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Media framing of the 'War on Terror': The case of Urdu-language Elite Press during the dictatorial regime in Pakistan (2001-2008)

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Abstract:

This research is focused on press-government relationship on the issue of 'War on Terrorism' (WoT) during the dictatorial regime led by the then military ruler General Pervez Musharraf who remained in power till 2008 in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Global war against terrorism, generally known as 'war on terror' was actually started by the United States of America in the aftermath of 9/11 episode in 2001. Pakistan, on US demand, had not only become an important ally of the grand alliance formed under the umbrella of the United States but had also adopted the role of a frontline state just to fight the war against terrorism (WoT) alongside the war allies. Generally mass media have the potential to influence public opinion and help reshape the states' policies on different issues. Likewise, mass media of Pakistan also took an active part in the war either by going alongside the then dictatorial government or against it. This research is based on examining the way the Urdu language elite press, the most popular mass media of Pakistan, covered the dictatorial regime of President General Pervez Musharraf with regard to its policy on the issue of 'WoT'. The Main purpose of this study is to know the nature of relationship between the Urdu-language elite press and the dictatorial government of Gen Musharraf in Pakistan with regard to their policy positions on 'WoT' from 2001 to 2008. Three newspapers including daily Jang, daily Nawa-I-Waqt, and daily Pakistan, considered to be representatives of the Urdu-language elite press of Pakistan, were selected for this study. The method used to measure the phenomenon is called framing where contents of the selected dailies were measured both quantitatively and qualitatively. Data were collected through systematic sampling method, while coding sheet was used as a tool for data collection. Unsigned main editorials of the selected newspapers were analyzed to examine the nature of relationship existed



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between the two entities i.e. the Urdu-language elite press, and the dictatorial government of Gen Pervez Musharraf, on the issue of 'WoT' in Pakistan. The results revealed that the selected elite newspapers, in general, remained critical to the dictatorial regime on the issue of 'WoT'. The findings also revealed that daily Nawa-I-Waqt remained highly critical to the government as compared to its other contemporaries i.e. daily Jang, and daily Pakistan. It was also revealed that the Urdu-language elite press while framing the 'War on Terror' remained somewhat supportive and quite neutral to the dictatorial regime on its policy on 'WoT'.

Keywords: Press-Government relationship, Urdu Press, Dictatorial regime, Pakistan.

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Introduction:

Mass media are the main sources for portraying social realities to the general public.¹ How one news media constructs a social reality is not necessarily like what is formed by another media because of their temptations to see the world in terms of their experiences and societal frames.² Because of differences in the world views of different news organizations it seems to be quite unlikely for different news media of a country to provide the same unified picture of an incident in their news stories or editorials.³ Though it may be possible for them to draw the same number of lines about an incident that has happened, but in many cases, it is practically quite difficult to construct same image of the incident. Differences in the construction of images about social realities are due to biases mass media have about the world they work in. It is generally believed that such differences in the depiction of realities by news media amount to the differences in their respective worldviews about their social, political and cultural environments.⁴ Similar to the situation found in other countries of the world, it is generally observed that such tilts in the performance of news organizations are also commonly there in Pakistan.⁵ Though specific ideologies of news organizations on day-to-day issues are generally not available in book form, however, these ideologies can be determined by studying the images portrayed by them in their contents over a substantial period of time. Due to significance of the image drawing function of the news media at national and international levels and its subsequent influence on the public opinion and governments, this issue has always remained a topic of substantial interest for social scientists and media researchers.

Image construction of realities, which is considered to be an integral part of the practice of almost every news media, is generally known as 'mass media framing.'⁶ The history of media framing is as old as the history of the mass media itself. Stanley Cohen (1981: 265)⁷, for example, while describing bias of the British news media noted that while dealing with deviant groups, they

(British media) often “over-report” by exaggerating the seriousness of events, the violence that occurred, and the damage caused. It is through framing that the mass media gives importance to some aspects of an event by portraying them frequently and marginalize others by ignoring them or presenting them less advantageously and outside the mainstream.⁸

This study is focused on examining the nature of relationship existed between the Urdu language press of Pakistan and the dictatorial regime of Gen Pervez Musharraf on the issue of ‘war on terror’-- the war that was started by the then US President George W. Bush to punish those who were involved in the alleged terrorist attacks on America on Sept 11, 2001. On US demand the then President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf who was also Chief of the military had not only decided to become part of the coalition force but had also adopted the role of a ‘frontline state’ to fight the war.⁹ This study is an attempt to examine as to how did the most popular and influential press of Pakistan i.e. the Urdu-language elite press frame the issue in its editorials with respect to the then dictatorial regime’s policy position on the war?

