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US Foreign Policy Regarding War on Terror: Pakistani Press Coverage

This study offers a detailed analysis of all unsigned editorials' appeared in the Dawn and The News on US policy towards Pakistan regarding issues including: Issue 1-Assassination of Osama Bin Laden, Issue 2-Do more policy, Issue 3-NATO supplies with reference to war on terror from January 2011 to December 2012 by employing content analysis methodology. The study maintains that both the Dawn & The News were critical to US policy on Assassination of Osama Bin Laden but the tone of The News was intense in nature. In addition, The News gave more negative coverage as compare to the Dawn. Similarly, US policy to put pressure on Pakistan to launch military operation against Taliban in the Tribal areas of Pakistan-Do more Policy, both newspapers criticized U.S. policy and supported Pakistan's government policy to negotiate with Taliban for peaceful resolution of the conflict. On NATO Supplies to Afghanistan through Pakistan, the Dawn gave neutral coverage while, The News was critical in

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tone. This study also reveals that the Dawn gave more coverage to US policy towards Pakistan as compare to The News while Policy Issue 2-Do more Policy, gained more editorial attention. The editorial coverage pattern of Pakistani newspapers supports the argument that the press and foreign policy relationship is issue-specific because of the influence of media's organizational policy.

Keywords: *Assassination of Osama Bin Laden, Do more Policy, Framing, NATO Supplies, US Foreign Policy, War on Terror.*

■ Introduction

In liberal democratic societies media plays a significant role in shaping foreign policy not only in policymaking and execution process but also in getting public support or create opposition to government policy line. Therefore, media framing of foreign policy issues has gained importance in media-government relationships in foreign context. According to Tuchman(1978) "the news media have the power to shape the meanings that the audience assigns to an issue or event because they disseminate the information that people want, need, and should know" (p. 2). In this way, the news media provide the frame of reference that the audience, such as readers and viewers use to interpret and discuss the issues and problems. Entman (1993) explains framing as:

Frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (p. 52)

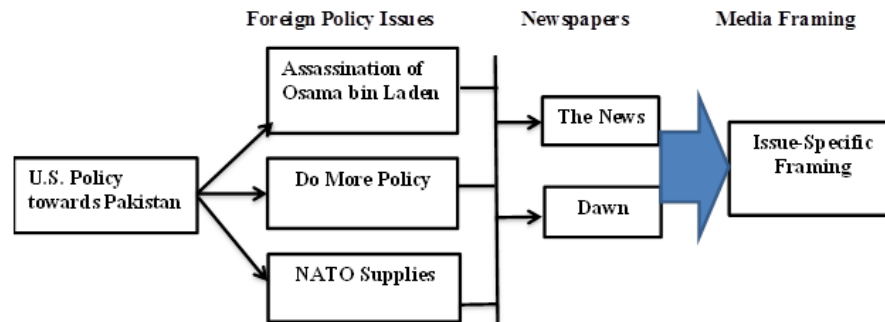
Tankard (2001) maintains that a media frame is “the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration” (p.3). McQuail (2010) argues that

In respect of news, there is now more or less a consensus among media scholars that the picture of 'reality' that news claims to provide cannot help but be a selective construct made up of fragments of factual information and observation that are bound together and given meaning by a particular frame, angle of vision or perspective. The genre requirements of news and the routines of news processing are also at work. Social construction refers to the processes by which events, persons, values and ideas are first defined or interpreted in a certain way and given value and priority, largely by mass media, leading to the (personal) construction of larger pictures of reality (p.101).

News framing broadly refers to the process of organizing a news story, thematically, stylistically, and factually, to convey a story line. Therefore, media has power to create and shape the pictures in the heads of the people by framing the issue/event according to newspaper organization perspective. The basic objective of this study is to explore how Pakistani press framed US foreign policy on issues included Assassination of Osama bin Laden, Do more Policy and NATO Supplies. It also explains to what extent the coverage pattern of *The News* and the *Dawn* converged or diverged and how media frames shape the orientation/stance of editorials' contents. This study supports the argument that the Pakistani press framing of US policy is issue-specific in nature (Figure 1).

