

PORTRAYAL OF PAKISTAN-USA RELATIONSHIP WITH REFERENCE TO DRONE STRIKES ON WAZIRISTAN IN THE EDITORIALS OF DAWN AND NATION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The aim of present research study was to comparatively examine the portrayal of Pakistan-USA relationship with reference to drone strikes in Pakistani territory, Waziristan, presented in two elite English newspapers, Dawn and Nation during the period of January 2013 to June 2013. Regarding that, two research questions were frame; 1) How much coverage was given to Pak-US relationship with reference to Drone Strikes by Pakistani press (The Dawn and The Nation)?; 2) What kind of stance (positive, negative, neutral) Pakistani press (The Dawn and the Nation) show towards Pak-US relationship with reference to Drone Strikes?. For this purpose, total 22 editorials, 5 from Dawn and 17 from Nation, published between January 2013 and June 2013 covering Pakistan-USA relation in the context of drone strikes, were thoroughly reviewed. Having statistically analyzed the information, it is deduced that there is a significant difference in the amount of coverage given by Dawn and Nation with reference to Pakistan-USA relation and drone strikes. Furthermore, Nation has shown more negative but less neutral or mixed stance towards Pakistan-USA relationship with reference to drone strikes in Waziristan than Dawn. However, both Dawn and Nation have not portrayed Pakistan-USA relationship as positive with reference to drone strikes.

Keywords: Portrayal, Pakistan-USA relationship, drones, waziristan, the Dawn, the Nation

INTRODUCTION

Today, the relationship between Pakistan and United States is paradoxical. This relation has not appeared as vital for both Pakistan and United States so far. There is mutual mistrust and suspicion in Pak-US ties (Lodhi, 2009). Besides that, both Pakistan and United States seem to understand the crucial importance of each other towards the achieving the goal of national interests. This has formed the perception at official and public levels that Pakistan-USA relationship is not a consistent and reliable relation rather a transactional one. In spite of sharing common goals and objectives, relation between Pakistan and United States depicts mutual frustration and trust gap.

Regarding war on terror, Pakistan has emerged as most significant partner of United States in 2001. Both Pakistan and America have done collaborative work to counter Al-Qaeda and Taliban in the region of Southeast Asia. This war has resulted in various dire consequences for entire region, especially for Pakistan. Drone attack in Waziristan is one of the dire consequences of war fought against Taliban and Al-Qaeda. These strikes on populated area led casualties related to human being, property and agriculture. As a result, Pakistan's internal security was intensely threatened. Government decision regarding war on terror and specifically drone strikes inside Pakistan has generated many controversies among public.

Anger and annoyance was also observed among Pakistani people regarding the drone strikes in tribal areas.

Resentment towards Pakistani government and Pakistan-USA relationship with regards to drone strikes in Waziristan has been highlighted by Pakistani media. Media plays a cardinal role in the clarification of certain issues and reformation of people's perception related to other people, culture and countries. Mass media also forms the person's perception of different countries and events as well (Soderlund, 2003). In this regard, framing theory is followed by media scholars (Gitlin, 1980). Newspapers, too, work on the same patterns. Editorials of newspaper are the representation of editor's point of view with regards to a particular issue (Weiss, 1988). Editorials of English newspapers (Dawn and Nation) are widely circulated and reliable enough to be used as research content.

According to Saleem (2000), positive image of United States in Pakistan is framed under the positive and favorable atmosphere, whereas negative image of United States is framed under the negative and unfavorable atmosphere by newspapers. Drone strikes in Waziristan led the negative atmosphere for Pakistani press and public. Under such atmosphere Pakistani press, certainly, views the Pakistan-US relationship differently leading the formation of public opinion regarding this relation as well. Over the issue of drones, Pakistan-USA relationship is on the brink of frustration and mistrust. The present study will highlight the sensitivity of drone strikes and its impact on Pak-US relation by comparing the editorials of two leading newspapers, Dawn and Nation published during January 2013 to June 2013. Following research questions have been formulated in this regard:

