

## **Framing Obama's Visit to India by Pakistani and Indian Newspapers**

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### **Abstract**

This paper attempts to take case study as a research approach in order to identify and compare and contrast the frames designed to report the US president Obama's visit to India in the daily Dawn (Pakistan) and the Times of India (TOI, India). As this was Obama's second visit to India, without visiting Pakistan even on the official offer from the PM Pakistan, so it raised suspicion and reservations from this side. This was the reason that the regional rivals Pakistan and India observed this visit minutely. Additionally, it was reported in the world major newspapers, because US tilted towards India, although declaring Pakistan as a non NATO ally in the global war against terrorism and extremism. For analyzing themes and patterns, framing theory was applied; however, critical discourse analysis (CDA) by van Dijk was employed for exploring emerging ideologies presented through the lexical items and phrases in the newspapers. The data analysis revealed that the TOI framed the image of Pakistan negatively by associating it with the regional security issues and China as a rival of India and US in the South Asia. Similarly, Obama's visit was presented in an ideal style by using positive lexical items. However, the daily Dawn usually took defensive and neutral position in framing India's image and for countering the TOI reporting against Pakistan. At the larger level, the reporting style of both the newspapers may depict a clear reflection of the mindset of masses and the policies of countries in order to inform the readers about the international relations.

**Keywords:** *framing, Obama's visit, bilateral relations*

### **Introduction**

The US president Barack Obama was on a three day official visit to India as the chief guest on the occasion of the Indian Republic Day in 2015. This was his second visit to India without visiting Pakistan who always remained in the front line in the US war against terrorism, and was fighting to control the so-called Islamic militancy and warfare in Afghanistan. Before his arrival, the US Secretary of State visited India and Pakistan to hold talks with the political and military leadership, which was considered a positive development for the US-Pak relations as an initiative in countering terrorism. However, all the structure of understanding was shattered due to Obama's visiting India by overlooking and ignoring Pakistan. Moreover, this visit was not a symbolic visit, rather a comprehensive package and

framework of the US-India bilateral agreements on the strategic and economic relationship and co-operation were designed (Gould, 2010).

In this context, Pakistan had reservations and major concerns about this visit, such as regional imbalance, change in the regional security structure, disturbance in the Pak-India balance of power and the use of nuclear power plants for the military purposes against Pakistan. Moreover, this visit showed major change in the US regional policy in favor of India at the expense of Pakistan (Bukhari, 2011). On the basis of this scenario, this visit was reported in the important newspapers of the world. However, India and Pakistan were the major countries to observe this development minutely and comprehensively, as the world superpower had chosen India by sidelining Pakistan that was known as a non-NATO ally in the war against terrorism. The daily Dawn of Pakistan and Times of India from India reported this visit from the multiple perspectives in order to inform and influence their audience at a larger scale. To keep in view the triangle of the US, India and Pakistan's relations, this study makes an attempt to unfold the negative, neutral and positive frames designed with the combination of different lexical items and phrases for reporting this visit in the two newspapers namely DAWN and Times of India.

### **Objectives**

1. To analyze the difference in the reporting style of DAWN and Times of India during Obama's visit on the India's Republic Day as the chief guest
2. To analyze the differences and similarities between the themes, lexical items and phrases used to frame this visit for reporting in the two newspapers
3. To understand the use of different words and phrases with the negative and positive connotations for designing the patterns and themes in the hard news
4. To comprehend the hidden national agenda of the countries presented through the news reporting for reshaping the mindset of the public

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were addressed through this study:

1. What types of frames (positive or negative) are designed by the selected newspapers for reporting about this visit?
2. What different themes emerged from the news reports regarding this visit from both the newspapers?

3. How do the two newspapers frame Obama's visit to India by combining the different lexical items and phrases?

### **Significance of Research**

This study provides a framework to analyze the style of reporting of the newspapers used to influence their respective audience at a larger scale. Moreover, it may contribute to understand the media discourse designed in order to mold and reshape the public opinion by incorporating certain ideologies for educating the masses about international relations. Similarly, it may support to unveil the hidden national ideology of the nations used to produce harmony in the masses about the specific issue like the two archaic rivals in the sub-continent, India and Pakistan.

