projection of disrupted law and order situation by the Western and local media over some time has produced a negative impact on the tourism industry which resulted in restricting foreign tourist visits to Pakistan. It can be observed that inappropriate security measures of foreigners have deprived this region of major economic investments in the past (Malik et al., 2019).

Problem Statement

The post-9/11 era has been found pivotal to Pakistan because the foreign policies of many countries (e.g., America and Europe) have been altered for deals that presented this region only confined to terrorism and tarnished its image around the globe (Hussain, 2020). Inside terrorist attacks have fueled up global criticism civil and military establishment of Pakistan, and several hours of electronic news reporting in international media about suicide bombings on Army headquarters and foreign cricket teams declared Pakistan as a failed state on the international landscape (Javaid & Haq, 2016). The image of Pakistan in the context of terrorism has been a major concern in many research studies, such as a critical study about the image of Islam in Western print media conducted by Ali and Lodhi (2009) which also reviewed research studies linked with Islam and terrorism. However, it considered Muslims both in the global paradigm and in the Pakistani perspective. Since the image of Pakistan has been tarnished regarding terrorism, religion has always been criticized in the Western mainstream electronic and print media. Therefore, the present study has been designed to evaluate the image of Pakistani civil and military establishment in contexts of religious extremism and OBL killing in Abbottabad in the mainstream newspapers of the UK and the USA over the period of one-month pre- and post-Operation Neptune Spear in Pakistan.

Objectives of the study

The present study aims.

- To analyze the coverage and portrayal of the civil and military leadership of Pakistan in the British and the American newspapers

¹ Operation Justice.

² Operation The path of Truth

³ Operation Lion Heart

⁴ Operation The righteous path /The straight Path/The Middle Way

⁵ Operation Earthquake

⁶ Operation Resipiscence

⁷ Operation Path to Salvation

⁸ Operation White Mountain

⁹ Operation Sharp and Cutting Strike

¹⁰ Operation Elimination of Discord

- To divulge the nature of coverage related to the Armed forces of Pakistan, ISI (Inter-services Intelligence) in the context of Operation Neptune Spear

Literature Review

In the post-9/11 era, Islam and the Muslim world have been associated with terrorism by the western powers. Counter-terrorism operations by the United States have been supported by the Muslim world as they extended their cooperation to strengthen the global War on Terror (hereafter GWOt) via logistics, political and diplomatic channels. The most significant paradigm shift was witnessed in Pakistan where General Pervaiz Musharraf, then President of the country presented his narrative enlightened moderation approach against extremism and the security agencies started a crackdown against militant wings in the region (Rabasa et al., 2004). Many Muslim countries including Indonesia, Uzbekistan, and other central and Southeast Asian countries allied with American GWOt, however despite all counter-terrorism efforts, the Muslim world has been unable to regain its positive image as a stigma of terrorism and another negative connotation has been firmly labeled with the Muslim world and the immigrants around the globe. To unfold the dynamics associated with the phenomenon of terrorism and the Muslim world has remained of great interest to media scholars and other social scientists since the disintegration of the former USSR and the worldwide dissipation of communism in general and particularly after the tragic incident of 9/11.

Several kinds of research focused on Islam and terrorism as the issue was critically analyzed in light of religious, social, and cultural perspectives. It was argued that mainstream print and electronic media have contributed a pivotal role in manipulating the image of Islam, Muslims, and society. The religion Islam was equated with extremism and terrorism (Armstrong, 2001) while Johnson (2006) critically described the Jihadi school of thought in certain Muslim countries as a root cause behind acts of terrorism perpetrated by the militant groups either independently or through the patronage of the state organs. Contrary to this approach, which is based on Islamophobia, Murad (2003) argued that religion cannot be held responsible through generalized lenses or as a sole factor. He identified different perspectives and factors linked with the phenomena of terrorism and presented an argument that Islamic teaching doesn't support any act of extremism and terrorism. It is evident that the media of the United States has always followed the policy of the White House and Pentagon for presenting an image of other countries and this premise is evident and supported in the study as Ali and Khalid (2008) discussed patterns of treatment for friendly and foe declared Muslim countries in the US prestigious news magazines and they concluded that the ratio of positive coverage of US-allied Muslim countries was found greater in comparison of enemy declared Muslim states. In this context, Huntington put the responsibility on Muslims as he argued that Muslim states not only fought wars against each other but also kept waging wars with the Western world as well. He further linked Islam with phenomena of violence and extremism as he advocated the clash of civilization theory and global conflict between the Muslim world and the West was traced in light of this approach. Ahmad (2008) analyzed the role of Hollywood movies in cultivating negative images of Muslims and the Islamic world. He referred to different movies, namely 'The Siege', 'True Lies', and 'Executive Decision' which categorically presented Islam as an extremist religion. Consequently, several Muslims from Pakistan and the Arab world were harassed and killed in the aftermath of 9/11 in the United States as a result of negative propaganda from mainstream print and electronic media, including Hollywood movies.