1. How much coverage was given to Pak-US relationship with reference to Drone Strikes by Pakistani press (The Dawn and The Nation)?
2. What kind of stance (positive, negative, neutral) Pakistani press (The Dawn and the Nation) show towards Pak-US relationship with reference to Drone Strikes?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pakistan-USA Relationship

The world politics scenario got changed with the 11 September attack on United States of America. Putting all blame on the Al-Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Ladin, America decided to take revenge from people responsible for 9/11 offense. Thus, a global war was instigated in the name of war on terror by attacking on Afghanistan. Though, Pakistan was not in favor of any country but it had to be part of US ally during war against terrorism. United States government still demands Pakistan to do more for eradicating Al-Qaeda network and Taliban (Sohrab, 2012). American policy, for last ten years, is solely working for its own security and interest at the cost of Pakistan national interests. Therefore, Pakistan-USA relationship seems to be rocky relationship depicting disturbance owing to serious challenges Pakistan came across (Mohmand, 2012).

Media of both countries have framed the image of Pakistan-USA relationship as their own accord. According to Siraj (2006), Pakistan-USA relationship was given favorable coverage after 9/11 incident and unfavorable coverage before 9/11 by American newspapers, New York Times and Washington Post. Moreover, Pakistan was portrayed as foe of America before 9/11, whereas was portrayed as friend post 9/11 attack. The bilateral relation between Pakistan and United States has seen many storm but it, somehow, it always survived. Both countries are needy for each other support and cooperation. It is essential to make amendments in approaches both countries have adopted. Pakistani people are eager to revisit the Pakistan-USA relationship. To be friend or foe of Pakistan at the same time is impossible

for America (Iqbal, 2011). Both Pakistan and America are in problem now. The conflict is associated with territorial sovereignty and America should accept in order to find alternative ways for making Afghanistan, a land of peace (Beg, 2011). Pakistan and United States have become co-dependent in relation to war against terrorism (Nawaz, 2011).

In an empirical study, it was found that Dawn has framed negative image of America post 9/11. America was framed as foe in about 64% editorials and was framed as neutral in 24.2% editorials of Dawn newspaper (Khan & Safdar, 2010). Pakistani press appeared not to be supporting government of United States and its foreign policy. Dawn newspaper has given less favorable coverage to Pakistan-USA relationship during 2008 to 2012. Approximately, 68.08% coverage was depicting unfavorable stance for Pakistan-USA relationship (Yousaf & Ali, 2012). It is revealed that Pakistani media has minimum soft corner for United States as a result of perceived negativism from American media after the horrifying incident of 9/11 (Khan, 2008).

A comparative study between newspapers of Pakistan (Dawn) and America (Washington Post) has shown that both newspapers depicted lack of satisfaction in the context of issues associated with Pakistan-USA relationship and their country's foreign policy towards each other. Dawn newspaper has shown more negative stance to Pakistan-USA relationship as compare to Washington Post (Sultan, 2013). Another study also demonstrates that both Dawn and Nation showed highly critical and unfavorable attitude for American policy with regards to Pakistan-USA relationship. However, negative image of Pak-US relations was prominent in both newspapers (Saleem, 2008). Critical attitude was also shown by Pakistan Times and Dawn for America (Saleem, 2010). But when United States of America showed care for Pakistan and its national interests, the newspapers (Dawn, News and Nation) have portrayed Pakistan-USA relationship as positive (Mahmood & Ahmed, 2013).

Drones Strikes in Waziristan

Drones are also known as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) which are regulated by ground pilots. These are autonomous flying machines work following preprogrammed mission. There are two main categories of drones. One is related to reconnaissance, surveillance and intelligence purposes and another is related to launching missiles and bombs. Drones were used first in Vietnam War and after 9/11 the demand of drones was increased. Pertaining to drone strikes in Pakistan, United States has declared it a counter insurgency operations in war against terrorism.

