

**Portrayal of Pakistan's Foreign Policy towards Yemeni Crisis in Mainstream National Media:
A Comparative Analysis of the Daily Dawn and The News**

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Abstract:

This paper aims to examine Pakistan's foreign policy through the prism of its mainstream national media in a new paradigm shift regarding Yemeni crisis which shattered peace and security in the Middle East. Conflict in Yemen also affected the foreign policy of Pakistan which emphasizes a diplomatic solution to this crisis. By and large, Pakistan avoids being viewed as a direct party in the war against Houthi rebels in Yemen, despite Saudi Arabia's pressure to avert any potential and large-scale sectarian uprising and yet another wave of militancy. Pakistani media has given extensive coverage to the Yemeni crisis. This paper aims to study the nature of reporting in the national dailies of Pakistan on Yemen's situation. Editorial pages of Daily Dawn and The News were selected to examine various variables i.e. frequency, frame, slant, and placement of the editorials for 35 days starting from 27-03-2015 to 30-04-2015 through content analysis. This study unveils the nature of treatment and depiction of trends and policy in editorials of selected newspapers to project the image of Yemen in this crisis in the light of Framing Theory.

Keywords: Pakistan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Middle East, foreign policy, framing, print media

INTRODUCTION

In Yemen, the decade's long political and military crisis has turned into a bloody civil war. The country is passing through major turmoil after the President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi's legitimate government was overthrown by the Houthi rebels who are believed to be backed by Iran. In March 2015, Houthi militias captured Sana'a, the capital of Yemen, and moved towards the Gulf of Aden. In the meantime, the Saudi-led coalition, on 25th March 2015, through the Operation Decisive Storm, launched airstrikes against Houthis intending to reinstate the internationally recognized government of Yemen (Congressional Research Service, 2021).

Yemeni crisis is a test case for the new Saudi King Salman, following the death of his elder brother King Abdullah in January 2015. Peaceful political transition was derailed by violence in the country after a 2011 uprising in Yemen against President Abdullah Saleh. International terrorist groups like al-Qaeda found new ground to incarcerate volatile Yemen (Kendall, 2018). Meanwhile, the crisis led to the development of humanitarian calamity and hundreds of thousands of Yemenis fled the country (Reliefweb, 2021). There also emerged acute shortages of daily life goods that included medicines, food, water, and other essential life commodities. The country witnessed bloodshed and

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vast destruction of property. Sixteen million people are in urgent need of humanitarian support (UNSDG, 2021). Direct foreign interference by the Saudi-led Allied forces on one side and by the Iranian government on the other side escalated sectarian conflict as is being experienced in Iraq and Syria (Alaragawi, 2021). The chance to resume talks for peace is uncertain and several experts doubt whether Yemen, in near future, will again be able to be a unified and viable country or not.

Having rich and vast oil reservoirs and producer & supplier of petroleum products globally, Saudi Arabia has remained involved politically and militarily in Yemen affairs since its independence in 1932. Moreover, being an immediate neighbor, Saudi Arabia's ties with Yemen have remained a dominant and decisive factor as well as a consistent challenge for Sana's foreign policy. The Saudis' perception of their security needs is, that they should seek to influence Yemen as much as possible to prevent it from becoming a security threat for them (Hearing before the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 2015).

PAKISTAN-YEMEN RELATIONS

In the modern political arena, Pakistan attaches greater importance to trust-based, and strong bilateral relations with the Middle Eastern countries including Yemen, which brighten chances of more trade, investment, and remittances for Pakistan. In this perspective, Pakistan desires to further strengthen its bilateral cooperation with Yemen in different fields for the mutual benefit of both countries. In January 2014, at 7th Session of the Joint Ministerial Commission between Yemen and Pakistan in Islamabad, both countries agreed to further enhance collaboration in diverse fields including investment, economy, trade, gas, and oil. Both sides agreed to increase the trade volume. Pakistan invited the Yemeni investors to invest in gas, oil, and energy sectors (Daily Times, 2014).

In April 2006, Yemeni President Abdullah Saleh visited Pakistan. Both sides agreed to expand cooperation in various fields including defense, trade, culture, education, agriculture, economy, science & technology, security, and war against terror. They agreed to strengthen the OIC to effectively address issues being confronted by the Muslim Ummah. They also urged the international community to remove the misperception about Islam especially envisaged by the West and to promote the vision of peace and tolerance of Islam. Both sides inked five agreements to promote sports, media, quality control, youth affairs, and trade. It was also agreed upon that Pakistan would fulfill all demands of Yemeni Security Forces (Paktribune.com, 2006.)