Figure-1: Pakistani Press Framing of U.S Foreign Policy:

Issue-Specific Interaction



■ Theoretical Framework

The Shoemaker & Reese (1996) "Hierarchical Model of influence on media contents" and "Framing" provide theoretical foundation for this study. Shoemaker & Reese (1996) hierarchical model discuss five levels of influence that shape media including (1) individual influence (2) daily work routines within the newsrooms (3) organizational influences, (4) extra-media influences & (5) Ideological influence on media contents (p. 65). Goffman (1974) presents the "Frame analysis" theory to offer a systematic account of how we use expectations to make sense of everyday life situations and the people in them (Baran & Davis, 2003, p. 274). Social experience is organized by frames, which he defines as principles of organization, which govern the subjective meanings we assign to social events (Goffman, 1974, p. 11). Explaining the concept of framing, Lakoff (2004) maintains that

Frames are mental structures that shape the way we see the world...the goals we seek, the plans we make, the way we act, and what counts as a good or bad outcome of our actions....You can't see or hear frames. They are part of [our] cognitive unconscious—structures in our brains that we cannot consciously access, but know by their

consequences: the way we reason and what counts as common sense. We also know frames through [media] language. All words are defined in relation to conceptual frames. When you hear a word, its frame (or collection of frames) is activated in your brain. (p. xv)

Gitlin (1980) argues that media is not the mirror of a society and the selectivity of media leads to framing or to the concept how to think about. He maintains that

Media are mobile spotlights, not passive mirrors of the society; selectivity is the instrument of their action. A news story adopts a certain frame and rejects or down plays material that is discrepant. A story is a choice, a way of seeing an event that also amounts to a way of screening from sight. (pp. 49-51)

Galtung and Ruge (1970) recognized media as an influential tool of "image former" (p. 260). The media images are based upon the frames that may be positive, neutral or negative in their tones. Berenger (2004) argued that "frames make messages memorable and understandable" (cited in King & Lester, 2005, p. 626). Neuman et al. (1992) considered frames as 'conceptual tools' used to convey, interpret, and evaluate information (p. 60). Norris (1995) maintained that news frames as cognitive schemata, and journalists usually work with news frames to simplify, prioritize and structure the narrative flow of events. Framing is a technique that helps in shaping public mind according to media's perspective (Nelson, Clawson, & Oxley, 1997). Entman (1997) asserts that "a frame operates to select and highlight some features of reality and obscures others in a way that tells consistent story about problem their causes, moral, implications and remedies". Saleem (2007) maintains that media frames are devices that reveal the "tone," "stance" or "direction" of media coverage of a particular event or issue. Herman and Chomsky (2002) maintain that media frames make event ordinary or extra ordinary depending upon media's organization interests and policy. To sum up, media frames have power to construct a picture in minds of the audience according to media's organizational viewpoint. The studies discuss in theoretical framework have strong relevance

with this research. These studies explain the concept of framing that helps in developing the list of Frames (see Figure 2) for this research which determined the stance/orientation of the editorial content. The following conclusion can be deduced from above mentioned studies. (1) The formulation of news frames, their tone/intensity is largely dependent upon media's organization policy. (2) The news frames shapes the mindset of the audience according to the media organizational point of view.

■ Methodology

The content analysis methodology is employed to analyze the editorials published in the *Dawn* and *The News* from January 2011 to December 2012 with reference to US policy towards Pakistan. Total of 175 editorials were included in this study as sample having one or more keywords such as U.S., Terrorism, Osama Bin Laden, NATO Supplies and War on Terror. Krippendorff (1980) defined content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context". According to Weber (1990) content analysis as "a research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text" (p. 9). Neuman (2004) maintains that "content analysis is a technique for gathering and analyzing the content of text. The content refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes or any message that can be communicated. The text is anything written, visual, spoken that serves as medium for communication" (pp. 272- 273). Sarantakos (1998) describes that the content analysis is a method in which a qualitative and quantitative examination is employed to analyze texts, pictures, films and other forms of verbal, visual or written communication (p. 279). In addition, Berelson (1952) maintains 'content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.' All unsigned editorials pertaining to US policy towards Pakistan on issues: (1) Assassination of Osama Bin Laden, (2) Do more Policy, (3) NATO Supplies were included as sample for this study. A list of frames was constructed on the bases of

editorials contents to measure the stance/direction/ orientation of data with five point scale including: 1. Highly Positive, 2. Positive, 3. Neutral, 4. Negative, 5. Highly Negative (see Figure 2).