Review of Literature:

"Terrorism" is a broad term encompassing many aspects of today's socio-political life of individuals as well as nations. Basically, this word is derived from Latin word “terror” which means "to frighten" (p 19).¹⁰ The word appeared on scene in English dictionaries in the year 1798 which refers to "systematic use of terror as a policy."¹¹ Although the term comes up in many texts and conventions, there is generally no agreed upon definition within the United Nations (UN) despite the mission assigned to it in December 1996 to a special committee established by the General Assembly. Being setup in 2003, the High-Level Panel on ‘Threats, Challenges and Change’ submitted a report approaching a definition in 2004. After bringing up the existing text, particularly the war crimes and crimes against humanity and the 12th United Nations Convention against terrorism, it proposed to use the word ‘terrorism’ to refer to “an action that is intended to cause death or serious body harm to civilians or non-combatants, when the purpose of such an act, by its nature or text, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing such an act.”¹²

Now-a-days, it refers to the murder of innocent people at mass scale by a ‘self-interested’ group in such a way as to make a media spectacle.¹³ Terrorism as defined by UN jury is, “any act intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing such act.”¹⁴ The current phrase of ‘war on terror’ is considered to be the by product of the alleged September 11th 2001 terrorist attacks on US in which a terrorist organization had reportedly, hijacked four USA’s commercial passenger jet airliners and crashed two of them into the World Trade Center in New York City and one of them into the Pentagon. The former target was considered to be

the symbol of US economic supremacy and power and the latter as its military power and supremacy in the world. Both of the symbols of US pride had received colossal damages as a result of the attacks. The US President George W. Bush had coined the term "war on terror" (WoT) for the war started by him in response to the September 11 event. Bush had charged that the 9/11 attacks were planned in Afghanistan by a terrorist group who called themselves 'Al Qaeda', Arabic word which means 'the basics of Islam'. The 'war on terror', George W. Bush had declared in a policy statement, "will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated".¹⁵ In response to the so called terrorist attacks, the US initiated a seemingly unending military operation against the *Al Qaeda* and the *Taliban*, a term used for the students of religious schools, in Afghanistan with the help of a local active opposition group known as 'Northern Alliance' and invaded the capital of Afghanistan, Kabul. A new government headed by Hamid Karzai, under the umbrella of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), was established in Afghanistan. Slowly and gradually, the war was extended to other parts of the country and, almost, to the whole world. Consequently, most of the world states including Pakistan have been pushed into an unending war. Many states are still busy in fighting it either physically or psychologically and, instead of coming to an end, the war seems to perpetuate to the whole world.

Dictatorial Regime in Pakistan and the 'War on Terror':

In the aftermath of the reported incidents of terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, Pakistan's national solidarity and its economic conditions got badly affected. Soon after the attacks Pakistan, under the direct rule of Gen. Pervez Musharraf, was pushed to the position of a front-line state in the 'global war against terrorism' and, probably due to the same reason, started pulsing highly in the headlines of the national and international media. The US had decided to attack Afghanistan, a landlocked country located towards the northwest of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in order to punish those who were blamed as the perpetrators of the attack. To execute her plan in the region, the US demanded airspace and air bases for logistic support from the neighboring countries.¹⁶ Though initially the US had started negotiations with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan for their logistic support but its first priority was Pakistan. As the Indian Ocean was the easiest route for most of the US supplies for attacking Afghanistan, therefore, it is assumed that Pakistan was made an ally of the grand alliance of the world states for assaulting Afghanistan. It is also important to note that soon after the terrorist attacks on US, Washington put forth yet another tough condition to Pakistan i.e. to decide in 24 hours, whether it (Pakistan) would be on America's side in the war or on the side of enemies.¹⁷ The then military ruler General Pervez Musharraf was unable to decline to the demand and, therefore, decided to stand with the US. On this occasion the US administration had made it clear to Pakistan that it wanted Pakistan to extend support to the US in the fight against terrorism in three areas

including a) intelligence support b) the use of Pakistan's airspace, and c) logistical support.¹⁸

The U.S., of course, had never directly threatened to use force against Pakistan but the U.S. officials had threatened to add Pakistan to a State Department's list of seven terrorist-sponsoring nations which would portend the possibility of U.S. force. According to one high-ranking official at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, "President Musharraf was told to either abandon support to *Taliban* or be prepared to be treated like the *Taliban*."¹⁹

