

Framing of US in Pakistani English Newspapers during Drone Strikes: A Content Analysis of Dawn and The Nation

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Abstract

The core objective of the current research was to analyze recurrent frames used by Pakistani English language newspapers to present US during drone strikes. For this purpose Editorials of Dawn and The Nation published from 1st March 2011 till 31st March 2013 having terms "drone" "pilotless air craft" and "unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)" were analyzed. A census study of 168 editorials was conducted. Quantitative content analysis was used as the research design. Ten categories were constructed by conducting a rigorous literature review of the past research. The results depicted that Pakistani print media strongly criticized US on her policies of drone attacks in tribal area of Pakistan. Both selected newspapers gave 62.2% negative coverage to US on different issues but comparatively The Nation gave more negative coverage to US than Dawn. On the contrary 26.7% editorials had favorable, and 11.1% had neutral coverage. The results showed that although both newspapers have differing approach to cover the issue of drone Dawn and consider drone strikes against the sovereignty of Pakistan but The Nation showed a greater concern over drone strikes.

Keywords: *US Image, Framing, Drone strikes, Pakistani Newspapers.*

Introduction

History of Pak-US relations is as old as the history of Pakistan. The Pakistan-US relationship has gone through many ups and downs since Pakistan got independence. At the time of Independence Pakistan had two options for making friendly relations. On one side was Soviet Union and on the other side was United State, but Pakistan established ties with United States (Dawn, 2012). These ties always remained stable until 9/11 attacks.

9/11 attacks on WTO and Pentagon were perhaps the most tragic event in the history of US (Sohrab & Choudhry, 2012). Immediately after the incident of 9/11, US media and the policy makers in the country pointed fingers on to Al Qaeda and their leader Osama Bin Laden. In that situation Pakistan's role became very crucial. Pakistan sent few people for negotiations with the Taliban leaders to present US demands but all went in vain. Pakistan extended support to US and Pakistan and US became coalition partners in war against terrorism.

These ties were working smoothly but some incidents like the killing of Al-Qaida's leader in Abbottabad, Raymond Davis incident, Attack on Salala Check post gave rise to the weakening of relationships between Pakistan and America in recent years.

In the war of US against Afghanistan, to combat terrorism, Pakistan suffered the most (Sohrab & Choudhry, 2012). Another reason of Pakistan's suffering is the Taliban leaders, who poured through the Pak-Afghan border in Pakistan, and created internal security problems for Pakistan (Malik, 2008). Obama took the office of President after Bush Jr. President Obama focused on the reconciliation strategy towards Pakistan and Afghanistan. US government launched Predator Drone Attacks within the tribal areas of Pakistan to destroy the terrorist networks and militants (Synnott, 2009). Public polls show that between 75-90% Pakistanis bitterly opposed the drone attacks (Oakley & Hammes, 2010).

Drone attacks are another very big issue which has strained the Pak-US relationship. America hit Pakistan with first drone attack in 2004 killing Nek Muhammad, who was a Pakistani Taliban commander and he had declared his support for Al Qaeda. Approximately 300 drones were fired in Pakistani territory during 2004-2011. A Pew Research Poll conducted in 2012 shows that only 17 percent of Pakistanis favor the US conducting drone strikes against leaders of terrorist groups, even if they are conducted with the Pakistani government's support.

US government has launched many military operations to combat terrorism in the world generally and in Pakistan particularly. Pakistan has always extended support towards US in war against terrorism. But from last couple of years US government has taken on a new strategy of drones, to fight terrorist in the tribal areas of Pakistan. These drone strikes are not only killing terrorists but innocent people as well. That is the reason that an anti-American thought has developed in the Pakistani people. The present study will explore either Pakistani English press is also presenting the same thought or do they adopt a different stance towards US.