The Incident of 9/11 has been considered a benchmark that diverted the attention of scholars of different disciplines to investigate the phenomenon of terrorism and the Muslim world significantly. Several research studies have so far been conducted in the first two decades of the 21st century on the said topic. However, before this incident, there had been only a limited supply of research about coverage and portrayals of Pakistan. Some of the researchers investigated news and editorial treatment of the Indo-Pak conflict with special reference to the issue of Kashmir. In the post 9/11 political scenario, the researchers of media studies from developed and developing countries produced a great quantity of work on the framing of Islam, Muslims, fundamentalism, terrorism, democracy, clash of civilizations, Islamophobia, and militant groups namely Hamas, Taliban, and Al-Qaida, etc. as through the lenses of qualitative and quantitative analysis of media texts (Baker, 2010; Brown, 2006; Carr & Hynes, 2015).

Siraj (2007), in his post-doctoral research study on news framing of Pakistan in American mainstream print media, concluded that the overall ratio of favorable coverage of Pakistan was found greater in Post 9/11 period in comparison to the pre-9/11 period. His findings on the portrayal of Pakistan in Post 9/11 period endorsed the arguments of several researchers (Kux, 2002; Obad 2003; Said, 1997) that the United States media painted political, social, and cultural fabrics of the friendly states in a favorable tone with a blend of positivity to those states as they were on the same page with the policy and working on the international agenda of the United States even such countries controlled/governed by the dictatorial regimes or monarchs. Since 9/11, most of the studies about coverage and representation of Pakistan in the Western media have

analyzed different spheres including its role in the War on Terror, politics, relations with the United States, UK, India, and China as overall framing of the country was explored in light of Propaganda Model of Herman and Chomsky, Media Conformity Theory, Manufacturing Consent Approach and Shoemaker & Reese Theory of Influences on Media Contents (Ali, 2008; Ali, Choudhry, Mahsud & Hassan, 2008; Jan & Saleem, 2013; Safdar, Budiman, Binti & Hamid 2014; Siraj, 2010). A few studies also investigated the image of Pakistan concerning drone strikes, the military operation in tribal areas, the lawyers' movement, and the imposition of emergency by General Musharraf (Ayoub & Ahmad, 2013; Khan & Imran, 2011; Shoeb, 2008).

Theoretical framework

Theoretically, the present study was conducted based on Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model and theories of effects on media content given by Shoemaker and Reese. The news contents of the British and American newspapers have been analyzed in the context of the influence of governmental policies. There have been several research studies that endorsed both theories on solid grounds while investigating the image of Pakistan, Islam, and the Muslim world in the Western mainstream media which can be witnessed in the synthesis of the literature. The Western media, by and large, covered many issues in the context of Pakistan, but its image has been painted negatively by following the foreign policy agenda of the global powers that also included the civil and military stakeholders of the UK and the USA.

Research Question

1. How civil and military leadership of Pakistan has been portrayed in mainstream newspapers of the UK and the USA regarding the OBL killing issue during pre- and post-operation times?
2. How the Armed Forces/ ISI vs. political leadership were comparatively portrayed by the newspapers regarding OBL hiding in Pakistan?