The next day i.e. on Sept. 13, 2001, the then President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf gave a nod to US, for joining the club called the International Coalition in order to fight against terrorism. On Sept.19, 2001, after having a meeting with higher official, the President General Pervez Musharraf addressed the nation on television and clarified his position by saying, "We in Pakistan are facing a very critical situation. Perhaps it is as critical as the events happened on 1971. If we make wrong decisions our vital interests will be harmed. Our critical concerns are our sovereignty, second our economy, third our strategic assets, and fourth our Kashmir cause. All four will be harmed. [And] If we make these decisions they must be according to Islam. It is not the question of bravery or cowardice. But bravery without thinking is stupidity. We have to save our interests. Pakistan comes first everything else is secondary." It was a major turning point in the country's foreign policy with respect to the 'war on terror'. It was the beginning of a new phase in the Pak-US friendship. Pakistan started cooperating with the US through providing logistic facilities, capturing *Al Qaida* suspects in the nook and corner of the country and sharing of intelligence with the US. Pakistan closed up its border with Afghanistan and also went up to the extent of granting two naval bases and three air force bases to the US military in the 'war against terrorism' (9/11 Commission Report). United States granted Pakistan equaling \$1 billion and exempt \$ 1 billion in debt.²⁰ Moreover, the United States also announced a five year aid package of \$3 billion for Pakistan in 2003. Another \$2.63 billion direct aid was also provided to Pakistan by the US between 2002 and 2005.²¹ The relationship was further strengthened by signing several agreements of trade and investment between both countries. The main objective of the above-mentioned US assistance to Pakistan was to achieve a specific goal in counter terrorism in the country with particular reference to its western border with Afghanistan.²² Its aim was not to strengthen Pakistan in order to do away with backwardness and to achieve internal stability. It was a 'politically-stipulated' assistance and a reward of Musharraf regime's devotion to the US in its 'global war against terror'. The 9/11 Commission have figured out that the U.S. assistance had not, "moved sufficiently beyond this security assistance to include significant funding for educational efforts"²³. "In this way, very little is unique about the history of U.S.-Pakistani relationship. Here once again history repeated itself, resembling the relationship in the 1980s when the United States (had) established a *quid pro quo* with General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq to help fight the Soviets."²⁴

The US President George W. Bush had announced 'war on terrorism' in revenge of horrible attacks of 9/11. Leaders of the dictatorial regime in Pakistan tried to mould the public opinion through mass media in order to make the people feel that 'terrorism' was a real threat to their entire modern lifestyle, values and democracy. The words like '9/11', and 'terrorism', etc made a perception of threat to audience in all the times as they listen or read in their daily life.²⁵

The 'war on terror' has not only brought innumerable miseries to Pakistan in the form of heavy losses in social and psychological fields but has also cast many adverse effects on its economy. A seemingly unending series of bomb blasts and suicide attacks started simultaneously in different parts of Pakistan with the declaration of 'war on terror' by the world states under the active guidance of the United States of America. These bomb blasts and suicide attacks devastated the country in terms of destruction to its social fabrics, and physical infrastructure. The European Asylum Support Office generated a table showing annual fatalities in terrorist violence in Pakistan and the number goes in thousands which includes losses of life of military personnel and ordinary citizens.²⁶ Frequent terrorist attacks on law enforcing personnel, and civilian population created uncertainty and reduced growth rate of the country, the report said. According to information provided by the Federal Bureau of Statistics of Pakistan its agricultural and industrial sectors saw a continuous and significant decline between the years 2004 and 2009.²⁷

Mass Media Framing of Issues:

Mass media framing is one of the most popular techniques for analyzing and measuring media contents and their different features.²⁸ Framing, used as a measuring technique in this study is a deliberate and conscious treatment of any form of communication material (text, audio, visual, and audio visual) through which the journalists select, reject, protect, support, reinforce, and highlight some of the features of the incidents in order to create a desired effect on the audience's mind.²⁹ Practice of Framing is common in almost every communication activity done through mass media.³⁰

The concept of media framing is not only related to the concept of agenda-setting McCombs & Shaw (1972) in which mass media focuses attention on certain issues but also expands on it thus focusing on essence of the issue.³¹ Framing discuss the way in which issues are presented. It also refers to the choices made by media journalists. Thus framing refers to the ways media and media gate-keepers organize and present the events and issues they cover. Frames are abstract notions that serve to organize or structure social meanings. Mass media, through framing, influence perception of the audience thus making them not only 'what to think about' but, most importantly 'what to think' and 'how to think about it.'³²

Researchers have also scrutinized media framing as a theory at length and have also emphasized the central idea of framing.^{33 34} General definition of framing includes "principles of organization which govern social events" (p. 232).³⁵

According to this concept none of the issues reported in mass media goes unframed.