PAKISTAN-SAUDI RELATIONS

Strong diplomatic relations and mutual trust provide opportunities for countries to enhance ties in various fields like direct foreign investment, commerce & trade and to strengthen cultural ties. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are enjoying closest bilateral ties and strategic partnership as the latter views the former as Custodian of the Holy Places of Islam. Both sides have witnessed widespread understanding over all matters of mutual benefits.

In 1932, King Abdullah Al-Saud established the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and later successfully turned the country from a desert nation to a dynamic modern welfare state. Presently, Saudi Arabia is one of the most influential players in Middle Eastern as well as international politics. Its socio-economic revolution and development are unmatched in the region. Saudi Arabia recognized the newly independent state of Pakistan in 1947. In 1951, a Friendship Treaty signed between Saudi

Arabia and Pakistan provided the base of collaboration that led to the beginning of a new era of friendship reflecting trust between the two states. Exchange of high-level delegations resulted in increased cooperation in diverse fields (CPGS, 2014: p. 4).

Since 1947, both Islamabad and Riyadh have had cordial ties which are based on mutual respect. Millions of Pakistanis are working in the Saudi Kingdom and sending remittances to their home country which volume to billions of US dollars. In the last few decades, Riyadh has got more importance in Pakistan's foreign policy. "Pakistan has long standing exemplary relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. With the passage of time, these relations are further strengthening through high level exchanges" (Sarjaz, 2014: p.10). Both nations expanded bilateral collaboration in the fields of education, tourism, trade, information technology, agriculture, communications, political, economic, religious, and security domains. Both countries exchanged high level delegations on several occasions. For the first time, King Saud visited Pakistan in 1954. King Faisal visited Pakistan in 1966 and 1974, King Khalid in 1976, and King Fahd as Crown Prince in 1980. King Abdullah visited Pakistan as Crown Prince in 1984, 1997, 1998, 2003, and as King in 2006. King Salman as Crown Prince visited Pakistan in 2014 (Khan, M.U.H. 2012).

Pakistan's Presidents and Premiers have also visited Saudi Arabia on regular basis since 1947. During the last few years, frequent visits have been paid from Pakistan to Riyadh. President Asif Ali Zardari paid a trip to Saudi Arabia in 2009 & 2011, whereas, Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani arrived in Kingdom in 2011 & 2012 respectively. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif made recurrent tours to Saudi Arabia every year during his tenure in 2013, 2014, 2015 & 2016. Prime Minister Imran Khan visited the KSA in 2018 and 2021. Pakistan's Army Chiefs General Pervez Kiyani, General Raheel Sharif, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, and other military top brass also officially visited Saudi Arabia to further strengthen defence cooperation between the two sides. These visits indicate the strength and pace of the closest partnership between the two countries as bilateral relations were buttressed over decades (Pakembassayksa.com, 2014).

Saudi Arabia provides financial assistance to Pakistan for the promotion of education and the construction of mosques and madrassas (religious schools). In this connection, KSA provided a grant of US\$10 million for the establishment of International Islamic University in Islamabad. Faisal Mosque Islamabad is named after King Faisal. In 1977, Lyallpur city was renamed as Faisalabad in honour of the Saudi King Faisal. King Abdullah was conferred with the highest civilian award of "Nishan-e-Pakistan" in 2006 (Pakembassayksa.com, 2014).

Riyadh always helped Pakistan in difficult situations like wars with India, Kashmir issue, coping with the Afghan refugees, and other natural disasters & calamities. In 1998, following nuclear tests, Pakistan was facing isolation as the US and West had imposed economic sanctions. After these sanctions, Saudi Arabia provided free of cost 50,000 barrels of oil per day to assist Pakistan to overcome its economic problems (Khan, M.U.H., 2012). On 17th February 2019, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman visited Pakistan. He signed investment deals with Pakistan worth \$20 billion including the establishment of an oil refinery in Gwadar (The News, 2019, 18th February). Earlier, Saudi Arabia also announced US \$6 billion bailout package for Pakistan's ailing economy including US \$3billion balance of payments support and US \$3billion in deferred payments on oil imports (Dawn, Islamabad, 2018).