Methods

Research method refers to a technique that is used to identify and comprehend any phenomenon. It provides a logical set of procedures that facilitates the accomplishment of specific research goals (Bist, 2015). The present research has utilized the method of content analysis to evaluate news stories, editorials, and articles in a qualitative manner. Qualitative studies are subjective in nature and truly depend upon the analytical, integrative skills, and personal knowledge of the researcher, and this type of research method is applied to the textual data that emphasizes sense-making or understanding a phenomenon rather than predicting or explaining it (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Through the qualitative procedure, a thematic analysis approach has been utilized in a present study that helps in generating independent codes of the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2015), and exploring the stance of the coverage regarding the image of Pakistan. The thematic analysis approach has been widely utilized during qualitative research in the field of social sciences (Roulston, 2001). Hence, qualitative content analysis was found more suitable in the context of this research, and all the contents were analyzed qualitatively. These contents comprised a portrayal of Pakistan's civil and military establishment in the context of Operation Neptune Spear. The news stories were selected for one month, each pre- and post-operation-times. It was a census study which is why the whole population was selected as a sample for analysis. The study has divulged the nature of the stories with special reference to OBL killing along with their framing and portrayal for projecting the image of Pakistan that was identified as favorable, unfavorable, and neutral in the contextual perspective.

Population and Sample

The population of this research was articles, news stories, letters to the editors, and editorials related to Pakistan in the context of Operation Neptune Spear that were published in newspapers in the UK (the Telegraph and the Guardian) and the USA (the New York Times and the Washington Post) during the period of one month pre and post-operation (April-June, 2011) of OBL in Abbottabad. All the contents for the analysis were accessed and retrieved from the database of Lexis Nexis by entering the keywords i.e., Pakistan, ISI, OBL, Pakistan Army, General Shuja Pasha, Asif Ali Zardari, General Ishfaq Pervaiz Kiyani, Operation Neptune Spear and Yousaf Raza Gillani. According to the initial scrutiny, 289 related items were finalized and selected for the analysis in this study that was published in four selected newspapers in the UK and the USA. It should be noted that the study was based on the entire population that's why no specific sample was selected.

Categories

Through initial evaluation and readings of the contents regarding the civil and military establishment of Pakistan in four selected newspapers, the related items of the unit of analysis were separated and the content that has been analyzed was categorized into three domains.

1. Pakistan Armed Forces & ISI

It comprised all the items published in the selected British and the American newspapers regarding the official activities of the Pakistan Army and statements of the Army Chief, DG ISI, General Kiyani, General Shuja Pasha, and other chiefs of the forces in their role in the War on Terror and violation of Pakistan's sovereignty as a result of OBL killing, the articles or features that portrayed Pakistan's image with negative connotation regarding ISI, a spy agency of Pakistan.

2. Pakistani Government

This category had all the published items that were related to the official activities of President Zardari statements, cabinet meetings, statements of federal ministers and Prime ministers about foreign or domestic policy regarding various issues of Pakistan as well as OBL killing, terrorism, War on Terrors, etc. along with the articles that projected controversies scams of ruling parties and scandals of public repetitive and officials.

Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis in the present study were news stories, editorials, articles/features, and letters to the editors. The whole paragraphs were used as a yardstick to analyze the stories in the said categories of issues published in four selected newspapers in the UK and the USA.

Results

The in-depth qualitative analysis of the published contents about Pakistan in both the newspapers of the UK and the USA vividly establishes the dark and bright aspects of the picture of the 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 the armed forces of Pakistan in fighting the militants regarding the war on terror in border areas adjacent to a neighboring country, Afghanistan. The newspaper adopted a softer tone while covering the Pakistan army before the killing of OBL. Precisely speaking the newspaper reflected and follow the same stance which was in accordance with the White House.

Post-OBL-Operation: Negative Image of Pakistan Armed Forces

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

The portrayal of the Pak Army in the Washington Post

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

Post OBL Killing scenario: Unfavorable Portrayal of General Kiyani

The New York Times in a publication of June 16, 2011, described Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Pervaiz Kiyani as a rigid and stubborn person who adopted a more formal 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 the killing of OBL as the result of Operation Neptune Spear on May 2, 2001. The newspaper further described him as 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 simply reading the published item about the security forces of Pakistan in the daily New York Times on June 10, 2011, no need to be an analyst or researcher of media content, even the layman would perceive the contents without any difficulty, the way the newspaper portrayed the security forces as a violator of rule of law and perpetrator of extrajudicial killings in a military operation in the 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 sorts of support to militants and terrorist groups namely *Lashkar-e-Taiba, Al-Qaida and the Taliban*, as accused by the newspaper. Besides the newspaper also accused ISI was harboring the dens of terrorists and leaked the information prior to American attacks on the camps. The CIA's efforts regarding the elimination and fixing of terrorist groups could not produce desired results due to the non-cooperative role and double game strategy of ISI. In view of the newspaper ISI gave a tough time to the CIA in the case of Raymond Davis as well as proved to be a stumbling block in the way of stamping out the terrorist group *Lashkar*. 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 mouthpiece and low-cost loudspeaker and custodian of American foreign policy.