Media Frames are cognitive images, which reporters utilize to abridge, prioritize and structure the narrative stream of issues.³⁶ It is generally observed that framing is inescapable in the process of media production.³⁷ Framing seems to occur at every stage in media of mass communication because journalists usually try to find out moral judgments of issues, or they try to identify solutions for most of the problems. This way Framing requires prejudiced involvement in any issue.³⁸

Methodology:

To investigate relationship between the Urdu language press and the dictatorial regime of Gen Pervez Musharraf on the issue of 'War on Terror' through editorial framing, main editorials published in the most popular newspapers from Sept. 11, 2001 to Sept. 8, 2008 were studied both quantitatively and qualitatively. The papers selected for this study included daily *Jang*, daily *Nawa-i-Waqt*, and daily *Pakistan*.

Selection of unsigned editorials for this study was due to the reason that they (editorials) not only openly express their organizational policies but are also considered to be the most suitable places in newspapers used as rings for ideological wrestling on controversial and sketchy topics.³⁹ Another reason for choosing unsigned editorial of the newspapers was due to the premise that unsigned editorials are the places in newspapers which solely reflect the official position of their respective organizations on day to day situations.⁴⁰ Study of the editorial contents of these three newspapers was conducted on the basis of their wide circulation in almost all parts of the country as well as abroad. Data was collected through systematic sampling method, whereas, coding sheet was used as a tool for data collection

Editorials related to the issue of 'war on terror' were frequently selected as items and then analyzed for finding answer to the main question i.e. relationship between the Urdu language press and the dictatorial regime of Gen Pervez Musharraf through media framing the issue of 'WoT'. During copy to copy search of the selected three newspapers a total of (402) editorials related to the subject were found. Out of this amount daily *Jang* had published 118 (29.35%), daily *Nawa-i-Waqt* 125 (31.09%), and daily *Pakistan* 159 (39.55%) editorials during the study period. Due to large size of the population i.e. 402, only those editorials were selected for the samples which were published on common dates in all the three newspapers. In this way 84 such dates came to hand on which each of the three newspapers had published an editorial on the issue. For the sake of bringing further simplicity in the sample, every 3rd date of the common dates was selected which resulted in 28 common dates on which each of the selected papers had published an editorial on the issue. In this way a total of (84) editorials came into the sample in which each of the selected papers (daily *Jang*, daily *Nawa-i-Waqt*, and daily *Pakistan*) had an equal share i.e. 28 editorials.

Criteria for selection:

Criteria for selection of relevant editorials was that any unsigned editorial published in the selected newspapers during the study period in which predominance of the article dealt with the issue of 'terrorism and its relevance to Pakistan was picked, for example; Pressure on Islamabad, action against Osama, defining terrorism, attack on Afghanistan, dangers to Pakistan, nuclear assets' safety, foreign militants, responding to US demands, Pakistan's promise of cooperation, massacre in Bahawalpur, non-NATO ally status, War in Afghanistan, Beyond war, Pak-Saudi fight against terrorism, emulate US, the Taliban bubble, refugee influx, and Crusade, etc.

Quantitative Method:

Quantitative content analysis was used, as a first step, in this research mostly to describe the amount of coverage given to the issue and direction of the editorials. Quantitative approach in this study is concerned with how often a variable was present in numbers thus allowing greater precision in reporting the results. Though editorials are generally combination of several paragraphs made up of sentences and words, therefore, an editorial, as a whole, was taken as the unit of analysis and the unit of coding. After coding, directions of the editorial contents were identified which helped in understanding the nature of relationship existed between the press and the dictatorial government on the issue of 'WoT'.

Qualitative Method:

Second step of the study was qualitative content analysis which allowed researchers to view the phenomenon in natural setting without the artificiality that sometimes surrounds experimental research. Qualitative strategy was used in this research to explain the quantitative data and to interpret the various frames. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods offered the possibility of better understanding of the research question (Mc Quail, 1983).⁴¹

The results of quantitative analysis were followed by a thorough qualitative analysis. Key categories of contents were identified and within those categories the framing of the editorials was analyzed. The analysis brought forth the meaning of both manifest and latent contents found within the text and rooted within the culture.