These attacks have been claimed to target the high profile militants belonging to Al-Qaeda and Haqaani network. But it has not been clarified by media and American government that how much harm it has brought to civilians, animals and agriculture fields besides targeting terrorists in Waziristan. United States of America has been using it in the name of self-defense. War on terror that instigated the drone strikes in the tribal areas of Pakistan is one of those significant factors that have put profound impact on the portrayal of Pakistan-USA relationship. In The Nation, newspaper of Pakistan, Jerral (2013) writes that "After keeping mum for the last nine years, the United Nations has broken its silence on the subject of killings in the Pakistani tribal areas by the US drones. It calls these attacks "violation" of Pakistan's sovereignty and classifies killings a breach of human rights.

Pew Global Attitude Survey (2012) has revealed that drone strikes by America in the Pakistani territory are quit unpopular and unfavorable. Virtually, 97% deemed drone strikes as bad , among them 69% put all responsibilities only America only, whereas 18% believed that drone strikes were being carried out with coordination of both Pakistan and United States. In the same survey, about 94% deemed drone strikes as the cause of death of innocent

civilians and 74% did not favor drone strikes as necessary to defeat the extremist organizations. However, overall opinion, to some extent, was divided over the issue that either drone strikes were carried out with the approval or disapproval of Pakistani government. Owing to drone and other issues, United States was perceived by 74% as enemy of Pakistan and this image of United States has grown rapidly and in the year of 2012, it was on peak. About 58% Pakistani has reported that there is no improvement in bilateral relation between Pakistan and United States of America.

METHODOLOGY

This is a comparative study and editorials of two elite English newspapers, Dawn and Nation, portraying the Pakistan-USA relationship pertaining to drone strikes were reviewed. Editorials of both newspapers were compared in terms of coverage given to Pak-US relation with reference to drone strikes and as well as stance both newspaper were having towards Pak-US relationship during the period of six months (from January 2013 to June 2013). In this regard, the technique of content analysis (Sarantakos, 1998) was used to compare the editorials of both newspapers. The content analysis was done in the following ways.

Universe

Universe of the present study comprised of all editorials published regularly in The Dawn and The Nation newspapers during the period of January 2013 to June 2013 with regards to drone strikes and Pak-US relation.

Sampling

Sampling of the present study is actually the Universe of the present study that comprised of selected editorials of two elite newspapers, The Dawn and The Nation, with reference to the Pak-US relations during initial six months of 2013.

Unit of Analysis

Unit of analysis in the present study was focused on the words, sentence, and paragraph of editorials and entire editorials as well.

Time Period

The time period for the selection of editorials was six months (from January 2013 to June 2013) for examining the editorials of both newspapers, The Dawn and The Nation, in the present study.

Category of Analysis

The category of analysis, in the present study, was drone strikes. All editorials related to Drone issue either published in Dawn or Nation were taken into account as category of analysis.

Direction of Contents

Three directions were selected to analyze the content of editorials of both newspapers.

Favorable (+)

Editorials of both newspapers depicting positive stance towards Pakistan-USA relationship in the context of drone strikes

Unfavorable (-)

Editorials of both newspapers depicting negative stance towards Pakistan-USA relationship in the context of drone strikes

Neutral/Mixed (0)

Editorials of both newspapers depicting neutral or mixed stance towards Pakistan-USA relationship in the context of drone strikes

Total twenty two (N = 22) editorials were selected from two Pakistani English newspapers, The Dawn and The Nation, published during January 2013 to June 2013. Among twenty two editorials, five (N= 5) were taken from Dawn newspaper and seventeen (N = 17) were taken from the Nation newspaper. The content, focusing on the issues of Drone attacks in Waziristan and stance Pakistani press has towards the Pak-US relations, was analyzed in order to compile it under the direction of favorable, unfavorable and neutral/mixed. Statistical analysis of obtained raw data was done through SPSS, Version 17.0. Frequencies and percentages were computed.

RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Coverage given to Pak-US Relationship With Reference to Drone Strikes

The first research question of the present study was that;

- How much coverage was given to Pak-US relationship with reference to Drone Strikes by Pakistani press (The Dawn and The Nation)?