Huge numbers of Pakistani citizens are working in different trades in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They are a great asset to the oil-rich Kingdom (CPGS, 2014, p. 4). In March 2014, KSA provided 1.5 billion US dollars to Pakistan and similarly, Riyadh provided soft loans. In 2009, a US \$100 million credit was provided to import fertilizers. In addition, during the visit of Crown Prince Salman bin Abdul Aziz in February 2014 to Pakistan, both sides agreed to provide soft loans to Islamabad (Khushboo & Faisal 2016). Saudi Arabia also agreed to give US \$3 billion loans to Pakistan when Prime Minister Imran Khan visited Riyadh in 2018. It also agreed to provide loans up to 3 billion US \$ in deferred payments for oil imports to support Islamabad to ease its current accounts crisis (The News, Islamabad, 2018).

Pakistan has always reciprocated Saudi Arabia's generous cooperation in a befitting manner. Both sides established military ties after Pakistan's independence in 1947. Pakistan provided arms and training to the Saudi security forces. On Pakistan's behalf, it deployed troops in 1969, 1970, and 1980 to protect the Holy Sites at the request of Saudi Arabia. During Gulf War 1990-91, Pakistan also deployed troops in Saudi Arabia. Pakistan's major exports to the Kingdom are fiber materials, yarn, fresh cotton, rice, clothes, computer ups, woolens (hosiery), couch linen, dish towels, mangoes, silk, art images, artificial fabrics, leather garments, flooring, rugs, furniture equipment, footwear, sports goods, medical goods, fruits, fish, vegetables, flavours, spices, crusts, juices etc. On the other hand, Pakistan's key import from Saudi Arabia is oil products (CPGS, 2014: p. 4).

PAKISTAN'S POLICY TOWARDS YEMEN CRISIS

The demand of Saudi King Salman urging Pakistan to become a part of Operation Decisive Storm, the Saudi-led military action against the Houthi rebels in Yemen was a critical juncture in Islamabad-Riyadh relations. It took place in such a time when Pakistan was busy in very serious reconsiderations to balance its foreign policy in the post-9/11 scenario and after having faced serious consequences in the shape of wide-spread militancy inside the country costing around 80 thousand casualties and economic loss of more than the US \$100 billion as a consequent of having remained a frontline state and ally of the USA in war on terror in Afghanistan (Yousuf, 2016). Another consideration before Pakistan was to avoid any potential and massive level Sunni-Shia schism and yet another wave of sectarian militancy. Pakistan's foreign policy witnessed a change when it was decided not to involve in a direct conflict against Houthis through the deployment of its troops in Yemen and it was urged that the conflict should be resolved through political means. The public opinion in Pakistan was against any direct involvement in foreign conflicts as Pakistan had been facing several internal as well as external challenges and could not afford to be involved in yet another conflict beyond its borders (Iqbal, K., 2015).

Saudi Arabia has immense influence inside Pakistan that manipulates public spheres. Hence, the kingdom believes that it has the privilege and an important place in influencing the foreign policy of Pakistan. Against this backdrop, Imam-e-Kaba Sheikh Khalid-al-Ghamidi's visit to Pakistan in April 2015 was an important step to gain the sympathies of ordinary Muslims in favor of Saudi Arabia. The imam held meetings with religious and political figures to defuse tensions between the two states that had emerged after the cold response of Pakistan to Riyadh's request to deploy forces in Yemen in the aftermath of the resolution adopted by Pakistani Parliament vehemently opposing troops' deployment in foreign conflicts (The Express Tribune, 2015).

In the meantime, Pakistan launched diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis peacefully. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited Ankara on 3rd April 2015 and held a meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu. They agreed to extend all possible support to Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. They urged to address this conflict peacefully to bring lasting stability to the region (The Tribune, 2015). Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited Iran on 7th April 2015 and had a comprehensive discussion over Yemen's issue. Iranian President Hasan Rouhani said, "we had common points; we have to witness the end of war and bloodshed in Yemen as soon as possible". He called for an end to the Saudi coalition airstrikes against Yemen. He urged Gulf States to fight against terrorism and extremism together in the region (The Times of Israel, 2015).

The Turkish President emphasized a concrete regional move to end conflicts in Iraq, Yemen, and Syria. Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif arrived in Pakistan on 8th April 2015 and held meetings with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif, and Prime Minister's Advisor on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz. Both sides discussed the Yemen crisis and called for peace talks to resolve the conflict. Javad Zarif stated that Tehran is ready to facilitate the peace process for a broad-based government in Yemen. He called for a ceasefire to provide a safe passage to stranded people. Pakistan and Iran agreed to work together to find a political solution to Yemen's unrest (The Nation, 2015).