Different newspaper organizations have different policies. That is why they treat issues differently. Dawn and The Nation are two prestigious English language newspapers of Pakistan. Dawn acquires a very balanced approach while discussing various issues; on the contrary The Nation adopts a straightforward stance. The present study will enable us to understand how Pakistani English press is covering the issue of drone attacks in Pakistani territory. More over the study will also clarify how US is being portrayed in this regard.

Objectives of the Study

Following are the objectives of the study.

1. To find out the image of US is being portrayed through the editorial content of daily Dawn and The Nation.
2. To dig out the frames Daily Dawn and The Nation are using to portray US image about drone attacks.
3. To figure out the difference in the coverage on Drone attacks in editorial pages of Daily Dawn and The Nation.

Research Questions

This study will examine framing of USA image by Pakistani Print media with reference to Drone attacks in Tribal Areas. The questions of interest to this study are.

- RQ1. What image of US is being portrayed through the editorials of Dawn and The Nation?
RQ2. What frames Dawn and The Nation are using to portray US image about drone attacks?
RQ3. Is there a difference in the coverage on drone attacks in editorials of Daily Dawn and The Nation?

Hypotheses:

- H1: It is more likely that the image of US will be portrayed more negatively than positive or neutral through editorial content of Daily Dawn.
- H2: It is more likely that the image of US will be portrayed more positively than negative or neutral through editorial content of Daily The Nation.
- H3: It is more likely that The Nation will be framing drone attacks more violation of sovereignty then innocent civilians' casualties.
- H4: It is more likely that The Nation will be framing drone attacks and America in a very harsh tone as compared to Dawn.

Review of Literature

A rigorous literature review was conducted to find out media portrayals of countries. Sultan (2013) analyzed the picture of Pak-US Relations in the elite press of Pakistan and United States during the regime of Raja Pervaiz Ashraf from June 2012 to December 2012. He studied the editorials of one Pakistani newspaper Dawn and one American newspaper, The Washington Post. He concluded that although both the newspapers have criticized the government's policies towards the other, however Pakistani newspaper Dawn has presented US in an unfavorable frame in most of the editorials.

Blayde and Lnzner (2012) studied anti American thoughts in Islamic world. They collected data from 13000 Muslims from 21 countries and concluded that the Muslims who are strongly anti-American are not very religious.

A somewhat similar study was conducted by Khan & Safder. (2010) they concluded that overall the Pakistani press portrayed an unfavorable image of America. Ayoub & Ahmad (2013) second the above mentioned results by conducting research on editorials of Dawn and The Nation. And concluded that although both the newspapers presented this relationship negatively but Nation presented more negative frames for Pak-US regarding drone strikes.

Al-Nuaimi (2012) investigated the image of U.S.A in the Gulf Press. He argued that Gulf press are presenting the policy stance of their government that is why they are not very critical about many of the US related issues. Al-Nuaimi said that the people of the Gulf countries do not follow the thoughts about US government presented by Gulf press.

Saleem and Mian (2014) investigated US foreign policy towards South Asia as framed by Pakistani press and found that The News framed US in a negative way while Dawn adopted a balanced approach. Khan and Irtaza. (2010) and Khan (2008) studied image of Pakistan in US media. They concluded that US media blames Pakistan irrespective of the US policy towards Pakistan. Moreover the US press presents a prejudiced approach towards Islam and Muslims.

Khan (2008) explored that Pakistan is a US ally in War on Terror, even then Pakistan is framed as a foe in the US prestigious newspapers. On the contrary Ali's results did not support Khan's results. Ali (2008) studied the image of Pakistan as presented by News week and Time magazine and found a more positive coverage given to Pakistan by these two news magazines i.e. 37 % approximately.

Shah's (2014) results were contrary to Ali's (2008). He investigated image of Pakistan in The Daily Telegraph and found that approximately 53% article framed Pakistan negatively, approximately 15 % positively and the rest presented Pakistan neutrally, making the ratio of negative portrayal the highest. In another study Ali (2012) studied the image framing of Muslim countries in News week and Time magazine and found an overall higher proportion of negative coverage as compared to positive or neutral coverage.