### **Literature Review**

Media discourse is a lethal weapon through which readers construct meanings and establish perceptions and opinions. Similarly, it is not only a powerful mode of communication, but also a valuable source of information that serves as a trend-setter in terms of domestic and international issues (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). For instance, the Indo-Pak bilateral relations are mostly reported with different and multiple angles by the print media of both countries to influence their masses. As, Saffee (2016) reported that the media discourse from Pakistan and India presented different dimensions of the same issues by viewing the first one from the lens of security crisis. However, Pakistan rejected this blame entirely and termed it the Indian propaganda for maligning Pakistan.

India and Pakistan are two important countries in south Asia that share their hostile borders, conflicted history and have deadly nuclear power in the region. Both of them look at each other as recurrent trouble makers and enduring enemies, because of having hostile, bloody historical legacy and, the birth of Pakistan from the division of the Sub-continent. Moreover, the frequent border strikes, four wars, Kashmir issue, water disputes and blame games from India on the international forums against Pakistan are the major elements (Mahapatra, 2011).

The US policy towards South Asia is also a major factor in diverting and redirecting these relations into the hostile direction, as the US interest and policy is to stop all world powers from dominating Asia and Europe. For achieving these objectives, the US was forced to join hands either with India or Pakistan for curtailing the influence of the Soviet Union in the region. However, India adopted non-alignment policy and kept itself away from supporting or opposing the US. In this situation, the US perceived Pakistan as a strategic asset to throw the Soviet Union away from the region and made it the US ally against this expansion. But these relations could not develop on permanent basis and fluctuated time to time based on the needs

and interests of the US. The US only maintained bilateral relations with Pakistan during destruction of the Soviet Union and after 9/11 attacks on Washington for teaching a lesson to the attackers and terrorists hiding in Afghanistan. At the same time, it closed its eyes towards Pakistan on the occasion of manufacturing and testing of the nuclear weapons. Moreover, it left Pakistan helpless to burn solely in the war against terrorism after the settlement and withdrawal of the US forces from Afghanistan (Chou, 2005). On the other side, the US always preferred India and strived to have relations with it after the Cold War to cope with the China's influence in the region and supported its nuclear power program by imposing sanctions on Pakistan. From the era of President Clinton to Obama, the US and India enjoyed pleasant bilateral relations. The Indian PM Manmohan Singh visited US and Obama had two official visits to India during his two consecutive presidential terms by calling the US-India relations as the defining partnerships of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Chou, 2005, NAYAK, 2013).

This background information may present a comprehensive picture of the US influence and interest in the region. Similarly, it may show that the US is the defining power and influential country in making and breaking the states in the world usually and in the South Asia specifically. Additionally, this information may also throw light on the national interest of the both countries. India and Pakistan are not in favor of allowing the US to tilt on one side at the expense of the other. This is the case, when Obama visited India twice by ignoring the offer of the PM of Pakistan for visiting officially this country, it gave birth to reservations and skepticism in Pakistan, as it is the front line ally in the US war against terrorism (Akhtar, 2011).

## **Theoretical framework**

This study was underpinned by applying the two major theories known as media framing and the critical discourse analysis (CDA). In order to identify the negative, neutral and positive themes and frames emerged from reporting of the two different newspapers about Obama's visit to India, framing theory was applied.

Framing involves selecting and highlighting salient features of the problem in order to achieve influential perception of the audience, while neglecting and excluding the unfavorable aspects (Entman, 1993). In communication, it means portraying the boundary of the news story with great consciousness and instinct by keeping in view the cultural values, national and domestic policies and attitude of the masses for winning support and dominant public's perception (Ruesch & Bateson, 2006). However, from the linguistics perspectives, it involves analysis of the selection, placement, structure, usage and application of the specific words, phrases and sentences for creating different building blocks in a text (Matthes & Kohring, 2008). Similarly, frames are the specific properties of

the news narratives for developing particular understanding with the help of metaphors, phrases, keywords, concepts and repeated words to reinforce the required images (Entman, 1991).