In the meantime, Pakistan's Parliament unanimously passed a resolution to remain neutral in the war against Houthis. The resolution urged the government to adopt a strategy to resolve the Yemen crisis through diplomatic means. In a Special Joint Session of the Parliament, it was decided to back the government's strategy to protect Saudi Arabia's territorial integrity and sovereignty. It was pledged that Pakistan must play a mediating role. Most of the lawmakers during the five days debate, emphasized the government not to be a part of the war against Houthis (The Tribune, 2015). In a reaction to the Parliament resolution, UAE State Foreign Affairs Minister Dr. Anwar Mohammad Gargash warned Pakistan of heavy price for ambiguous stand regarding Yemen crisis. He urged Pakistan to show its clear strategy in favour of its strategic relationship with Gulf countries (The Khaleej Times, 2015).

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif reaffirmed Islamabad's stance to resolve Yemen crisis through political negotiations. In a key statement, the Prime Minister reiterated that any threat to Saudi Arabia's territorial integrity will evoke a strong reaction from Pakistan. Pakistan will continue to pursue the policy of friendly relations with the Gulf Countries (Geo.tv 13-04-2015). The parliamentary resolution aggravated harsh reaction across the GCC and Nawaz Sharif personally reiterated and reassured the Arab World that Islamabad continues to stand by their side at any critical juncture. On 23rd April 2015, Nawaz Sharif along with Army Chief General Raheel Sharif and a high-level delegation visited Riyadh and held a meeting with King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz. They expressed solidarity with Riyadh after the Pakistani parliament passed a resolution refusing to send forces to join the Saudi-led coalition. Pakistan also pledged the King to extend every possible help for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Saudi Arabia. Pakistan also pledged that measures had been taken to implement the resolution of United Nations Security Council on Yemen (Dawn, 2015). On 14th April 2015, United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 2216 (2015) demanding an end to Yemeni violence. It also demanded Houthis to withdraw from all areas seized during the latest conflict, relinquish arms seized from military and security institutions, cease all

actions falling exclusively within the authority of the legitimate government of Yemen, and fully implement previous Council resolution (United Nations, 2015).

Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt and Indonesia remained very active to resolve the Yemen crisis peacefully. They tried to find a way forward that would be acceptable to all stakeholders. Pakistan faced a very tough challenge to have had balanced ties with Saudi Arabia and Iran. Yemen's unrest created difficulties for Pakistan and its policymakers to maintain balance in its relations with Saudi Arabia and Iran. On one side, there was a friend like Saudi Arabia, the Custodian of the Holy Places, to which Pakistan owes deep allegiance and high devotion, while on the other hand, there stood a friend and a neighbor like Iran wherewith Islamabad had signed a gas pipeline project worth billions of dollars which is considered as an energy lifeline for Pakistan (Khanyari, A., 2014).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scheufele (1999) observed that at the present day, media effects are considered and categorized as a social constructionist approach (p. 103). Supporting the same idea (McQuail, 1994, p. 331) noted that mass media constructs social reality by framing images of reality in a predicable and patterned way. According to (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987) media discourse is part of a process by which individuals draw meaning and make their public opinion, while journalists play a vital role to develop meanings in the public discourse. A wide range of literature exists to portray the role of media in the domain of "framing". Existing research work on media framing covers an extensive range of topics that exhibits different conceptual approaches. Ali, Jan, & Saleem (2013), Saleem, N, (2011) and Yusof, Hassan, F., Hassan, S., & Osman, (2013) suggested that media is considered to be an objective and reliable source to portray a fair picture of issues happening around the world. Media also filters, shapes and then frames the issues according to its agenda (Yusof et al. 2013). It was also argued that by giving a little attention, or through biased approach, the US media specifically portrayed the image of developing countries with pessimist content (Ali et al. 2013). Media framing research suggests that the US media coverage of foreign countries mostly serves the national interests of their own country (Saleem, N, 2011). Apart from US media, Steuter & Wills, (2009) examines that Canadian media constructed and framed the image of Iraq and Afghanistan as an enemy with certain agenda framing. Several studies have found literature on media framing of the War on Terror. On the other hand, result of several studies showed that Pakistani media, specifically the print media framed the War on Terror and the issue of drone attacks in an unfavorable way which support the national interests of Pakistan and popular opinion (Ahmad, Mahsud, & Isshtiaq: 2011).