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 Abbottabad.

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

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 Islamist organizations that were responsible for the 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, the daily Guardian, the other leading newspaper of the 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 bypasses objectivity, fairness, and impartiality, the universal principles of journalism while describing and tagging **ISI as a dirty tricks department of the Pakistan army**

In this connection, the newspaper did not prove the accuracy and truthfulness of the charges because the newspaper could not furnish any concrete and substantive evidence with regard to her long list of accusations against ISI.

A few sentences were published in Daily Guardian on May 12, 2011, describing General Ahmed Shuja Pasha, DG ISI as a capable, brilliant, and intelligent 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 in aid since September Eleven but in return failed to come up with 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 paints the picture in favor of the civilian government of the Pakistan People's Party, PPP as compared to the military establishment in the context of the 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 Abbottabad.

The Washington Post in its publication of May 15, 2011, appreciated and eulogized the meritorious contribution of Benazir Bhutto, former prime minister and chairperson of PPP for the revival of democracy and her efforts for respect of human rights. She was described as a progressive, secular leader and a ray of hope for a country like Pakistan which suffered a lot at 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.

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.

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.

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, and more appreciation whereas the military establishment received more negative description, more criticism, and bagged more defaming. The political leadership was described as more pro-western, sincere, and proactive towards playing her role in the fulfillment of Western and the US agenda in order to eliminate terrorism and extremist 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 a powerful military Junta, they just became the mouthpiece of the intelligence agencies.

The bottom line about the favorable portrayal of both the leaders in the newspapers also establishes this picture, as the analysis of the contents clearly communicates that enough space had been given to Mr. Zardari and Mr. Gillani, their points of view and statements on various issues 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 Mahmood Qureshi was painted as close to the military establishment who was sidelined by his party. Mr. Qureshi demanded the resignation of Mr. Zardari with regard to the OBL operation on Pakistani soil. Later on, he joined Pakistan Tehrik Insaaf, 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 an emerging outspoken leader against drone attacks and a significant vocalist against the US policies of the 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 the future as a protest against the drone attacks.

Both the US newspapers adopted a softer tone while covering the diplomatic activities of Hussain Haqqani, Pakistan's former ambassador to the US. The right-wing political parties in Pakistan considered him pro-American. His statements regarding the OBL operation, the 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 the military establishment and also knew the art to remain part of every government.

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

Discussion

The overall image of the military establishment of Pakistan in the context of the OBL killing has been portrayed negatively. Similar patterns were found in previous studies (Marwa, 2015). However, Mr. Zardari got the confidence of the West on his promise of civilian supremacy on the armed forces and top spy agency i.e., ISI. On issues of the killing of OBL, he was framed in favorable manners as a mature politician and pro-west ally in comparison to the military establishment. It can be summed up that the selected British and American newspapers supported the foreign policy of the US administration while portraying the news stories related to Operation Spear Neptune and the overall image of the civil and military leadership of Pakistan has deteriorated around the globe. These results are in line with the studies conducted by scholars in the past (Iftikhar & Shafiq, 2019; Shehla, 2017; Yousaf, 2012). It is significant to mention here that the killing of OBL was formidable for the relations of Pakistan with the West. The selected newspapers highly

depict the foreign policy of the US with Pakistan. The results of this study have also endorsed and supported the arguments given by the propaganda model of Herman and Chomsky and Shoemaker and Reese theory of influence on media content. The Western mainstream media projected Pakistan's image negatively in front of the world through published content and followed its foreign policy while covering the issues of terrorism and Operation Neptune Spear in Pakistan.

Conclusion

Through qualitative analysis of the contents, it can be postulated that the civil and military leadership of Pakistan was framed negatively in the context of terrorism specifically related to the OBL killing issue. It has been divulged that the military leadership of Pakistan including the Armed forces, ISI, and forces of the spy agencies have always been criticized in the Western mainstream print media, and the overall image of the Pakistan in context of the OBL killing was framed in an unfavorable manner.

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