In the quantitative part of this text-based study first, ideologies, frames, opinionated words, idioms, phrases, catchy words/ key words or slogans, tones (many of them took the form of either supportive, or opposite, or few of them stood neutral to the government's official stance on the issue of 'WoT') were noted in the texts of newspapers' editorials with the help of a coding sheet developed for this particular purpose. In qualitative part of this study descriptive phrases and adjectives (frequently used in opinionated items and rarely used in objective items) used by journalists in the elite press were identified as frames in

order to examine dictatorial regime's position on the subject of 'War on Terror', for example 'Non-native ally', 'frontline state', 'with us or with enemies', 'do more demand from Pakistan', 'US as unreliable friend', 'Pakistan's friendly relations with Taliban', 'Musharraf's surrender under the US pressure' etc.

Coding and Reliability:

Two students of M. Phil class of the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Peshawar were assigned to read a sample of the selected editorials to identify the issue, its direction and then to evaluate them. For this purpose, the researcher himself worked with them for a short period of time. Agreement between the coders was increased after a detailed discussion with them. Following instructions were given to them:

Each coder would read each headline and the full text of the given sample of editorials at least three times to ensure relevance of the editorial with the subject. The criteria to make judgments were made on the basis of headline, frequency of ideas/words/phrases related to the theme/topic or the central idea or the overall impression of the coders based on the attributes mentioned in the previous lines. Headlines of the editorials were helpful in making judgment about the contents' categories.

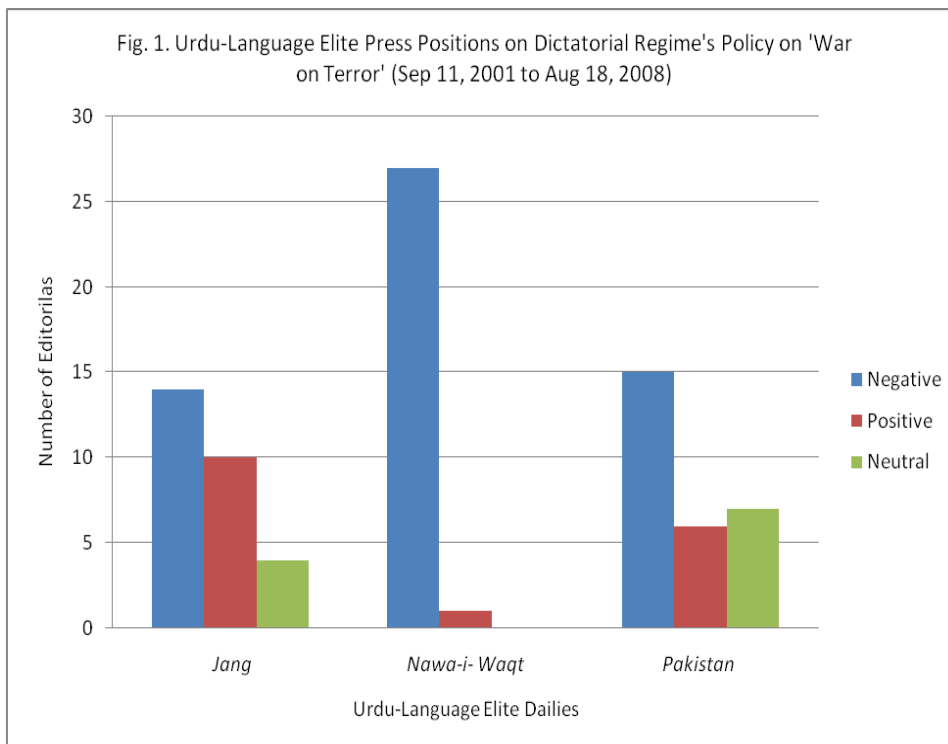
Inter-coder reliability checked under Holsti's (1969) formula,⁴² on 25% of the sampled editorials showed 96% agreement.

To measure consistency of the analysis through time a test-retest measure of reliability showed an average of 88% for this study across the time.

Quantitative Findings:

Table 1: Comparative positions of the Urdu-language elite newspapers on dictatorial regime's policy on the issue of 'War on Terror' in Pakistan (Sept. 11, 2001 to Aug.18, 2008).