So it is concluded that a rich literature is available on the portrayal of countries in the foreign media. However the image of a country portrayed in a foreign media outlet at one point in time is not necessarily remain the same always. Sometimes the image of countries changes with the changing relations between countries and with their foreign policies. But it was observed that image of US presented by Pakistani media gets an unfavorable treatment in most of the cases.

Theoretical Framework

Cohen (1963) defined that mostly people get imitations of the states and their societies through the mass media. Merrill (1995) called that it's the media which create positive and negative images of the world in the people's mind. And media do these functions with the help of a very popular concept of media effects studies which is framing.

The idea of framing was first given by Goffman in 1974 (Baran & Davis, 2003). But many have contributed in refining this idea. According to one concept framing is "a dynamic, circumstantially-bound process of opinion formation in which the prevailing modes of presentation in elite rhetoric and news media coverage shape mass opinion" (Scheufele & Iyengar, 2012, p.1).

Basically framing is a process, "of organizing a news story, thematically, stylistically and factually, to convey a specific story line (Maslog, Lee & Kim, 2006, p.24). Sometimes media present the image of some countries positively and sometimes negatively by selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation (Entman, 1993).

After studying and analyzing the concept of framing it was concluded that it provides the best suitable line of research for the present study. So the theoretical foundation of "framing theory" was adopted to assess the image of US as presented by Pakistani media in the context of drone attacks.

Methodology

This study examines the editorials of Dawn and The Nation about the image framing of American regarding drone attacks. Quantitative content analysis was used to get awareness about the stance and coverage given by Pakistani English press to America and drone attacks. Universe of the study was editorials of Dawn and The Nation from March 2011 to March 2013 using the word, "drone" "pilot less air craft" and "unmanned aerial vehicles". It was a census study so no sampling technique is applied.

Content Categories

Image of a country can be measures through mass media in terms of diplomatic, economic historical, religious, military and political in manner, either positively or negatively (Hanan & Saleem, 2014). Fifteen categories for the purpose of examining the content related to the image of any country were identified by Schramm and Atwood (1981). Khan and Safdar (2010) identified ten categories to examine US image in Pakistani media.

However, according to the requirement of the present study ten modified categories were constructed including, war and terror, US and Pakistan relations, drone attacks, Raymond Deive, Salala attacks, NATO supply, international politics, domestic politics, economy and others.

Coding Unit

In the present study entire editorial will be considered as the contextual unit to identify the frames used for US and every single sentence will be the coding unit for identification of slant in the editorial.

Operational Definitions of Content Categories

Editorials published in Dawn and The Nation from March 2011 to March 2013 which will discuss war and terror, US and Pakistan relations, drone attacks, Raymond Devise, Salala attacks, NATO supply, international politics, domestic politics, and economy as the core topic will be considered as presenting that respective frame. However the category “others” do not represent any frame it shows that if some editorial is about US but do not discuss any of the identified categories then it will be placed in the category of “others”.

Operational Definitions of Slant

Favorable:

Sentences which reflect positive changes and progress in war on terror, national or worldwide politics, finances, peace campaign, signing contracts with other countries which leading to harmony and development, coded as favorable.

Unfavorable:

Sentences which mirrored disobedience in war on terror, unwillingness in peace encouraging activities, involvement in backing militant’s actions; normal accidents , financial, political, social conflict and clash was coded as unfavorable.

Neutral:

All those sentences which did not show favorable or unfavorable slant will be coded as neutral.

