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## **Portrayal of the Drone Attacks during Republican and Democratic Regimes: A Comparative Analysis of *Daily Dawn* and *The New York Times***

### **ABSTRACT**

*Drone-attacks have achieved a fair-share in the press coverage during recent decades. They are deemed as an integral and impressive part of modern-day war strategy, particularly in the United States of America (USA) led War-on-Terror. The study examined how two leading Pakistani and American newspapers portrayed drone attacks in Pakistan during Republican (George W. Bush) and Democratic (Barack Obama) regimes. Content analysis and framing were used as methodological tools. All the editorials were analyzed which were published on the subject during the timeline of sixteen years (January 2001 – January 2017). The results show that both the newspapers are independent, balanced and suggestive. During Bush administration there were relatively fewer editorials on the subject due to the fewer drone attacks in his regime. Both the newspapers framed drone attacks differently in each regime. There is significant difference in framing and slanting of newspapers during democratic regime in which *The New York Times* was more favorable to drone attacks than *Daily Dawn*. The study also reveals that Pak-US relations comparatively remained hostile during Obama regime.*

**Keywords:** Drone attacks, Democratic, Republican, Pakistan, United States, Framing, *The New York Times*, *Daily Dawn*

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## **Introduction**

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 once again brought United States of America and Pakistan together in a global war against terrorism. President Musharraf opted to join hands with America to attract financial assistance, secure atomic weapons and to stand strong against India as well as to cope with extremism which was a longstanding issue for Pakistan (Shahid, 2014). Due to its geo-political status, Pakistan's support was very important for United States in its war against terrorists in Afghanistan (Akhtar, 2012). The United States used many options to combat terrorism and militancy in this region including drone (distantly directed aerial vehicles) attacks in, formerly called Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)<sup>1</sup> of Pakistan under the patronage of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) since 2004. These drone attacks increased after Barrack Obama assumed presidency in 2009 which was not quite frequent under the administration of George W. Bush. Massive agitations started consistently in main cities of Pakistan until US significantly limited drone strikes before the end of 2013 (Masood and Mehsud, 2013; Serle, 2014). The 13<sup>th</sup> National Assembly (2008-13) of Pakistan unanimously passed a resolution in which they declared drone strikes as the violation of the sovereignty of Pakistan. After many ups and downs in Pak-US relations and especially after the killing of Osama bin Laden in a raid by United States, Pakistan demanded US to vacate its personnel and armed drones from Shamsi Air Base located in the south of Balochistan. Shamsi is one of the bases from which United States had been launching drone attacks. In the election campaign of 2013, Nawaz Sharif (the former prime minister of Pakistan) and the rival political leader Imran Khan (the current prime minister of Pakistan) vowed to stop drone attacks completely ("Drone attacks must stop: Nawaz | The Express Tribune," n.d.). After being elected as the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif did not adhere to his stance against drone strikes. Some scholars argue that it is an indication that Pakistan's Army controlling the national security policy was in collaboration with the United States on drone program which was mutually beneficial for both countries to target terrorists (Landay, 2013; Bowman & Inskeep, 2009; Roggio 2010).

Nawaz Sharif's stance was, of course, the result of the strong opposition from the majority of Pakistani public who, according to Pew's Survey (2009), were against this program despite of their lack of knowledge on the details of the drone program and its implications. This survey also

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On 28<sup>th</sup> may 2018 President of Pakistan Mamnoon Hussain signed a bill for the merger of Federally Administered tribal areas (FATA) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) in 31<sup>st</sup> constitutional amendment.

indicates that there was a minority of public who were aware of the usage of this program and thus they were in the favor of this program (Fair et al. 2014, 2015). Other than Pew, some other studies have also focused on the public opinion on drone program such as Fair, et al. 2014, 2015. However, focus of these studies have been on analyzing the public opinion and not on the sources of this public opinion particularly media which is one of the strongest influencers of public opinion. There is very little research which has comparatively analyzed the ways Pakistani and US media perceived and portrayed the US drone programs especially when it started and became most active - Bush and Obama regime. Therefore, it is important to understand how the media specifically leading newspapers portrayed drone attacks in their editorials reflecting the policy of newspapers and how the portrayal varied from Bush administration to Obama administration. The editorials of *The New York Times* and *Daily Dawn* have been analyzed in this study.