Urdu Press	Direction of Editorial Contents			Total
	Negative	Neutral	Positive	
<i>Jang</i> n=28	14 50.00%	4 14.29%	10 35.71%	28 100%
<i>Nawa-i-Waqt</i> n=28	27 96.43%	0 0.00%	1 3.57%	28 100%
<i>Pakistan</i> n=28	15 53.57%	7 25.00%	6 21.43%	28 100%
Total N= 84	56 66.67%	11 13.1%	17 20.24%	84 100%



Analysis of the quantitative data reveals that overall the Urdu language elite press of Pakistan remained 66.67% (56 editorials) critical to the official foreign policy position of the dictatorial regime of General Pervez Musharraf on the issue of 'WoT'. The press, however, showed 20.24% (17 editorials) support to the regime's official stance on the issue and remained 13.1% (11 editorials) neutral to it (see Table 1).

Moreover, a look at the individual performance of the three selected Urdu language newspapers reveals that the daily *Nawa-i-Waqt* remained 96.4% (27 editorials) critical to the dictatorial regime's official position on 'WOT'. Daily *Jang* and daily *Pakistan* reflected quite similar positions by showing almost equal critical stances i.e. 50.0% and 53.57% (14 and 15 editorials) respectively with regard to the regime's official position on the issue. Daily *Pakistan* showed relatively more critical stance than its contemporary daily *Jang* towards the position of the dictatorial regime on the issue.

Analysis of the quantitative data also reveals that *Nawa-i-Waqt* showed no neutrality to the dictatorial government of Pervez Musharraf by publishing not a single neutral editorial whereas daily *Pakistan* showed 25.00% (7 editorials) and daily *Jang* 14.29% (4 editorials) neutral stances on the regime's official position/stance on the issue. Daily *Pakistan* remained relatively more neutral i.e.

25% (7 editorials) as compared to daily *Jang* which remained 14.29% (4 editorials) neutral to the dictatorial government (see table 1).

As far as supportive attitudes of the selected dailies are concerned, the data shows that daily *Jang* was on the top amongst its contemporaries by giving 35.71% (10 editorials) support to the dictatorial regime's official position on WoT followed by daily *Pakistan* which gave 21.43% (6 editorials) support and daily *Nawa-i-Waqt* which gave 3.57% (only one editorial) support to the dictatorial regime's position on WoT (Figure 1).

Combining Quantitative Findings with Qualitative Findings:

On the whole the Urdu language elite press of Pakistan remained highly critical to the official position of the dictatorial regime of Gen Pervez Musharraf on the issue of 'War on Terror' (WoT). However, all the papers adopted different approaches in their opposition to the government on the issue.

Daily *Nawa-i-Waqt* while showing the strongest quantitative opposition (96.43%, Table 1) to the dictatorial regime's stance on 'WoT' adopted an aggressive style and used highly charged language in order to make severely negative frames of the phenomena. The paper while disapproving President Gen. Pervez Musharraf's decision to join coalition forces for starting aerial strikes on Afghanistan expressed serious doubts on the presence of US naval aircraft carriers near Pakistani coastal area. The paper raised serious objections to the US offer of sending American marine forces for the protection of Pakistan's nuclear installations against *Al Qaida* and wrote, "...after failure in her plan to establish a broad-based government in Afghanistan the United States started criminal and indiscriminate killings of the innocent Afghan children, women, and aged citizens through continuous bombing just to show high performance to her coalition partners. How come, the ugly idea of granting protection to Musharraf and his nuclear programme came to her (US) mind?"... "Future of Pervez Musharraf government is bleak and its days are numbered because his decisions are against the feelings of his people."⁴³ Regarding the US decision to punish Afghanistan for 9/11 attacks the paper wrote, "Are Taliban 'right or wrong' in giving refuge to the main suspect of terrorist attack on US, their case is yet to be decided. The government of Pakistan should not break its ties with them because "it will give a chance to India, our perennial enemy, to come in Afghanistan."⁴⁴ The paper ridiculed the long history of relations between the United States and Pakistan and termed the former as 'untrustworthy friend' and 'a power with no intellect'... 'who takes serious actions merely on the basis of doubts, allegations, and weak information'⁴⁵ who push and 'involve its best friends in heinous actions of wars'.⁴⁶ Ridiculing the dictatorial government's decision to join US-led coalition forces against Afghanistan, the paper wrote, "Our government [Pakistan] is ready to cross all limits for the sake of maintaining friendship with America" and equated this situation to the 'lizard of American Aid' which 'could neither be swallowed nor spit'.⁴⁷ In another editorial the paper warned the government of Pakistan to beware of friendship with the U.S. and wrote,