For identifying different lexical items (words & phrases) by combining them to create negative, positive and neutral images, the theory of critical discourse analysis (CDA) by van Dijk was employed in order to unfold the hidden ideologies in the text. CDA involves the application of language within the social, cultural and psychological framework in order to emphasize and de-emphasize the social reality for producing positive and negative images. This model works under certain categories such as actor description, comparison, disclaimer, generalization, hyperbole and victimization (Meyer, 2001; van Dijk, 1997). These categories were selected in viewing the research question of the study.

## **Methodology**

This study falls in qualitative paradigm and case study is selected as a research approach. The case study is considered a holistic and in-depth interpretation of social phenomena for understanding the complex issues by enabling a researcher to examine data closely and minutely within the specific research context (Hamel, Dufour & Fortune, 1993; Yin, 1994). The data incorporated all hard news (serious news reported immediately after the event) of the daily Dawn and Times of India from 25 to 27 January, 2015 about this visit, collected by using purposive sampling technique. This technique is primarily used in the qualitative research to investigate selected units with particular settings based on the particular objectives associated with the proposed research questions of the study (Maxwell, 2008). Moreover, the data was analyzed by applying the method of inductive content analysis. This type of analysis is usually used in the qualitative research in order to identify and understand the themes emerge from the in-depth study of the documents by recursive and intensive examination and comparison with the other text by using ATLAS.ti software. This software is used for getting reliable and valid results by making codes and categories (Mayring, 2000).

## **Data Analysis & Discussion: Similar News Reports**

### **US, India and Pakistan**

Times of India has reported that Pakistan is playing a double game by pursuing dual policy on curbing militancy and using delaying tactics by not taking action against *Taliban*, which is the source of mistrust and distrust between the two states. However, the US understands Pakistan's issues of unsuccessfulness in tackling terrorism and continues to provide financial aid even though, it is resisted by the dominated Republicans in the US congress. Similarly, India would also like to see new and changed US approach towards

Pakistan that is still stuck in the debate of good and bad *Taliban*, instead of taking strict actions against them. President Obama also demanded from Pakistan to bring to justice all actors of Mumbai attack, 2008.

This narrative may show that the US-Pak relations are strained, because Pakistan is doing nothing to curb and eliminate terrorism and terrorists from the region, which is the main cause of poor bilateral relations in the above mentioned countries. Moreover, it may show that Pakistan is the only country in the region that is backing militancy and terrorism and doing nothing to change this alarming scenario except getting the US aid. However, Pakistan is in the situation of doldrums on its policy regarding *Taliban* by thinking about them as assists or liabilities. Likewise, the US is giving unnecessary importance to Pakistan without granting permission from India, which is ready to change its non-align movement policy. Meanwhile, President Obama was the only person who could understand the bleak and alarming scenario and demanded from Pakistan to punish the bad *Jihadi* activists and attackers on Mumbai (India) in 2008. Similarly, it may represent that Pakistan has safe havens for these terrorists and backing them to destroy the US-India's interests in the region.

Perkovich (2010) has also suggested that the epicenter of extremism in the region is Pakistan that is hesitant to take action against the extremist elements by indulging in the debate of good and bad *jihadis*. Moreover, it is doing nothing to bring into justice the terrorists involved in the Mumbai attacks by playing a double game of getting monetary support from the world super power. Besides, Pakistan is the actual cause of the regional security issues.