## Literature Review

In presence of public support media, arguably, show a policy which dominantly favors the government. However, media changes its policy with vanishing public support for government policies (Christie, 2006). Arsenault & Castells (2006) while studying media framing of Iraq war found that public is dependent on the media to get government's stance on foreign policy like war in Iraq. About media framing of Iraq war, Dimitrova & Strömbäck (2008) analyzed the claims of President Bush about their accomplishments in Iraq and its coverage in *The New York Times*. Dimitrova found that news frames were shaped and used in news production and coverage of military conflict. *The New York Times* influenced shaping of public meaning about Iraq war by focusing on the military coverage of Iraq war and ignored other aspects like agitation against war. Due to selective media coverage of events, White argues, public will infer only the positive aspects of war being unaware about its victims and ruins. He concludes that here in framing of Iraq war *The New York Times* used "simplistic militaristic frames" (2015, p.77). This is supported by the idea of several scholars who have criticized these issues in detail. For instance, Herman & Chomsky (2004) and McChesney (2004; 2008) state that media, in order to have power, is functioning as a lapdog of political elite instead of working as the fourth pillar of estate. It is this status of 'lapdog' which let media portray selective information.

Some scholars argue that media has its own ideology that it follows. According to Gramsci (2014) ideology stems from social structures which are dependent on other components that determine the shape and dissemination of information to the public. Ideological structures can be

depicted through printed words which are important in shaping many social factors and guiding the meaning of those words. Such social factors are vivid which actually effect words and serve the purpose of elite class instead of working class (White, 2015). Gramsci states that ideology becomes a lens for many people to the world and they do not think critically and question the existence of different things.

For Althusser (2014) ideology can be understood on focusing on how a concept helps in bringing awareness in public which were kept at distant from such concepts. He argues that working class should be introduced to philosophies instead of information which makes them tools of a capitalist society. Althusser deliberates that ideology is not imaginary rather it exists in the information which can be understood. It is not a person's association to the ideology rather the information itself which defines ideology. Ideology cannot function or be understood in the absence of information. With the importance of language, the role of information cannot be denied in forming a discussion. Understanding of ideology is dependent on the subject (Althusser, 2010). Ideology has an imaginary relationship with the information people attain and the way it functions in their daily lives (White, 2015).

Thus, not only elite use media as its 'lapdog', media also has its own ideology which is somehow dependent on the contents and types of information that media receives. On top of that, media channels are also bound to adhere to their government policies as well. Even the so-called 'independent media' of the developed world is not an exception. Studies indicate that developing countries are portrayed pessimistically in the content of American media (Ali et al., 2013). Media framing explicitly shows that U.S media gives coverage to other countries in a way that suits their national interests (Saleem. N, 2011). Even Canadian media used agenda of framing and portrayed Iraq and Afghanistan as enemy (Steuter & Wills, 2009). Similarly, Pakistani media especially print media portrayed drone attacks in a way that suits their national interests (Ahmed, Mahsud & Ishtiaq, 2011).

Through framing of drone attacks media has been promoting anti-American sentiments in Pakistan (Rehman, 2013). Ayoub & Ahmed (2013) analyzed Pakistan and USA relations with reference to drone strikes. They concluded that Pakistani media has portrayed drone strikes negatively due to the dual policy of America regarding drone strikes and their relations to Pakistan. Clearly international media has got a specific viewpoint in framing Islam and Islamic states.