Ayoub & Ahmed (2013) reviewed two newspapers i.e. The Nation and Dawn to examine the portrayal of Pakistan-USA relationship concerning drone strikes in Waziristan. Results revealed that due to the double standard of the US in its diplomatic policy, the Pakistani press portrayed the Pak-US bilateral relationship negatively. So far as the international media is concerned, it has its agenda on framing Islam and Islamic states. Yusof, H. S., Hassan, F, Hassan, S, & Osman, N. M (2013) researched framing of international media on Islam and terrorism. Their findings concluded that international media outlets branded Islam with terrorism even after the death of Osama Bin Laden. Islam as a religion was linked with terrorism and also framed in a negative and biased way. The rise of Islamophobia in the West is the extended shape of the negative portrayal of Islam and the Muslims (Siddiqa & Sultan, 2019). Paracha (2012) observed that even though Pakistan remained

the US ally in War on Terror, but Pakistan's elite press framed the issue of war on terror unfavorably. Saleem (2014) also found that the Pakistani press was critical towards the US drone attacks policy in Pakistan's tribal area. However, the tone of newspapers varied as per their organization's policy. Dawn supported US policy to offer USAID to Pakistan. The News argued that media and foreign policy relationship is issue specific, but this does not necessarily mean that framing is always influenced by the objectives of country's foreign policy. Whereas, Siraj (2006) stated that foreign policy influences the way the media frame the content. He explored the image of Pakistan in US media's news framing. The study analyzed the news stories of The Washington Post and The New York Times and concluded that US media frame the countries, according to the national interest and foreign policy of America.

Research Questions: The study focused on the following questions: To what extent Islamabad distanced itself from Yemen conflict? How much editorial space was given to Yemen unrest by "The News" and "Dawn" Islamabad from 27-03-2015 to 31-04-2015? How did the selected newspapers treat the Yemeni issue in the context of, "whether Pakistan should join the Saudi-led coalition or not"?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The studies of mass media effects on decision making procedures started in 1990s after the increased involvement of UN peacekeeping forces in multifaceted situations in different parts of the world. Mass media emerged as the "Fourth Estate Pillar" into the policy framing in the changing international scenario. Under the information technological advancement, the first-ever theory was born in support of the impact of television news worldwide.

Framing Theory

Framing means "how to portray an event in a particular story, article, feature and editorial". This theory deals with how information is organized, constructed, and presented. Media is always gaining the audience's attention through certain aspects of an issue and then meticulously paints those aspects. Frames are principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters. According to Gitlin (1980) and Entman (1993), the framing technique is used in agenda-setting where a certain portion of an issue is selected and then its features are highlighted by the media in such a way to promote a particular aspect of it. Through this way, the audience's attention towards a specific point is achieved by the mass media.

The term "framing" is considered as an important element in mass media studies. Framing theory has a significant impact on readers and the audience. It promotes media attention to certain issues and puts them within the specific meaning. This theory also has a significant role in the theory of agenda setting. However, the majority of researchers stressed that "the agenda setting do not quote Ervin Goffman, who is considered as the father of this theory." Goffman (1991) defines framing as a cognitive structure that unconsciously leads the individual to what is to be noticed and what defines that situation for that individual. According to Lippmann (1921), media can portray a picture of various issues but most of the time this image is flawed. He states that media depicts mostly only few pictures of truth instead of reality itself. So these reflections shape the perception of the audience. Shaw and Comb, (1972) endorse agenda setting concept of Lippmann arguing that

audience's opinion about the world is motivated by the way the news media portrays the event to them. They investigated that whether people's perception about the issues is dependent on the topics the mass media covers or not, and revealed that setting of the agenda by the media is an ever-changing or dynamic process, in which changes in media coverage lead to or cause subsequent changes in problem awareness of the issues. This is a crucial function of the agenda-setting theory as it does not only present an issue to think about but tells different ways to the audience to perceive that (Lang & Lang, 1981).

Bernard Cohen (1983) revealed that the press may not be successful in telling people what to think, but it is successful in telling its readers what to think about. The researchers viewed that if media provides more space to an issue, then the audience gives value to that story and is more informed about that.

What is an Editorial?