The *Dawn* & *The News* were selected for this study because both newspapers have large circulation and enjoying good reputation among readers and policymakers. These newspapers regularly comments on foreign policy issues related to Pakistan. The rationale behind taking time period from January 2011 to December 2012 for study was that the US-Pakistan relations had undergone several up and downs including assassination of Osama Bin Laden, Drone attack, NATO attacks on Pakistan military check post on Pakistan-Afghanistan border area, blocking NATO supplies for US forces through Pakistan, American pressure on Pakistan to launch military operation in North Waziristan etc.

Figure 2: List of Frames

<p>Highly Positive Assassination of Osama bin Laden: 'For this detective work and the successful operation, credit must go to American intelligence and special forces' (Osama bin Laden, 2011), 'A compromise has been reached, or so it seems, that ought to keep a vital strategic relationship</p>	<p>'Osama bin Laden's presence here, the American operation against him' (Defence expenditure, 2011), 'Osama bin Laden had lived and was killed by the American Navy SEALs'(Lure of Bin Laden, 2011). Do more Policy: 'North Waziristan has infamously become tied up with the American</p>	<p>'And if the US wants 'more' from us then it has to step up and do more itself' (Border sealing, 2012) and 'Pakistan is continually urged to 'do more' and continually fingered as falling short of American objectives' (The partnership, 2011). NATO Supplies to Pakistan: 'American officials have been making aggressive public</p>
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<p>going despite the strains of recent weeks' (Problems at hand, 2011).</p> <p>Do more Policy: 'America sent the right man for the job'(Senator Kerry's visit, 2011).</p> <p>NATO Supplies to Pakistan: 'The government has to make a decision, irrespective of domestic emotions' NATO supplies issue, 2012).</p> <p>Positive Assassination of Osama bin Laden: Osama bin Laden: 'Pakistan`s enemy is our enemy' (Cameron's plea, 2011), 'White House and the State Department seem to be treading carefully to avoid rupturing the relationship entirely' (Osama investigation, 2011), 'President Obama</p>	<p>demand to 'do more' rather than be recognized for a more relevant reason' (Nature of threat, 2012), 'military action, chiefly against the Haqqani network based in North Waziristan – a group it sees as a prime enemy' (Time for action, 2012).</p> <p>NATO Supplies to Pakistan: 'An effective, well-thought-out security plan is essential for the protection of the convoys' (NATO convey, 2012). 'Pakistani and US sides seem to be negotiating the terms and conditions for transporting NATO and American supplies to Afghanistan' Security and deals, 2012)</p>	<p>statements and the deadlock (NATO supply talks, 2012)', 'Pakistan won no support or friends or battles in Chicago, and there is a danger that it their opposition to the reopening' (Still we wait, 2012).</p> <p>Highly Negative Assassination of Osama bin Laden: 'it is our people – who had no part in determining what happened – who are paying the price for the raid in Abbottabad' (The Taliban's revenge, 2011), 'director of the (The Taliban's revenge, 2011), 'director of the CIA said that we were either 'culpable or incompetent' in our failure to detect and detain Osama bin Laden' (Munter's job, 2011) and 'Just to add insult to injury, the Americans have said that if they have actionable intelligence</p>
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<p>has meanwhile spoken of Pakistani cooperation' (The fall of Osama, 2011).</p> <p>Do more Policy: 'Clearly intended to preserve progress in the relationship' (Hopeful signs, 2012), 'if Pakistan took on the militants in North Waziristan itself, a great deal of the rationale for drone strikes — unilateral or not — would go down'(DC talks, 2012), '[Defeating] Haqqani network is now also a matter of Pakistan's own security'(Who'll go first?, 2012), 'In fact, Ms Clinton lowered the temperature and undertook useful public diplomacy (Clinton visit, 2011).</p> <p>NATO Supplies to Pakistan: 'Very encouraged by the talks' (Very</p>	<p>Negative Assassination of Osama bin Laden: 'American Navy SEALs humiliated Pakistan's intelligence establishment the way nothing else has' (Hillary Clinton's claim, 2012), 'outrage over the CIA's alleged use of a vaccination campaign' (An ill-considered move, 2012), 'western intelligence community are only concerned with achieving their targets, unperturbed about the consequences of their actions' (Aid worker's killing, 2012).</p> <p>Do more Policy: 'key US demand in recent times: that the Pakistani military launch an operation in</p>	<p>on any other high profile target they will act unilaterally again' (Failure and trust, 2011).</p> <p>Do more Policy: 'disastrous consequences for regional stability is a unilateral incursion of foreign ground troops' (Troop build-up, 2011), 'America has delivered, not just a warning, but a substantial slap on the wrist' (Growing gulf, 2011), 'Mike Mullen's outburst about links between the ISI and the Haqqani network' (Righting relation, 2011) and 'undermined the immense sacrifices of Pakistanis in the war on terror by drumming up Pakistan's connection with the Haqqanis' (Finding solutions, 2011).</p> <p>NATO Supplies to Pakistan:</p>
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<p>encouraged , 2012), 'the supply route – will, it is hoped, mark a breakthrough in Pakistan-US ties that have been caught in a state of paralysis for months' (Positive signs, 2012), 'US wanted to reset military-to-military ties, including working on border issues and reopening ground supply lines' (Mil-to-mil ties, 2012)</p> <p>Neutral Assassination of Osama Bin Laden:</p>	<p>North Waziristan' (Rebuilding ties, 2011), 'A full-frontal, all-guns-blazing, purely military approach — as the Americans seem to demand often — cannot be a genuine or long-term solution to the problem of militancy' (Bannu attacks, 2011). 'Isaf commanders, their governments and Hamid Karzai have lost all moral authority for asking Pakistan to 'do more'' (Cross-border raids, 2011), 'key source of friction between Washington and Islamabad' (Few carrots, 2011),</p>	<p>'no circumstance flagrant transgression of our territorial frontiers would be accepted' (Envoys' conference , 2011) and 'The message that went out was loud and clear: eradicate US influence in Pakistan, stop NATO supplies passing through the country' (DPC rally, 2012)</p>
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**Table -1
Total Coverage of Policy Issues
regarding US Foreign Policy**