## **Statement of the Problem**

CIA has been running the 'secret program' of drones for decades. The information about program is cloaked in privacy because most of the information about the program has been classified. Due to its secrecy, very little is known about it. However, the little information known publicly states few things about drone program. In 1990 the unarmed version of predator drone program was used for spying Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. The purpose of program was intelligence gathering till the terrorist attack in 9/11 2001. George W. Bush ordered to equip predator drones with missiles against leaders of Al Qaeda (Bergen & Tiedemann, 2012). President Bush gave this order to CIA through a memorandum of notification which allowed them to kill members of Al Qaeda (Mayer, 2009). Later on, congress passed a bill authorizing the use of military force. The Bush administration declared terrorism a war act so there was no need to go through any civilian processes according to international law. President Obama significantly intensified program and increased frequency of drone attacks. After assuming presidency Obama administration permitted four times as many drones strikes as Bush administration allowed in eight years (Bergen & Tiedemann, 2012). According to a former official of white house, sometimes number of drones flew over Pakistan searching for targets. He said that sometimes there were so many drones flying that they had to argue that which operative can claim a target (Mayer, 2009).

There was so much increase in the use of drones that the drone manufacture, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, could hardly meet government's demand for the required drones. It is not known publicly that how many drones CIA has classified. However, the number of drones which US Air Forces use are expected to be between 50 to 200 (Mayer, 2009).

For combat and noncombat missions around the world United States has been using Predator and Reaper which are the two types of drones. In 1994 the first drone was provided to military by a defense contractor. A weapon carrier drone was developed in 2000. It was Yemen where the first drone attacked in 2002 (Thompson & Ghosh, 2009). Along with the strikes, drones are also equipped with video surveillance technology. This video surveillance of thousands of hours is used in ultimately deciding the drone strike. In Pakistan drone strikes were started in 2004 by President George W. Bush. From 2004 to 2007, there were a total of 9 drone strikes on Pakistani territory which were highly increased with a total of 33 drone strikes carried out in Pakistan in 2008 (Bergman & Tiedmann, 2010).

Use of drone attacks had been controversial throughout war on terror. Even American media and public did not support it fully as many had the view that due to use of this technology many civilians are being killed which is triggering public's wrath and extremism.

Within that scenario, this study will investigate how the leading newspapers from Pakistan and United States portrayed Drone attacks during republican and democratic regimes over the period of sixteen years. It will assess frequency of the issue in media coverage and slant/frames used in favor and against drone attacks in Pakistan.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to:

- Investigate the frames and slants used by *Daily Dawn* and *The New York Times*
- Assess the difference in framing of drone attacks during republican and democratic regimes
- Assess difference in portrayal of drone attacks during both regimes by the selected newspapers

### **Research Questions**

1. How did *The New York Times* portray drone attacks?
2. How did *Daily Dawn* portray drone attacks?
3. What was the extent and difference in coverage of both newspapers?
4. How the coverage of issue differed in both newspapers and regimes?
5. What has been the frequency of favorable and unfavorable frames and slants?
6. What was the overall slant of both newspapers during the selected timeline?

### **Hypothesis**

- H1: *Daily Dawn* gives more unfavorable coverage to drone attacks in Pakistan than *The New York Times*.
- H2: Both newspapers give more coverage to drone attacks during democratic regime than in republican regime.
- H3: Overall both newspapers give more negative frames to drone attacks in Pakistan than positive frames.

### **Methodology**

This paper used the methodology of content analysis which Neuendorf (2002, p.1) defines as “systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics”. This methodology is useful in this study for its

long-term usage in the past and the areas it covers. For instance, it is the fastest growing technique being used in mass communication research for more than thirty years. Moreover, it also has the ability to analyze language, portrayals of object and issues in TV commercials, films, news and other productions.