Editorial in any newspaper enjoys a central place that mostly attracts sober readers. Editorial gives views of the publisher or editor over a hot and burning issue. Editorial is being considered as the voice of a newspaper. Colonel (Rtd.) Robert W. MacCormik, owner and publisher of *the Chicago Tribune (USA)* explains a newspaper as an entity and not a limb of a greater organization. According to him, an editorial is the product of an organization rather than the work of an individual (Shabir, 2014: p 45).

METHODOLOGY

Content analysis method has been used to address the research questions in the study. This method is regularly being used in mass media. M.H. Walizer and Paul L. Wiemer (1978) as cited in Gunter (2000) explained content methodology as a systematic procedure devised to examine the content of recorded information. Krippendorff (1980) defined it as a research technique for making replicable and valid references from available data to their context (Javed, 2014, p. 3). The content procedure has been applied to analyze the dailies "Dawn" and "The News" which have been preferred as icons for the study. This research covers the period from 27-03-2015 to 30-04-2015 which marked a peak time in Yemeni crisis. On 26th March 2015, the Saudi-led coalition launched airstrikes against Houthis. Saudi Arabia demanded Pakistan to join the coalition in the war. Therefore, this time frame was crucial for Pakistan's foreign policymakers. This research is confined to editorials of the selected English newspapers. The study aims to examine the content of print media that is it favoured or opposed Pakistan to join the Saudi-led coalition.

All editorials printed in dailies, The News and Dawn from 27-03-2015 to 30-04-2015, are the population of the research. Editorials printed about Pakistan's foreign policy on Yemen's crisis in The News and Dawn from 27-03-2015 to 30-04-2015 were taken as purposive sampling. Sentences, paragraphs and words of the entire editorials were units of analysis. The study examined editorials of selected dailies from 27-03-2015 to 31-04-2015. Analysis of Category was "Pakistan's foreign policy on Yemen conflict". All editorials related to Yemen were taken into consideration. Three directions were selected.

- a. **Positive and Favorable:** Editorials having favorable stance about the foreign policy of Pakistan regarding Yemen crisis i.e. suggesting Pakistan join coalition forces or arguing in favour of it.

- b. **Unfavorable:** Editorials of both newspapers depicting a negative stance on this issue i.e. suggesting Pakistan not join coalition forces or giving arguments against any such decision.
- c. **Mixed and Neutral:** All editorials having mixed or neutral stance about Pakistan's strategy on the Yemen crisis.

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of data revealed that the Pakistani print media provided considerable coverage to the Yemeni crisis. Newspapers gave substantial space to unrest in Yemen with a variety of news genres on daily basis. The majority of dailies highlighted the Saudi request to Pakistan to join the coalition war against Houthis. Number of news items, editorials, articles, and interviews, were published on the issue. The editorials from 27-03-2015 to 30-04-2015 of Dawn and The News were thoroughly studied on the Yemen issue. Tables 1 and 2 explain the study's findings.

Table 1: Daily The News Editorials Coverage of the Yemen Crisis

Sr. No.	Dated	Editorials Number	Slant			Total Words
			Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	
1.	28-03-2015	1	-	1	-	454
2.	29-03-2015	1	-	-	1	387
3.	31-03-2015	1	-	1	-	538
4.	02-04-2015	1	-	1	-	503
5.	08-04-2015	1	-	1	-	464
6.	11-04-2015	1	-	1	-	449
7.	13-04-2015	1	-	-	1	477
8.	14-04-2015	1	-	1	-	465
9.	16-04-2015	1	-	-	1	425
10.	18-04-2015	1	1	-	-	439
11.	23-04-2015	1	1	-	-	461
12.	26-04-2015	1	1	-	-	398
Total		12	03	06	03	9760

Table 1.2: Daily Dawn Editorials Coverage of the Yemen Crisis

Sr. No.	Date	Number of Editorials	Slant			Total Words
			Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	
1.	27-03-2015	1	-	1	-	424
2.	30-03-2015	1	-	1	-	509
3.	01-4-2015	1	-	1	-	430
4.	03-4-2015	1	-	1	-	495
5.	08-4-2015	1	-	1	-	513
6.	09-4-2015	1	1	-	-	346
7.	10-4-2015	1	1	-	-	502
8.	11-4-2015	1	-	1	-	496
9.	13-4-2015	1	-	1	-	556
10.	15-4-2015	1	-	1	-	511

11.	23-4-2015	1	-	1	-	428
12.	35-4-2015	1	-	-	1	437
13.	30-4-2015	1	-	-	1	412
Total		13	02	09	02	6059

Frequency of Editorials Regarding Pakistan’s Policy to Join or Not the War against Houthis

Table 1 shows that during 35-day study period, 12 editorials were printed by daily The News on Yemen unrest. These editorials were focused on the Yemen issue and discussed Pakistan’s policy towards the crisis. Saudi Arabia’s request for Pakistan to support and join the war against Houthis has been highlighted in detail. The News donated 9760 words to Yemen crisis that whether Pakistan had to join the war or not?