Table 1

Coverage to Drone Strikes in Waziristan During six months	Newspapers					
	The Dawn		The Nation		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
	5	26.3	17	25.7	22	100

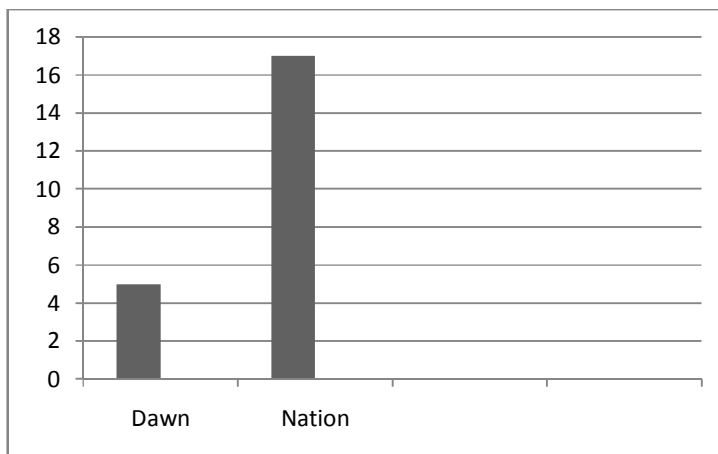


Figure 1

Results of Table 1 reveal that total 22 editorials from both newspapers (Dawn and Nation) published during the period of January 2013 to June 2013 were reviewed to examine the

portrayal of Pakistan-USA relationships with reference to Drone Strikes in Waziristan. It is depicted that among 22 editorials, 5(26.3%) were reviewed from Dawn newspaper and 17(25.75) were reviewed from Nation newspaper in the context of Pak-US relationship.

Portrayal of Pakistan-USA Relationship with Reference to Drone Strikes

The second research question was that;

- What kind of stance (positive, negative, neutral) Pakistani press (The Dawn and the Nation) show towards Pak-US relationship with reference to Drone Strikes?

Table 2

<i>Stance of Pakistani press towards Drone Strikes in Waziristan</i>	<i>Positive Stance</i>		<i>Negative Stance</i>		<i>Neutral/Mixed Stance</i>	
	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Dawn</i>	0	0	4	80	1	20
<i>Nation</i>	0	0	15	88.2	2	11.7

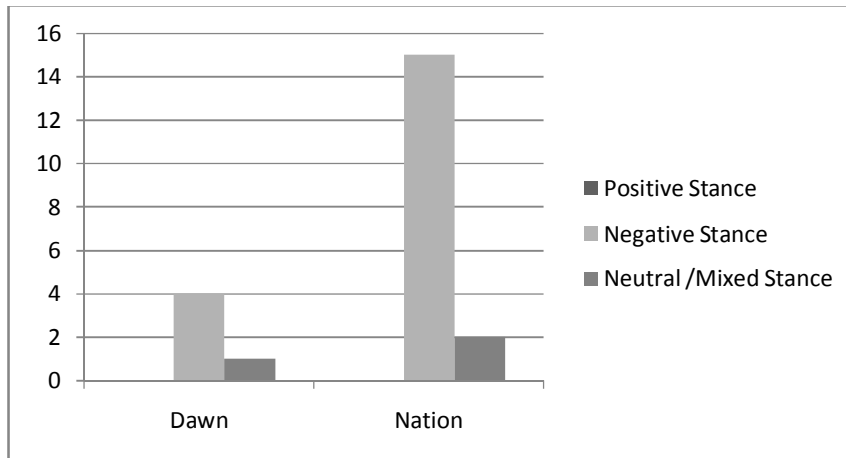


Figure 2

Results of Table 2 demonstrate a significant difference in the stance shown by Dawn and Nation newspaper towards drone strikes in Waziristan. It is depicted that Nation has shown more negative stance (88.2%) toward drone strikes than Dawn newspaper (80%). Dawn has shown more mixed or neutral stance (20%) towards drone strikes than Nation (11.7%). However, both newspapers did not demonstrate any kind of positive stance towards drone strikes in Waziristan.