For reporting, the TOI presented negative image of Pakistan by employing "actor description, victimization and generalization" devices in the rhetoric with the help of the few phrases and words such as *trust deficit between the US and Pakistan, duality of policies of Pakistan, suspicion, belated crackdown against militants, still unsure Pakistani government, however US knows the difficulties of Pakistan, Washington has not discontinued its aid Programme for Islamabad, despite hostile opposition*. Actor description determines the in-group and out-group members for describing in-group in neutral or positive way and out-group in repulsive and negative manner. By employing these devices, TOI presented Pakistan in negative style as out-group and US in a positive manner as in-group, because it is ready to favor Pakistan even in the adverse circumstances. Similarly, generalization and victimization devices are used for showing prejudices against the target group by over emphasizing its negative traits (van Dijk, 1997). Employing these devices; Pakistan is victimized by highlighting its security issues and associating it with terrorism and terrorists. The analysis and rhetorical devices may show that the TOI designed negative frame

regarding the US-Pak relations by associating Pakistan with terrorism and regional imbalance.

In contrast, the daily DAWN reported that India wanted to see a changed US approach towards Pakistan regarding their bilateral relations, but the White House seemed unready to make its relations better with India at the expense of Pakistan by executing a delicate dance. Moreover, Obama declared that Washington's relations with New Delhi were much broader than the Indo-Pak's conflicts and issues. Additionally, according to the US state department, Pakistan was not in favor of militancy and banned all militant groups without any discrimination. Similarly, Pakistan reiterated several times that it was in its own interest to root out militancy in order to eliminate and avoid Peshawar like attacks.

This narrative may reveal that Pakistan is still the US partner and it will not be out from the US regional policy towards South Asia. Similarly, India could not replace Pakistan's importance for regional security, because US considered it as part and parcel for its interests in the region. Likewise, President Obama also declared that US was not concern with the Indo-Pak conflicts, rather it took US-India relations in the broader perspectives. Additionally, the US has also reiterated that Pakistan is crystal clear regarding its Taliban's policy and striving hard to destroy them indiscriminately at any costs. Besides, the US has recognized the sacrifices of Pakistan for eliminating and curbing terrorism from the region, which is a source of direct and indirect support for the US in its mission of crushing terrorism at the global level. Moreover, Pakistan thinks that to curb terrorism is essential not only for Pakistan national interests, but also for the US interests in the region.

Riaz (2011) has also suggested that India propagates Pakistan as the sponsor of terrorism in the region, while the US still takes Pakistan as a source of assistance in the way of eliminating terrorism. Moreover, India as the leading architect of the Non-aligned Movement is another cause of much suspicion in the US eyes, as it maintained relations with the Soviet Union by propagating this policy superficially. In contrast, Pakistan is the only trust worthy partner for the US, which is proven from the Soviet Union war when Pakistan supported US interests and destroyed the onslaught of USSR and communism.

For reporting, the daily DAWN adopted device of "euphemism" for eliminating the impact of negative image presented against Pakistan by using few phrases such as *US relations with India not at Pakistan's expense, taking care to maintain its relationship with Islamabad, addressing New Delhi's concerns about Pakistan, taking care not to alienate Pakistan, banned militant groups, Pakistan's own interest to take steps against all*

*militant groups, do not differentiate between groups, thwart violent extremism, national action plan.* This device is mostly applied in order to beautify negative and bad social realities in a pleasant and attractive style (van Dijk, 1997).

With the help of rhetorical devices and analysis, it may be assumed that the daily DAWN designed defensive and positive frame regarding the image of Pakistan. Similarly, it also strives to present highly positive and neutral approach towards the US-Pak relations by negating the repulsive presentation of TOI. It may be inferred from the picture at a larger level that the TOI presents negative frame of Pakistan by emphasizing the US-Pak strained relations and associating Pakistan as the supporter of militancy and terrorism, and getting undue monetary favor from the US. However, the daily DAWN tones this effect down by adopting defensive position approach, and including the US state department's narrative, which is in favor of Pakistan. Similarly, it presents Pakistan not as a terrorist country, but a victim in the hands of fiery circumstances due to the global issue of terrorism.

### **India and Global Affairs**

TOI reported that India was ready to actively participate in the global affairs and across its borders for providing logistic and strategic support especially for economic and intelligence sharing to counter Islamic militancy in Syria and Iraq. Moreover, this was the only country in the South Asia, where civilized and cultured Muslim population was living with peace and harmony.