Table 1.2 shows 13 editorials published by Dawn. Daily Dawn on its editorials pages provided space to 6059 words. The paper widely presented its stance and highlighted various aspects of the situation faced by the government of Pakistan. Dawn termed the Yemeni conflict as a milestone for Pak-Saudi Arabia relations. The agenda-setting could be well judged in these two dailies. A different coverage approach was adopted by both newspapers. The Dawn printed 13 editorials while daily The News published 12. Daily The News contributed 9760 words while Dawn printed 6059 words about the crisis in Yemen. This considerable coverage to the Yemeni issue by the two newspapers provided an answer to Research Question-2 inquiring how much editorial space was given to the Yemeni issue by these dailies from 27-03-2015 to 31-04-2015.

Comparison of the News and Dawn about Pakistan’s Policy towards the Yemen Issue

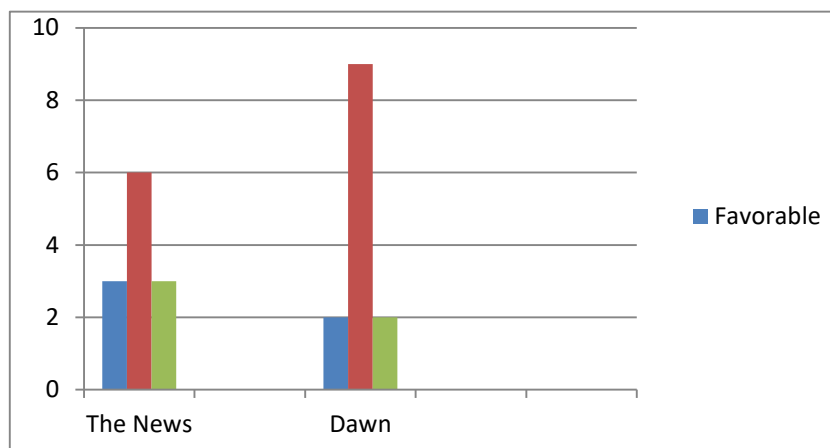


Figure 1.1 Frequency comparative analysis of The News and Dawn about Pakistan policy towards Yemen issue

Figure 1.1 shows that daily Dawn published 13 editorials, while The News donated 12 stories. Dawn provided space to 9 unfavorable editorials as compared to 6 editorials of The News. *The News* is regarded as a political organ while *Dawn* is treated as an ideological daily in the country. Both newspapers adopted a different approach towards the Yemen unrest. Figure 1.1 elaborates The News published 6 editorials unfavorable to Saudi Arabia’s request. It printed 3 favorable editorials. Interestingly, these favorable editorials were based on the analysis regarding UN Security Council’s

Resolution where an arms embargo was put on Houthi rebels and they were asked to relinquish the seized territory. The other one was on Pakistan Parliament's Resolution to remain neutral. The third editorial lauded Pakistan's step to evacuate stranded Pakistanis in Yemen. The paper provided space for 3 neutral editorials.

Daily Dawn published 13 editorials over the Yemen crisis and allotted 9 editorials as unfavorable to the Saudi request. Only 2 editorials were favorable and 2 neutral towards the issue. It is pertinent to mention here that the paper in favorable editorials lauded the pulling out of 36 foreigners including 11 Indians from Yemen by the Pakistan Navy Ship. However, in one editorial, the daily hailed Pakistan's government peacemaking efforts to resolve the crisis.

Slant in Editorials Whether Pakistan to Join or not the Saudi-Led Coalition War

Figure 1.2 explains that The News Published 50 % editorials against/unfavorable to Saudi request. Interestingly the paper donated 25 % editorials as favorable but not to the Saudi request. In these favorable editorials, the paper highlighted the efforts to resolve the issue amicably. The daily published three neutral editorials during the study period. However, the paper did not publish a single favorable story to the Saudi request. Daily Dawn published 69.20 % editorials against Saudi request, while it provided space to 15 % favorable editorials but it did not favor that Pakistan should join the coalition war. The paper contributed 15.50 % of neutral editorials on the Yemen crisis. It did not provide any space to even a single story that favored Saudi's request.