While using the methodology of content analysis, frames and slants will be analyzed in coverage of drone attacks. Two newspapers have been selected *Daily Dawn* and *The New York Times* respectively from Pakistan and United States. The study will give a comparative analysis of the coverage between the leading newspapers of both countries. It will also compare the difference of coverage between republican regime and democratic regime, so the selected timeline is of 16 years starting from January 2001 to January 2017. The study will analyze editorials which represent the official policy of newspaper and have the power to change public opinion. The population of the study are the editorials of both newspapers during the selected timeline regarding drone attacks.

The editorials of *The New York Times* were downloaded from LexisNexis database by using search term "Pakistan" then I used terms drones attacks and air strikes to specify editorial articles for this study. All the house editorials of *Daily Dawn* were downloaded from online archive and printed editions by using key words and filters like drone strikes or air strikes in Pakistan. In total 108 editorials were downloaded out of which 86 came from *Daily Dawn* whereas *The New York Times* published 22 editorials.

A trained coder coded all 108 editorials. Then another trained coder coded a subsample of ten percent (N=11). Scott's *pi* was calculated to correct the chance agreement between coders, resultantly an acceptable coefficient 0.89 and 0.91 have been reported for slant and frames respectively.

### **Coding Unit**

The slant of the editorials has been coded as favorable, unfavorable and neutral towards drone attacks. Paragraph is the coding unit, if an editorial has 10 paragraphs out of which 6 paragraphs are favorable editorials has been coded as favorable. For equal favorable and unfavorable paragraphs editorials were coded as neutral and for more unfavorable paragraphs an editorial has been coded as unfavorable. Frames have been coded on the basis of wording used in the editorials. If a frame depicts drone attacks are increasing extremism, killing civilians and sabotaging sovereignty of Pakistan it has been coded as negative. If a frame considers drone as helping weapon eradicating militants and Pakistan's security forces are accepting or benefiting from them it has been considered as positive frame.

## Findings

Overall 108 editorials appeared on drone attacks in both newspapers out of which 66 (61%) were unfavorable, 20 (19%) were favorable and 22 (20%) were neutral. In total 13 editorials were published during republican regime out of which 7 (54%), 3 (23%) and 3 (23%) editorials were unfavorable, favorable and neutral respectively. Whereas, during the democratic regime overall editorials on the issue were 95 out of which 59 (62%), 17 (18%) and 19 (20%) editorials were unfavorable, favorable and neutral respectively.

**Figure 1: Overall coverage of drone attacks during both regimes**

Newspapers	Editorials	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral
Republican	13	3(23%)	7(54%)	3(23%)
Democratic	95	17(18%)	59(62%)	19(20%)
Total	108	20(19%)	66(61%)	22(20%)

Chi-Square .841

*Daily Dawn* has published 86 editorials on the topic out of which 57 (66%) were unfavorable 13 (15%) were favorable and 16 (19%) were neutral. From the 86 editorials of *Daily Dawn*, 10 (11.6%) editorials appeared in republican regime out of which 5 (50%) unfavorable, 3 (30%) favorable and 2 (20%) were neutral. Among the total published editorials of *Daily Dawn*, 76 (88.4%) editorials came in democratic regime out of which 52 (68.4%), unfavorable 10 (13.2%) favorable and 14(18.4%) were neutral.

**Figure 2: Overall coverage of drone attacks in both newspapers**

Newspapers	Editorials	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral
<i>Daily Dawn</i>	86	13(15%)	57(66%)	16(19%)
<i>The New York Times</i>	22	7(32%)	9(41%)	6(27%)
Total	108	20(19%)	66(61%)	22(20%)

Chi-Square .077\*

\*Favorable= Drone attacks are helpful in combating terrorism and terrorists

\*Unfavorable= Drone attacks are killings civilians and promoting extremism

\*Neutral= Balanced editorials, equal favorable and unfavorable content

*The New York Times* has published 22 editorials on the topic out of which 7 (32%) were favorable 9 (41%) unfavorable and 6 (27%) were neutral. Overall 3 (23%) editorials appeared in republican regime and 10 (77%) editorials were



published in Democratic regime. From the 3 editorials of republican regime 2 (67%) were unfavorable and 1 (33%) was neutral. During democratic regime out of 19 editorials 7 (37%) were unfavorable and 7 (37%) were favorable and 5 (26%) were neutral.