Results

The study has been conducted about the framing of American image regarding drone attacks in Pakistani English press. Dawn and The Nation from March 2011 to March 2013 were selected as a sample for this research work. 168 editorials were studied, 123 (73.2%) in The Nation and 45 (26.8) in Dawn. The researchers made comparative analysis of American image as portrayed in Daily Dawn and The Nation. The shift of slant by topic wise division is explained. Data shows that there are total 45 editorials published in Dawn, when examined, showed that 12(26.7%) editorials are favorable towards America, 28(62.2%) unfavorable and 5(11.1%) are neutral. In 45 editorials 559 sentence were written. In which 121(21.6%) sentences are positive towards America, 343(61.3%) negative and 95(17.1%) are neutral. (See Table 1)

Table 1:- Distribution of slant in Daily Dawn (March 2011 to March 2013)

Slant	Number of Editorials	Number of sentences
Favorable	12(26.7%)	121(21.6%)
Unfavorable	28(62.2%)	343(61.3%)
Neutral	5(11.1%)	95(17.1%)
Total	45(100%)	559(100%)

Table 2 shows division of slant in The Nation. The data shows that there are total 123 editorials published in which 5 (4%) editorials are favorable towards America, 112 (91%) unfavorable and 6 (5%) are neutral. In 123 editorials 1400 sentence were written. In which 74 (5.3%) sentences are positive towards America, 1155 (82.5%) negative and 171(12.2%) are neutral.

Table 2:- Distribution of slant in The Nation (March 2011 to March 2013)

Slant	Number of editorials	Number of Sentences
Favorable	5(4%)	74(5.3%)
Unfavorable	112(91%)	1155(82.5%)
Neutral	6(5%)	171(12.2%)
Total	123(100%)	1400(100%)

The comparative analysis of the figures in Table 3 shows significant difference between the portrayals of US image by two selected newspapers. Daily Dawn has used more 26.7% favorable slant about US image than The Nation 4%. While The Nation has used expressively more 91% unfavorable slant about US image as equated to Daily Dawn 62.2%.

Table No. 3 Comparative analysis of Dawn and The Nation about the distribute of slant (Number of Editorials wise)

Slant	Daily Dawn	The Nation
Favorable	12(26.7%)	5(4%)
Unfavorable	28(62.2%)	112(91%)
Neutral	5(11.1%)	6(5%)
Total	45(100%)	123(100%)

Table 4:- Category wise distribution of slant in Daily Dawn and The Nation (Sentence wise).

Categories	Dawn				The Nation			
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	N	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	N
War on terror	00	12	04	16	179	179	25	214
US PAK relations	46	94	35	175	199	199	40	264
Drone attacks	42	127	35	204	449	449	36	509
Raymond Davis	00	04	02	06	44	44	00	44
Salala attacks	00	11	03	14	45	45	02	47
Nato supply	01	17	03	21	56	56	09	65
International poli	10	19	02	31	56	56	15	73
Domestic politics	10	33	04	47	101	101	35	149
Economy	04	06	02	12	15	15	10	25
Other	08	20	05	33	11	11	00	11
Total	121	343	559	95	74	1155	171	1400

Table 4 describes the comparative analysis of American image in Dawn and The Nation category wise distribution. In first category, war on terror, Dawn presents 0 favorable, 12 unfavorable and neutral 4 out of 16 sentences while The Nation presents 10 favorable, 179 unfavorable and 25 neutral out of 214 sentences.

In second category, US and Pakistan relations, presents 46 favorable, 94 unfavorable and 35 neutral out of 175 sentences while The Nations presents 25 favourable, 199 unfavorable and 40 neutral out of 264 sentences.

In third category drone attacks, Dawn presents 42 favorable, 127 unfavorable and 35 neutral out of 204 sentences while The Nation presents 24 favorable, 449 unfavorable and 36 neutral out of 509 sentences. In forth category, Raymond Davis , Dawn presents 0 favorable,4 unfavorable and 2 neutral out of 6 sentences while The Nation presents 0 favourable,44 unfavorable and 0 neutral out of 44 sentences.

In fifth category Salala attack, Dawn presents 0 favorable, 11unfavourable and 3 neutral out of 14 sentences while The Nation presents 0 favorable, 45 unfavorable and 2 neutral out of 47 sentences. In sixth category, NATO supply, Dawn presents 1 favorable, 17 unfavorable and 3 neutral out of 21 sentences while The Nation presents 0 favorable, 56 unfavorable and 9 neutral out of 65 sentences.