Policy Issues	Newspapers		
	Dawn	The News	Total

Assassination of Osama Bin Laden	No.	32	29	61
	%Within Newspaper	36.36%	33.33%	34.85%
	%Cross Newspaper	52.45%	47.55%	100%
Do More Policy	No.	40	45	85
	%Within Newspaper	68.96%	51.72%	48.57%
	%Cross Newspaper	45.45%	52.95%	100%
NATO Supplies	No.	16	13	29
	%Within Newspaper	18.18%	6.43%	16.57%
	%Cross Newspaper	55.17%	14.94%	100%
Grand Total	No.	88	87	175
	%Within Newspaper	100%	100%	100%
	%Cross Newspaper	50.29%	49.71%	100%

Table-2
Policy Issue 1: Assassination of Osama Bin Laden

		Highly Negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Highly Positive	Total
Dawn	Count	0	17 (53.1%)	9	4 (12.5%)	2 (6.3%)	32
	(%)		17(53.12%)	(28.1%)	6(18.75%)		(100%)
The News	Count	3(10.3%)	24(82.8%)	1(3.4%)	1(3.4%)	0	29(100
	(%)		27(93.10%)			1(3.44%)	%)
Total	Count	3(4.9%)	41(67.2%)	10(16.4	5(8.2%)	2(3.3%)	61(100
	(%)		44(72.13%)	%)	7(11.47%)		%)
Chi square = 14.282					p-value = 0.006*		

Table-3
Policy Issue 2: Do More Policy

		Highly Negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Highly Positive	Total
Dawn	Count	5(12.5%)	24 (60%)	3(7.5%)	7 (17.5%)	1(2.5%)	40
	(%)		29 (72.5%)		8 (20%)		(100%)
The News	Count	6 (13.3%)	37 (82.2%)	2	0	0	45
	(%)		43 (95.55%)	(4.45%)		0	(100%)
Total	Count	11(12.9%)	61 (71.8%)	5 (5.9%)	7 (8.2%)	1(1.2%)	85
	(%)		72 (84.70%)		8 (9.41%)		(100%)
Chi square = 10.805					p-value = 0.029**		