Analysis shows that both newspapers published the majority of editorials as unfavourable i.e. against the Saudi's demand from Pakistan to join the alliance. It provided the answer to Research Question-1 exploring to what extent Islamabad distanced itself from the Yemen conflict. Pakistan succeeded up to the maximum extent to stay away from the conflict in Yemen. Moreover, both the newspapers did not publish even a single story in favour of the Saudi's request urging Pakistan to join the coalition forces in the war against the Houthi rebels in Yemen. Thus the selected newspapers treated the Yemeni issue in the context that Pakistan should not join the Saudi-led coalition against the Yemeni rebels. It provided the answer to Research Question-3.

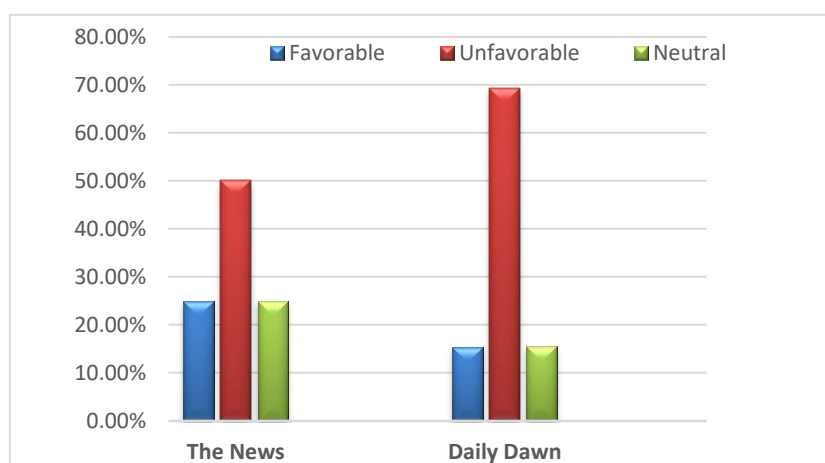


Figure 1.2 Slant in Editorials whether Pakistan to join or not the Saudi-led coalition war

Favorable editorials mainly pertained to the peace efforts of UN, Pakistan, Turkey, and Iran to resolve the Yemen issue. The paper hailed Pakistan's steps to evacuate stranded citizens including foreigners from Yemen.

CONCLUSION

Vividly, both the dailies paid massive coverage to Yemen crisis with huge space to editorials regarding this issue which answers second Research Question. Obviously, both newspapers did not support Saudi's request for Pakistan to join the coalition forces in the war against Houthis. All editorials had a reflection that Pakistan cannot afford to open another catastrophic door of direct involvement in any war, as it had provided to the US against USSR invasion in Afghanistan in 1980's and against the Taliban after 9/11. The newspapers did not publish a single editorial in favour of Saudi request. Both the newspapers framed the issue of the Yemen crisis in the opposite manner, which provides an answer to Research Question No-3 of the study. Both newspapers treated the Yemeni issue in the context that Pakistan should, by every possible means, avoid joining the Saudi-led coalition against the Houthi rebels in Yemen.

The study found that both newspapers supported Pakistan's policy to remain neutral and to resolve this issue peacefully. It hailed Pakistan Parliament's Resolution to remain neutral and only come forward to Saudi's defense if that country's territorial integrity and sovereignty were threatened by either means. These findings provided an answer to the first Research Question in the study enquiring as to what extent Islamabad distanced itself from the Yemeni conflict. The favorable editorials were published regarding peace efforts of different states including UN to resolve the crisis. It also contributed negative sentiments among masses against joining the war that if Pakistan joins the war, it will create more uncertainty and law & order situation inside the country as it had faced during war against terror and in terms of heightened Sunni-Shia sectarian rift in Pakistani society. Newspapers urged Pakistan to exercise skillful diplomacy to come out of this crisis, build national consensus on Yemen's policy and suggested Pakistan to continue its diplomatic role for a peaceful solution to the crisis. Thus in light of the findings of the study, it was concluded that the content of the editorials did not support the demand of "Saudi Arabia from Pakistan to join the coalition" forces against in war on Houthis.

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