In seventh category, international politics, Dawn presents 10 favorable, 19 unfavorable and 2 neutral out of 31 sentences while The Nation presents 2 favorable, 56 unfavorable and 15 neutral out of 73 sentences. In eighth category, Domestic politics, Dawn presents 10 favorable, 33 unfavorable and 4 neutral out of 47 sentences while The Nation presents 13 favorable, 101 unfavorable and 35 neutral out of 149 sentences.

In ninth category, Economy, Dawn presents 4 favorable, 6 unfavorable and 2 neutral out of 12 sentences while The Nation presents 0 favorable, 15 unfavorable and 10 neutral out of 20 sentences. And in the final category, Other, Dawn presents 8 favorable, 20 unfavorable and 5 neutral out of 33 sentences while The Nation presents 0 favorable, 11 unfavorable and 0 neutral out of 11 sentences.

Table 5:- Application of Z proportion test.

Sample	X	N	sample
1	121	559	0.216458
2	74	1400	0.052857

Difference = $p(1) - p(2)$ $Z = 10.9221$ $P\text{-value} = 0$
 Z test tells that Dawn favors US more as compared to The Nation.

Discussion

To measure American image in Pakistani press regarding drone attacks total 168 editorials were studied. Data shows that only 10% editorials' portray America as a friend, 83% editorials frame America as foe and 6% editorial have a neutral stance. While analyzing the distribution of slant in 1959 sentences it is found that only 9% sentences are favorable about America, 76% sentences frame America as foe and 13% sentences reflect a neutral approach.

The findings of the content analysis reveals that the image of US portrayed through the editorial content of Dawn and The Nation shows a slight difference. As 62.2% editorial and 61.3% sentences showed unfavorable, 26.7% editorial and 21.6% sentences showed favorable and 11.1% editorial and 17.1% sentences showed neutral slant towards US image in Daily Dawn. These findings support first hypothesis. The findings of the content analysis did not support the hypothesis H2 that the image of US will be portrayed more positively than negative or neutral through editorial content of The Nation, as 91% editorial and 82.5% sentences show unfavorable, 4% editorial and 5.3% sentences favorable and 5% editorials and 12.2% sentences showed neutral slant towards US image in The Nation.

Data reveals that The Nation is framing drone attacks more as violation of sovereignty then innocent civilians' casualties, while Dawn is framing drone attacks as a weapon of civilian killing. Both the newspapers are against the drone attacks of America which support the H3.

Findings support H4 that The Nation extremely criticized America on the issues of the war on terror, drone attacks and US Pakistan relations. The Nation adopted strict policy to deal with America and used very harsh tone while portraying all the issues related to America and drone attacks. While Dawn had moderate stance about American policies and did not use harsh tone in addressing the issues.

Dawn used soft stance on drone attacks. Dawn favored drone attacks as if they are done with the collaboration of Pakistan and to eliminate terrorists. While The Nation used harsh tone and opposed drone attacks. The Nation took it as violation of Pakistani territoriality and sovereignty. The Nation opposed drone attacks strongly.

Conclusion

Overall America is framed as unfavorable by Dawn and The Nation regarding drone attacks. The results show that Pakistani English press has portrayed American image negatively. Overall the Pakistani English press used highly unfavorable slant towards America particularly on the issues like war on terror, US-Pak relations and Drone attacks. It is also demanded by both the newspapers to stop these activities immediately. On the basis of the findings it is concluded that although Pakistani Government has claimed about friendly relations with America, Pakistani English press does not take it in the same way. Due to drone attacks on Pakistani territory, Pakistani English press takes it as violation of sovereignty of the state and killing of innocent people. So if America wants to establish her good image in Pakistan, she should stop drone attacks at once.

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