Table-4
Policy Issue 3: NATO Supplies

		Highly Negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Highly Positive	Total
Dawn	Count (%)	1(6.3%)	2 (12.5%)	8 (50%)	4(25%)	1(6.3%)	16(100%)
		3(18.75%)			5 (31.25%)		
The News	Count (%)	3 (23.1%)	7(53.8%)	2(15.4%)	1(7.7%)	0	13(100%)
		10 (76.92%)			1(7.69%)		
Total	Count (%)	4 (13.8%)	9 (31%)	10 (34.5%)	5 (17.2%)	1(3.4%)	29(100%)
		13(44.82%)			6(20.68%)		
Chi square = 9.974					p-value = 0.041**		

Table-5
Overall Coverage of US Foreign Policy towards Pakistan:
Statistical Analysis

Issue	News Paper	No. of Articles	Standard deviations	Leven's test of equality of var		Means	ANOVA	
				p-value			F - Ratio	p-value
Assassination of Osama bin Laden	Dawn	32	.92403	19.104	.000*	2.7188	F(1,60)=13.452	.001*
	The News	29	.53452			2.0000		
Do more Policy	Dawn	40	1.00480	27.827	.000*	2.3750	F(1,84)=8.044	.006*
	The News	45	.41682			1.9111		
NATO supplies	Dawn	16	.95743	.148	.704	3.1250	F(1,28)=9.382	.005*
	The News	13	.86232			2.0769		

*sig at 1%, **sig at 5%, ***sig at 10%

■ Results and Discussion

H1: *The News* will be more critical to US policy regarding Assassination of Osama Bin Laden than Dawn.

Table 2 reveals that both *Dawn* & *The News* criticized U.S. policy regarding "Assassination of Osama Bin Laden." Out of 32(100%) editorials, 17 (53.1%) editorials published in the *Dawn* framed US policy as negative on this Issue. Similarly, 27 (93.10%) out of 29 (100%) editorials appeared in *The News* gave negative coverage to U.S. policy of Assassination of Osama Bin Laden. In addition, *The News* published 3 (10.3%) editorials with highly critical tone. The Chi-square analysis reveals that this coverage trend is significant $X^2=14.282$, $P=0.006$ (Table 2). Similarly Analysis of variance results (Table 5) also confirms this hypothesis $F(1, 60)=13.452$, $P=.001$. For example, *The News* criticized US policy in one of its editorial maintains that 'Just to add insult to injury, the Americans have said that if they have actionable intelligence on any other high profile target they will act unilaterally again' (Failure and trust, 2011). *The News* also declared this attack as unjust and "a physical invasion" in to Pakistan's airspace (Munter's job, 2011). The qualitatively and qualitatively findings validates the hypothesis H1.

H2: *The News* coverage will be more negative regarding US "Do more Policy" than *Dawn*.

Table 3 reveals that both *The News* & the *Dawn* framed U.S. Do more Policy in a negative context. For instance, out of 40 (100%) editorials, 29 (72.5%) editorials appeared in the *Dawn* and 43 (95.55%) out of 45 (100%) editorials in *The News* published U.S. policy on Issue 2- Do more Policy- as negative. Moreover, *The News* was highly critical to U.S. Policy compare to the *Dawn* (see Table 3). For example, *The News* states that "[US] undermined the immense sacrifices of Pakistanis in the war on terror by drumming up Pakistan's connection with the Haqqanis' (Finding solutions, 2011). Chi-square analysis verifies

that the results are statistically significant $X^2=10.805$, $P=0.029$. Likewise Table 5 ANOVA test confirms that the coverage trends are statistically significant $F(1,84)=8.044$, $P=.006$. The qualitative and quantitative findings validate H2.

H3: It is assumed that the *Dawn* will frame US policy on NATO Supplies through Pakistan in a neutral context.

Table 4 indicates that out of 16, 8 (50%) editorials appeared in the *Dawn* gave a neutral coverage to US policy compare to *The News* which published only 2 (15.4%) editorials on Issue 3 -NATO Supplies. Overall, *The News* were critical to U.S. policy. The quantitative findings determine that the data is statistically significant $X^2=9.974$, $P=0.041$. In addition, Table 5 also certifies that finding are statistically significant $F(1,28)=9.382$, $P=.005$. These findings validate the hypothesis.

■ Research Questions

RQ1: How far the *Dawn* and *The News* converged or diverged in their coverage pattern regarding US policy towards Pakistan.