Though, Pakistan-USA relationship always has been remained in the news but since last one decade it got enormous attention of mass media, almost, of both countries. Pakistani press frequently gives coverage to the nature of Pak-US relation. In the present study, Dawn and Nation, as representative of Pakistani press, were taken into consideration with regards to Pakistan-USA relation and drone strikes in Waziristan. Like previous studies, the present paper has proved that Pakistani press, Dawn and Nation, has framed the image of Pakistan-USA relationship according to atmosphere available at time. Both Nation and Dawn have discussed the Pakistan-USA relationship with reference to drone strikes during six months but Nation paid more attention to this relation.

Each newspaper has its policy to publish the material. Nation works under the ideology of Pakistan more as compare to Dawn. Nation is also called Pakistani newspaper. Albeit, Dawn also has played a distal role in the movement of Pakistan before partition and features the national interests but Nation gives more space to national interests. It has proved in the current study that issues influencing Pakistan in any way were given more coverage by Nation as compare to Dawn. Various factors play important role in giving coverage to a particular issue such as; culture, pressure from governmental and non-governmental organizations, welfare organizations, money to need work timely, socio-political circumstances, ideology of country, policies of newspaper etc.

It also has been found in the present study that Nation has shown more negative stance for Pakistan-USA relationship with reference to drone strikes in Waziristan as compare to Dawn. More neutral or mixed stance was demonstrated by Dawn than Nation. Negative stance was shown for two reasons. One reason is that drone attacks, though, were launched to target terrorists belonging to Al-Qaeda and Taliban but it became the cause of casualties in form of death of civilians including children and women. No law in the entire world permits to kill innocent people in the name of war. Drone strikes are making people psychologically sick. A research reported on the topic, "Living Under Drones" highlighted that severe psychological consequence of drone strikes on people living in Waziristan. They were suffering from anxiety, fear, anger and irritability. They also reported to have nightmares, intrusive thoughts, poor appetite and physical or somatic complaints (Wood, 2012).

The second reason is that drone strikes are the threat to Pakistan sovereignty. Each country of the world is given respect with regard to its independence and sovereignty. Pakistan is also an independent state having its own values, interests and ideology. No country in the world, even American has rights to target its enemy inside the Pakistan's territory. Pakistan must take action against terrorists if they are using its soil against any one. American' invasion should not be allowed at any cost. For these reasons, both newspapers, have presented negative portrayal of Pakistan-USA relationship with reference to drone strikes. Dawn has less discussed that issue but it too paid attention to this serious issue so that it could be resolved immediately. Pertaining to showing more mixed or neutral stance, Dawn has emphasized on continuing the drone strikes with the cooperation of Pakistan, if drones are essential to curb the militants. The continuity of drones must ensure the safety of civilians. Furthermore, the authority of conducting drone strikes should be given to the Pakistani forces.

The present study also demonstrates that both newspapers have not shown positive stance towards Pakistan-USA relationship with reference to drone strikes. Owing to above mentioned reasons, Pakistani people have developed negative feelings and emotions in form of anger, aggression and bitterness for America. Media does not only form the public perception but also is the reflection of what people feel and think. Both Dawn and Nation, being representatives of Pakistan and its citizen have reflected the people' emotions, therefore, both of them did not positive stance completely towards drone strikes and Pakistan-USA relation.

CONCLUSION

Drone strikes are clear threat to the sovereignty of Pakistan. Besides that it has brought harm to people who had nothing to do with militants. The friendship between Pakistan and America seems not be in favor of Pakistan. A huge lose Pakistan had to bear due to war on terror. Despite that, America had launched drone strikes in the tribal areas of Pakistan that caused harm to the Pakistani people economically, socially and psychologically. The

authority of drone strikes in its own hand depicts that America has not count on Pakistan despite declaring it strategic partner. Due to these contradictions and double standards on the part of United States, Pakistani press (Dawn and Nation) have portrayed the Pakistan-USA relationship as negative. Nation has appeared to portraying this relation more negative than Dawn. In essence, it is recommended that Pakistani government must take action to protect its own interests. There should be stable and healthy relation with America but it is also essential to function according to country's foreign policy. There should be no compromise over the country's sovereignty, ideology and interests.

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