**Figure 3: Coverage of drone attacks in newspapers during each regime**

Regimes	Newspapers	Editorials	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral
Republicans	<i>Daily Dawn</i>	10	3(30%)	5(50%)	2(20%)
	The New York Times	3	00	2(67%)	1(33)
Democratic	<i>Daily Dawn</i>	76	10(13.2%)	52(68.4%)	14(18.4%)
	The New York Times	19	7(37%)	7(37%)	5(26%)

Republican Chi-Square .550  
 Democratic Chi-Square .022\*

\*Republican (Bush Regime) January 2001 to January 2009  
 \*Democratic (Obama Regime) January 2009 to January 2017

Overall 93 frames appeared in the study out of which 66 (71%) were negative to drone attacks and 27 (29%) were positive. During republican regime both newspapers published 10 frames out of which 07 frames came in *Daily Dawn* including 4 (57%) positive and 3 (47%) negative frames however all 3 frames were negative which appeared in *The New York Times*. 83 frames appeared during democratic regime out of which 60 (72%) were negative and 23 (28%) were positive. *Daily Dawn* published 65 frames out of which 51 (78%) were negative and 14 (22%) were positive. 18 frames appeared in *The New York Times* out of which 9 (50%) were negative and 9 (50%) were positive. Overall *Daily Dawn* published 72 frames out of which 54 (75%) were negative and 18 (25%) were positive however *The New York Times* published 21 editorials in total out of which 12 (57%) were negative and 09 (43%) were positive to Pakistan.

**Figure 4: Frequency of frames in both newspapers**

Regimes	Newspapers	Frames	Positive	Negative
Republicans	<i>Daily Dawn</i>	07	4(57%)	3(43%)
	The New York Times	3	00	3(100%)
Democratic	<i>Daily Dawn</i>	65	14(22%)	51(78%)
	The New York Times	18	09(50%)	09(50%)
Total		93	27	66
Chi-Square .113*				

\*Positive Frames= considering drones helpful and necessary

\*Negative Frames= considering drones counter productive

**Figure 5: Overall Frequency of frames during each regime**

Regimes	Frames	Positive	Negative
Republican	10	4(40%)	6(60%)
Democratic	83	23(28%)	60(72%)
Total	93	27(29%)	66(71%)

Chi-Square (Republican) .091\*  
Chi-Square (Democratic) .017\*

\*Positive Frames= considering drones helpful and necessary

\*Negative Frames= considering drone counter productive

Inferential analysis		
Name of items	Chi-Square Value	Statistically significant or insignificant
Overall difference in slant during both regime	.841	Statistically insignificant
Overall difference in the slant of both newspapers	.077	Statistically insignificant
Slant difference of both newspapers during republican regime	.550	Statistically insignificant
Slant difference of both newspapers during democratic regime	.022*	Statistically significant
Overall difference of frames in both newspapers	.113*	Statistically significant
Overall difference of frames in both newspapers during democratic regime	.017*	Statistically significant

## Discussion

Findings of the study indicate that NYT has given very little coverage to the issue of drone attacks. However, comparative analysis of republican and democratic regimes indicates that relatively NYT has given a mix coverage to the issue especially during republican regime when drone attacks were introduced. However, during democratic regime *The New York Times* gave more favorable coverage to drone attacks while considering it a helping tool in eradicating extremism from Pakistan. Study also indicates that during republican regime, soon after 9/11 incident which were the initial years of war on terror, *The New York Times* and American public did not support use of drone attacks in Pakistan. They appeared to be convinced that due to drone strikes civilians were being killed and that resulted as uproar in Pakistanis against the United States. As an editorial of *The New York Times* dated January 28, 2006 titled *Straight Talk Needed* on Pakistan states that

the “President Bush reciprocated by pretending in his public comments that the American airstrikes that killed 18 Pakistani civilians earlier this month were not Topic A in that relationship. Those strikes were legitimately aimed at top fugitive leaders of Al Qaeda, but they hit innocent women and children. Pakistan’s people deserve a good explanation (Straight Talk Needed on Pakistan, 2006).” Another editorial published on September 6, 2008 writes, “at least one civilian, a child, was killed and possibly more in what may be the start of a new American offensive (Caught in the Cross-Fire, 2008).”