On Issue 1-Assassination of Osama Bin Laden, both *Dawn* & *The News* framed US policy towards Pakistan as negative. *The News* was more critical to US policy compare to the *Dawn* (see table 2). Criticizing the killing of Osama Bin Laden, and *The News* maintained that "it is our people – who had no part in determining what happened – who are paying the price for the raid in Abbottabad (The Taliban's revenge, 2011)." The quantitative analysis of editorials' commentary reveals that this

coverage trend is statistically significant $X^2=14.282$, $P=0.006$ (Table 2) $F(1, 60)=13.452$, $P=.001$ (Table 5). The finding further reveals that the coverage trends were converged regarding Issue 1. While on Issue 2-Do more Policy, both the *Dawn* and *The News* were converged in their coverage trends. Both newspapers were critical to US policy. The coverage trends are statistically significant $X^2=10.805$, $P=0.029$ (Table 3) $F(1, 84)=8.044$, $P=.006$ (Table 5). The qualitative analysis reveals that *The News* was highly critical to US policy on Issue 2.

Furthermore, on Issue 3-NATO Supplies, the *Dawn* and *The News* were diverged in their coverage pattern. The *Dawn* was neutral in its coverage while *The News* was critical in tone (Table 4). For instance, in an editorial the *Dawn* 'adopted a balanced tone in its editorial comments and maintained that "an effective, well-thought-out security plan is essential for the protection of the convoys (NATO convoy, 2012)".

RQ2: Which issue-Assassination of Osama bin Laden, Do more Policy and NATO Supplies is framed more negatively regarding US policy towards Pakistan?

Both *The News* & the *Dawn* were critical to US Policy towards Pakistan on policy Issues 1, 2 and 3, but on the Issue 2-Do more Policy- they were highly negative in tone. This trend is statistically significant $X^2=10.805$, $P=0.029$ (See Table 3).

RQ3: Which Policy Issue Assassination of Osama bin Laden, Do more Policy and NATO Supplies gained more media attention.

Table 1 indicates that both *The News* and the *Dawn* gave more coverage to Issue 2-“Do more Policy” instead of Issue 1-Assassination of Osama bin Laden and Issue 3-NATO Supplies for allied deployment in Afghanistan through Pakistan. Out of 175, 85(48.57%) editorials were focused on Issue 2 because of two reasons. (1) US put pressure on Pakistan to launch military operation against Taliban and their supporters to clear the Northern areas of Pakistan where they were residing while Pakistan wanted to disarm them through negotiations. (2) The qualitative analysis reveals that editorials’ commentary was revolving around the themes of Pakistani sovereignty, independent foreign policy and patriotism that why this issue gained more media attention.

RQ4: Which newspaper-*The News* and the *Dawn* gave more attention to the US policy towards Pakistan?

Table 1 reveals that the *Dawn* gave slightly more coverage to US policy compare to *The News*. The *Dawn* gave more coverage to Issue 1-Assassination of Osama bin Laden 32 (52.45%) and Issue 3- NATO Supplies 16 (55.17%) while *The News* paid more attention to Issue 2- Do more Policy 45 (52.95%) respectively.

■ Conclusion

This study concludes that the convergence or divergence of the coverage trends of the *Dawn* and *The News* regarding Issue 1-Assassination of Osama bin Laden, Issue 2-Do more Policy and Issue 3-NATO Supplies, is largely based upon their organizational policy/ideology. Both, *The Dawn* & *The News*

were critical to US policy regarding "Assassination of Osama bin Laden and "Do more Policy" whereas, on "NATO Supplies" the *Dawn* gave neutral coverage while, *The News* was critical in tone. The study reveals that *The News* gave more negative coverage compare to the *Dawn* regarding Issue 1-Assassination of Osama bin Laden. In addition, the *Dawn* gave more attention to Issue 1-Assassination of Osama bin Laden and Issue 3-NATO Supplies in its editorial coverage while *The News* focus was on Issue 2- Do more Policy. Overall, the *Dawn* gave more coverage to US policy towards Pakistan compare to *The News* while Issue 2- Do more Policy gained more editorial attention. The intensity and diverse pattern coverage reveal that editorial commentary of a newspaper is highly influenced by the policy/ideology of the newspaper organization. In addition, the divergent pattern of coverage of the *Dawn* & *The News* support the argument that the Pakistani press is an issue-specific in its coverage.

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