“...America has on its credit a long history of ‘betraying her friends’.⁴⁸ Condemning Allied Forces’ attack on Afghanistan, the paper equated it with ‘second phase of Crusade’ and warned Gen Musharraf’s government to desist from ‘selling autonomy for few pennies.’⁴⁹ The paper repeatedly asked Gen Musharraf to review his decision of taking side with the Allied Forces as a ‘frontline state’ which, according to the paper, had distanced Pakistan from the Muslim brother states.⁵⁰

Quantitative data analysis shows that daily *Jang* remained 50% critical (Table 1) to the dictatorial regime’s policy on WoT but the qualitative data did not support it. Contents of its editorials revealed that the paper was strongly against terrorism and its sponsoring states but, on the other hand, it gave enthusiastic support to policies of the dictatorial government of Gen Pervez Musharraf with respect to ‘WoT’. Here it is important to note that the daily *Jang*, in the days of dictatorial regime, remained highly critical to the UN, US and its war allies for ‘bringing atrocities to the region through wars’ but never criticized Gen Musharraf for his stand as a ‘front line’ state in the war. Gen Musharraf was portrayed by the paper as a true representative of his people and framed his actions as ‘actions needed for national interest’.

At the start of the ‘war on terror’ as a US reaction to 9/11 incident daily *Jang*, after showing deep concern over the terrorist attacks and the killings of innocent people of the United States of America, termed it a ‘human tragedy.’⁵¹ The paper supported President Musharraf’s decision to join the alliance formed by the then US President G. W. Bush for punishing perpetrators of 9/11 as well as their supporters. Though President Gen Musharraf was a military general reached to power corridors through a coo but the paper portrayed him as leader of 140 million people of Pakistan and a true representative of their aspirations.⁵² The paper supported Musharraf’s resolve to take every possible step to eliminate terrorism⁵³ but asked the US to come up with solid evidences in support of her allegations against the alleged terrorists.⁵⁴ It resented the US announcement of lifting sanctions from Pakistan and India as a reward for joining the alliance to fight ‘war on terror’ and questioned “Is it still binding on Pakistan to offer itself as a ‘front line state’ when America had adopted a policy of even-handedness between us and India?”⁵⁵ Framing terrorism as a byproduct of injustice the paper asked the US to ‘avoid its policy of injustice among the nations’⁵⁶ and stressed the US and the UN to define terrorism for the sake of saving the world from a bigger disaster.⁵⁷

Daily *Pakistan* was second after daily *Nawa-i-Waqt* in its quantitative critical stance to the official policy of the dictatorial regime on the issue of WoT (53.57%) but qualitative data did not seem to support it. Few factors including India, Israel, and Jews remained quite dominant during the editorial framing of the issue by the paper. Another factor that has been continuously used by the newspaper in its editorial framing was to give blind support to the regime’s demand from the United States and its coalition partners to provide financial aid

to strengthen Pakistan's economy, and defence. Islam and Muslim *Ummah* were also used as drivers by the paper in the process of executing its framing of the 'WoT'. In its first editorial that appeared after the incident of 9/11 titled, "Tragedy bigger than the Tragedy" the daily quoted the US president Bush when he had warned that America would not make any difference between the terrorists and their supporters. The paper also quoted a part of the speech given by the then US National Security Advisor, Colin Powell to a press conference the same day. After sharing grief with US on the loss, the editorial claimed that Hindu and Jews lobbies were busy in maligning Islam and trying to link 9/11 with Pakistan, Islam, and the Muslims. The daily also made a forceful demand from the US president to bring forth solid proofs about the perpetrators of the 9/11 before using any military might against them. "Taking action without proof will lead the world to a new tragedy which would be bigger than the 9/11 tragedy".⁵⁸ In another editorial titled "US expectations from Pakistan", the paper again selected a segment from the speech made by the US President G. W. Bush on Sept 13, 2001, in which he had appreciated president Musharraf for giving assurance to cooperate in the war against terror. The paper also appreciated president Musharraf's decision to fight against terrorism alongside America. The paper, on this occasion, used special phrases in favor of US and attempted to make positive frames of America by using words in her favor like; 'the only super power', 'cradle of democracy', 'upholder of justice', 'guardian of human rights'.⁵⁹ The paper suggested Musharraf to find religious solution with the help of religious scholars from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in view of US demand for using Pakistani air bases against Afghanistan. The paper opined that decision taken by a 'non-elected' dictator will not be accepted by the nation. The paper said that America wanted to make Afghanistan a sacrificial lamb for a crime for which she had no proof. 'America wants to drag Pakistan into it'.⁶⁰ When US pressure increased on Pakistan for becoming part of the alliance and to fight the war, the paper suggested that President Musharraf should be relieved from dual charges i.e. being Army chief and being head of the state, so that he could focus on his primary duty of defending his country.⁶¹ The daily celebrated the announcement made by the then US Foreign Secretary, Colin Powell, regarding lifting sanctions from Pakistan and framed it as 'a US gesture of goodwill to encourage Pakistan for supporting the war' which could be "withdrawn if Pakistan deviated from the American roadmap".⁶² The daily also welcomed the US decision to declare Pakistan as 'non NATO ally' in the war.⁶³ The paper showed serious doubts about sincerity of the US with Pakistan and asked US to avoid the policy of using Pakistan as a "tissue paper". According to the daily, 'Pakistan was always made a defense partner by the US when it was needed but, after achieving her objectives, threw it like a pair of old shoes'.⁶⁴