This narrative may show that India is ready to take part in the world affairs especially in the regional and global security of the Muslim world for eliminating the so called militancy and terrorism beyond the border. Moreover, India is the only country where the Muslims can live with peace and freedom, although it is Hindu dominating state. However, the Muslim countries like Syria and Iraq are unsafe, so it is essential to make the masses free by providing economic assistance to them. In the similar manner, India is also ready to support US in its so called mission of eliminating global terrorism by offering it strategic and intelligence sharing assistance. It may also display that the US is more tilted towards India for changing its bilateral relations from strained to the pleasant one, and India is also ready to welcome the US.

Tellis & Mirski (2013) also put forward the same viewpoint that for the last few centuries, India's worldview is changing from the perspectives of national and international affairs. It thinks to be destined for participating actively in the world affairs by shunning its cold war attitude with the world superpower US for assuring its active participation and involvement in the

global security especially to counter Islamic militancy and achieving its hegemonic role in the South Asia. Similarly, the US seems ready to welcome India for expanding its mission of war against terrorism, as India is the emerging power to counter the role of China in the region.

For reporting, the TOI used “categorization” device in order to produce highly positive image of India and Indian masses such as *willing to engage, issues beyond borders, Indian Muslims have largely shunned radical causes, India increasingly prepared to engage on global security issues, radical Islamist group active in Syria and Iraq, role in battling Islamic State*. In categorization, individuals are labeled as the best or the worst through their social and national affiliation (van Dijk, 1997). By employing this device TOI displayed Indian Muslims and India as a state in a highly positive manner.

On the other side, the daily DAWN reports Obama’s view that the US and India are true *global and natural partners* due to their great democracies and firm belief in the strength and power of the citizens. Moreover, India is ready to engage in the regional and global security under Modi’s leadership for curtailing and eliminating Islamic militancy in Iraq and Syria and beyond the border at South China Sea.

This narrative may show that there are no cordial and amicable relations between US and India, rather few elements like the democratic system of government, elimination of the so called Islamic militancy and opposing and countering the role of China joined them. It may also indicate that India and the US are both ready to engage in the global affairs mutually. Moreover, India has totally shunned its previous attitude/policy of non-alignment and seems ready to have firm bilateral ties with the US in eliminating the world terrorism especially beyond the border.

Riaz (2011) and Perkovich (2010) also highlight the key points that shape the Indo-US bilateral relations. Significant of them are India’s desire of playing at global level and hegemonic role at the regional level, overcoming and controlling China’s role in the South Asia and the US access to all gulfs and Middle East to Africa for energy and economic resources. In this context, both countries need each other in order to achieve their objectives.

For reporting, the daily DAWN employed the “presupposition” device in order to design neutral frames by using few phrases such as *defining partnerships of the 21st century, Islamophobia, Islamic militancy*. This device is usually used in order to talk about truth which is not yet developed (van Dijk, 1997).

The analysis and reporting style of the TOI may reveal that the frames of India's role in the world affairs and its desire of taking part in the global security are designed in a positive and comprehensive way. However, the daily DAWN presented neutral frame by merely spotlighting on Obama's views regarding Indo-US role in future at the global level and India's desire to play its part in the world affairs.

### **India, China and USA**

The daily DAWN and TOI reported that the US considers India a possible solution for countering China's hegemony in the regional affairs. Moreover, both countries want to design a collation of democracies in order to mitigate China's role for achieving freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. This news report by both the newspapers may cover solely the China's role as emerging super power in the world particularly, whereas US is trying its best to beat it at global level by using India to counter it in the region. Moreover, both countries have burning desire to control the movement in the South China Sea for increasing their financial means and resources.

Banerjee (2015) also throws light on this situation that China is a fast growing economic, military and political country in Asia that has expanded its sphere of influence and is ready to challenge the US in the region particularly and in the world generally. India does not have good relations with China as both of them consider each other competitor in the regional hegemony and power. Moreover, the US and India both want to have access to the South China Sea in order to achieve balance of power in the South Asia by overcoming the China's role, therefore, India is the only country to be a "possible counterweight to China" in the Washington's eyes. Similarly, Brewster (2015) also supports this view that the US tilts towards India in order to balance China's rise and to counter its hegemony in the region with the support of India as both countries are competitor in the region.