During Republican regime both newspapers gave more unfavorable coverage to drone attacks especially when Bush administration started drone attacks in 2004. As 50% coverage of *Daily Dawn* was unfavorable to drone attacks 30% was favorable whereas 20% was neutral. An editorial of Dawn news published on July 24, 2007 titled “Dangerous talks” states, “any American attacks within Pakistani territory could lead to serious consequences, destabilising Pakistan and embarrassing even the moderates, who will then find themselves in the company of the extremists whom they despise” (Dangerous talks, 2007). Unlike Dawn, 67% coverage of *The New York Times* was unfavorable to drone attacks and 33% was neutral.

During Democratic regime, the coverage of both newspapers showed a different treatment as compared to that of republican regime as the slant of *Daily Dawn* was 68.4%, 13.2% and 18.4% unfavorable, favorable and neutral respectively. Whereas *The New York Times* gave 37% favorable and 37% unfavorable coverage with 26% neutral coverage of drone attacks during democratic regime. *Daily Dawn* presented more unfavorable coverage to drone attacks during democratic regime whereas *The New York Times* gave more favorable coverage during democratic regime as compared to that republican regime. Overall, statistics indicate that *Daily Dawn* gave more unfavorable coverage to drone attacks.

This study also indicates that the Drone attacks got less coverage during republican regime compared to that of democratic regime. One obvious reason is that democratic administration increased the frequency of drone attacks. However, during democratic regime *The New York Times* gave more favorable coverage to drone attacks, which shows that during democratic regime both factors increased - the frequency of drone attacks as well as favorable coverage of drone attacks in *The New York Times*.

Contrary to *The New York Times* and unlike general perception, the *Daily Dawn* gave more favorable coverage to drone attacks during republican regime and more unfavorable coverage during democratic regime. Arguably, it was because of the absence of the reaction of Pakistanis and political parties. In start of war on terror they did not have knowledge of drone attacks but with time and increasing frequency of drone attacks, opposing

sentiments triggered in Pakistanis which later reflected in the editorials of *Daily Dawn*. As an editorial of *Daily Dawn* published on February 10, 2009 states that “the Americans remain fixated on the threat emanating from Fata — though their appetite for drone strikes has triggered a backlash among Pakistanis (Special envoy’s agenda, 2009)”. Another editorial published on December 3, 2010 states that, “it is now evident that Pakistan’s leaders quietly approved drone attacks inside Fata, giving a lie to earlier claims that no such permission had been given. The public has for a long time been asking for clarity in the government’s stand on drone attacks. Now, the matter stands exposed. The lesson, again, is that political players must not only be careful of what they say, and to whom, but transparency must be ensured as a matter of policy (Unpalatable leaks, 2010)”.

Results reflect that overall coverage of drone attacks was negative in Pakistan as well as in the United States. However, when compared *The New York Times* with the *Daily Dawn*, it was found that NYT gave more favorable coverage to drone attacks than that of *Daily Dawn*. Interestingly, *The New York Times* discussed negative frames of drone attacks whereas *Daily Dawn* discussed some positive aspects of drone strikes as well. Despite achieving some high targets by drone attacks, both the newspapers criticized the drone program for killing civilians and violating Pakistan’s sovereignty. Moreover, Mutual relations between both countries remained conciliatory during republican regime of President Bush as compared to the tenure of democrats of President Obama.