Pakistan was the only country to recognize Taliban's government in Afghanistan, therefore, the then dictatorial government tried its best to convince Taliban to handover Osama Bin Ladin, declared by the US as the main suspect of the 9/11 attacks, the paper asked the US for the provision of solid proofs to

Pakistan to enable it to convince Taliban. Request was also made by the paper from Taliban to feel 'gravity of the situation'.⁶⁵

Daily *Pakistan* not only acknowledged but also defended President Musharraf's decision to join coalition forces for fighting 'war on terror' and termed it to be a "principled stand" which according to the paper was "quite in accordance to the UN resolution". The paper framed that the decision enjoyed wide acceptance in the country and that 'majority of the people of Pakistan supported Pakistan's principled stand'.⁶⁶

Summary and Conclusion:

Findings of this study show that media-government relationship is a complex subject, therefore, it would be hard to rely on one theoretical model to examine it. Different newspapers of the Urdu language elite press also observed their specific ideological leanings in their editorials while dealing with the issue of their relations with the dictatorial government on the subject of 'war on terror'. Qualitative data also show that the presentation of this relationship reflects shades of the regime's official ideology as well as newspapers' organizational ideologies (Shoemaker et al, 1987) in their editorial contents.

The findings of this study support the studies showing that the US press does not necessarily support American governmental policy (Becker, 1977; Ramaprasad, 1983; Brown, 1980's, Kuan-Hsing Chen, 1983). The findings further support Shoemaker et al (1987) view of the ideology of media organization. According to this view, media contents reflect the financier's ideology. Influence of the financiers' ideology on the contents is, however, not necessarily direct and fixed. Tunstall (1987) also points out that much news organizations policies are traditional and fixed. In this study the overall direction of the editorials of daily *Nawa-I-Waqt* indicates that it has specific views on the issues of India, Israel, ideology of Pakistan, and nuclear capability of the country. Paper's blind support to the government in these areas seems to be independent as well as mutual exploitation between the two.

During qualitative examination of Urdu language elite press editorials, it was noticed that the press frequently participated in the debate on policy alternatives after the policy makers themselves disagreed on the regime's policy regarding 'war on terror'. As parliament remains suspended in Pakistan during military regimes due to which controversial issues are unable to reach there for heated debate. In such situations the elite press, taking liberty of their limited independence, adopt their own policy (adversarial or supportive) and takes exceptional stance on the issues. On such occasions journalists are usually found urging policy makers to follow their suggestions on the issues.

In this study some connecting points have been found which are closely related to Shoemaker's et al idea of framing, and the idea of the ideology of media organization. It was noted that despite presence of the official policy of the regime on 'WoT', the media organizations expressed their own specific ideologies/policies on the issue. Though the media policy was adversarial to the

government view on 'WoT' but it was not in opposition to the state. According to Herman and Chomsky (1988), in pluralistic societies, media are encouraged to spirited debate, criticism, and dissent as long as these remain faithfully within the system that constitute an elite consensus (p. 302).

In summary, it cannot be assumed that the Urdu language press of Pakistan operates without ideological perspective or political controls. There is tolerance for multiple views, but for the most part, these views exist within the framework of the overall socio-political system of the country. Views outside that framework are infrequently considered.

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