According to Puri & Sahgal (2011) the South China Sea covers many important Asian states. From India's perspectives, the access to this sea is highly significant for increasing trade and economic engagements with ASEAN and East Asia and for growing economic and strategic interests in the region. As well as, from the US point of view, maintaining freedom of navigation in the sea is significant, which includes unimpeded lawful navigation for commercial, private and military vessels and aircraft and for achieving intra-regional and international trade (Mc Devitt, 2014). However, both countries could not get access of the freedom of navigation until China agreed to give them access at two-hundred-mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) (Glaser, 2012). It means China is the only bounding factors for the two important states (India & US) in the region.

For reporting the TOI and the daily DAWN applied “disclaimer” device by using few phrases, such as *India a possible counterweight to China*, *China's assertiveness in Asia*, *assertive China*, *balance China's rise*. The application of this category is based on the positive self-representation of India and the US and negative representation of China (van Dijk, 1997). It means both newspapers frame neutral image of China and leave on the reader to infer the real essence and theme from the lexical items.

This analysis and rhetorical device may also show that the TOI and DAWN designed neutral frame regarding the Indo-US objectives of curtailing the China's role in the region.

### **Agreements and Nuclear Deal**

The TOI reported that the two sides have reached an agreement on climate change, taxation, defense cooperation and deal on civil nuclear trade. Both of them broke the deadlock on civil nuclear pact to firm up defense cooperation for broadening ties in trade and investment areas. Moreover, both sides agreed in operationalizing civil nuclear pact, making firm defense cooperation agreements, as well as increasing relations/ties in trade and investment, as annual bilateral trade of \$100 billion is low and Washington wants it to grow fivefold. For this purpose, the US President Obama ended a landmark day with a pledge of \$4 billion in investments and loans, seeking to release what he called the *untapped potential* of a business and strategic partnership between the world's largest democracies.

Similarly, the daily Dawn reported that both the leaders have held talks on a number of issues and have reached an agreement of solving long delayed civil nuclear power issue. Moreover, they have reached an agreement to tackle all issues of the security measures and liability issues about the pact of civil nuclear technology signed in 2008. Obama also announced that their advancement to solve this issue showed the sign of moving forward and development in their bilateral ties. This important step shows that how *we can work together to elevate our relationship*. Modi said that within six year bilateral agreements would move towards commercial cooperation by resolving all issues regarding laws and international legal obligations.

TOI and DAWN reported that a comprehensive package of agreements was finalized between the US and India as both presidents Obama (US) and Modi (India) resolved to strengthen ties and bilateral relations for getting benefits at national and international levels.

Twining (2007) highlighted that a series of bilateral agreements were finalized between India and the US. Both of them pledged for mutual cooperation on economic, defense and nuclear issues. Similarly, Ollapally (2005) also explained that complete framework of bilateral relations is the

only outcome of this visit. Likewise, it has laid the stone of long lasting bilateral ties, friendship and mutual cooperation of the states, which is the Indian burning desire. The Indians tend to view India's weight in the international politics and security, which remains formidable by the US that always takes India as a minor global player.

The analysis of news reports and rhetorical devices for designing frames of nuclear deal and agreements may reveal that the TOI has reported this matter comprehensively by exaggerating more about the agreements. However, the daily DAWN merely focused on the deals of the nuclear technology and both the leaders' remarks regarding their agreements.

For designing frames, the TOI used "categorization" device by the help of few phrases and lexical items such as *two largest democracies*, *breaking nuclear-deal deadlock*, *big-ticket issues to be resolved*. Under this device, the two states (India & US) are categorized in a positive style on the basis of their bilateral relations. However, the daily DAWN used "actor description" device for presenting neutral image with the help of few phrases such as *reached an agreement to provide civilian nuclear*, held up by US concerns over liability. In this type of rhetoric, actors are described in neutral style (van Dijk, 1997). This means that the TOI applied positive and the daily DAWN used neutral frame for reporting on the agreements and the nuclear deal.