### **Recommendations, Limitations and Conclusion**

This study was based on the analysis of portrayal of drone strikes editorials of sixteen years starting from destiny of President Bush from 20<sup>th</sup> January 2001 till the end of Obama’s regime 20<sup>th</sup> January 2017. It was based on the premise that the *Daily Dawn* is against drone strikes and thus portrays drone strikes as unfavorable whereas the policies of *New York Times* are in favor of drone strikes. The study revealed that there are some indicators in the content of newspapers which reflect that newspapers of respective countries use frames which suit their national interests, popular public opinion and sometimes government policies. Interestingly, the coverage and treatment of both newspapers differed from each other in both regimes. Their portrayal of drone strike also kept on changing with the change of regime. This was specifically visible in the case of *Daily Dawn* that changed its stance with the decrease of public pressure and protest.

There has been a continuous confusion about the legality, benefits and damages of drone attacks in both newspapers and it is also reflected in the coverage of both newspapers. Both the newspapers neither fully

supported nor opposed drone attacks in their overall coverage. However, cumulative coverage of both newspapers was more unfavorable towards drone attacks. Both the newspapers criticized drone attacks and questioned their legitimacy. There are many editorials in which *Daily Dawn* not only condemned American government for striking in Pakistan and violating country's sovereignty but also censured the dual policy and ambiguity in the approach of Pakistani government. An editorial of *Daily Dawn* published on May 24, 2016 states The US drone strike which killed the Afghan Taliban leader Akhtar Mansour was a clear violation of Pakistan's sovereignty. *The Dawn* argues that the drone strike was a violation and informing Pakistani officials before or after the attacks did not make any difference. Even if some of the Pakistani officials are secretly coordinating American to let them strike, this cannot be used as a 'license' for violating territorial sovereignty. In the later part of same editorial *Daily Dawn* writes that the world perceives Pakistan for its 'double games' and the 'policies' which are harmful for other nations. It is not because of America's being a superpower but the perception about Pakistan which allows them to disregard international laws and a country's sovereignty while they strike in Balochistan and Abbottabad. Living of Osama bin Laden undetected and other leaders have created doubts about Pakistan (Sovereignty debate, 2016). Similarly, an editorial published on March 20, 2016 in *The New York Times* states hundreds of strikes have been launched in Pakistan by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Pentagon since September 11 attacks. According to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, hundreds of civilians have been killed in these attacks in Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen. America has showed that it can kill people with air strikes without giving any justification publicly about the destruction they cause (Transparency in the Drone Wars, 2016). Now this mix of debates in the favour and against of drone strikes is visible in both newspapers. Despite showing a slight favor for the policies of their respective countries, both the newspapers also favored the concerns of the other countries. In several editorials, *Daily Dawn* criticized policies of Pakistani government which resulted drone strikes whereas *The New York Times* also blamed American government for covertly striking noncombatants and not sharing the casualties of civilians and innocents as well violating international laws and sovereignty of Pakistan. So, it can be inferred that both the newspapers gave a balanced coverage and they were more suggestive to the governments of their respective countries which is contrary to the general assumption that *Daily Dawn* will only be unfavorable, and *The New York Times* being significantly favorable to drone attacks. Findings of the study also indicate that the policies of US government do not change much with the change of administration. However, both the selected newspapers are independent as well as balanced and change of

governments in both countries did not have much impact on their viewpoints about drone attacks.

This study was an attempt to focus on the portrayal of drone attacks in the *Daily Dawn* and the *New York Times*, the limitation of timeline of sixteen year made it difficult to consider more newspapers from both countries which can provide us even a bigger picture. This gap can be filled by the future studies that include more Pakistani and American newspapers to assess overall portrayal of affairs between two countries. Similarly, there can be addition in coding of more framing indicators and questions which can give a broader picture of the framing of drone attacks and factors which affect the coverage of drone attacks by the newspapers of both countries.

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