### **Highly Symbolic Visit**

TOI reported that Obama's twice visit to India as a chief guest on the Indian Republic Day symbolized an *upturn in the roller coaster* bilateral relation of the states. On this occasion, Modi broken with the protocol as Obama landed on the airport by receiving and welcoming him personally. Moreover, it was expected that the both leaders' personal chemistry would bring positive change and must be a great worth for both the countries' leaders and especially for the Indians. During Obama's presence in the parade ground, he also broke with the secret service security code by remaining in the open air for more than two hours for the Republic Day celebrations, which was against the security guidelines, as the US President could not spend more than 40 to 45 minutes in an open air. Additionally, he also reached at the venue by his own private car which showed another move away from the traditions.

The daily Dawn, however, reported Obama's visit as not symbolic; rather a start of the new warmth in the strained bilateral ties. This is evident from Obama's twice visit to India during his tenure and his arrival on the Indian Republic Day as the chief guest. Moreover, Obama also received hug from Modi, who received him personally as he landed, which is entirely

against the protocol. These celebrations signify new closeness between the world's largest democracies.

This news reports may show that Obama's visit to India is not a usual one, but symbolic in the history of international relations. The president of US, Obama visited India twice and seemed excited on the Indian Republic Day when President Modi gave him a huge hug on the airport. Both of them did not take care of their protocol and tried to show their personal ties more than the bilateral relations.

Mohan (2015) also suggested this point of view that Obama's participation as a chief guest on Indian Republic Day is the start of new and warmth relations in the field of economy, bilateral relations, industry and strategic partnership. The body language of the presidents may also show close and amicable personal ties and friendship between them. Similarly, Twining (2007) also reported that Obama's visit to India was comprehensive and more than symbolic, as it laid the foundation of Strategic Cooperation between the US and India and agreement on extending the Defense Cooperation Agreement.

For reporting, the TOI adopted "hyperbolic rhetoric" by using some highly positive lexical items for showing affection and personal intimacy between the US and the Indian' leaders during this visit, such as *bear hug, Modi's personal invitation, two leaders, both leaders, personal chemistry, Obama's India's itinerary, Warm start*. The hyperbolic device is used to enhance, increase and exaggerate the meanings by representing oneself in a highly positive manner. On the contrary, the daily Dawn used "actor description" device for reporting in order to design neutral frame by using few phrases such as *receiving hug from Modi, symbolizing new warmth*. Similarly, for framing Modi's image "generalization" device was applied for highlighting his negative traits such as *Hindu nationalist, shunned by the US and EU, son of tea seller*. In actor description, actors are described in neutral way in order to eliminate their impact and generalization is applied for showing and optimizing negative features (van Dijk, 1997).

These narratives and phrases may show that both newspapers have framed Obama's visit to India as highly significant for directing the strained bilateral ties into the warmth one, which may evident from the body language of the leaders. Similarly, the TOI may design highly positive frame about the significance of this visit by focusing more on Obama and Modi's activities. However, the daily Dawn reported in a neutral way and presented only the required information.

### **Obama's Early Leave**

The TOI reported that Obama departed India slightly early for traveling to Saudi Arabia on the death of King Abdullah instead of a planned

visit to the Taj Mahal. However, the daily Dawn reported that his cancellation for visiting Taj Mahal would deprive the country from the top tourist attraction at the time of government efforts to increase the visitors' numbers. Moreover, many people thanked Obama on social media website for orchestrating a clean-up of the mausoleum in the town of Agra, built by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan for his beloved empress, who died during childbirth in 1631.

TOI report merely focused on the reason of early leave in order to lessen the bad effects of not visiting the Taj Mahal. However, the daily DAWN concentrated on the aftermaths of not visiting the Taj Mahal that generated funds for India, although it was built by a Muslim ruler Shah Jahan. Moreover, it also included people's views those were tired of dirt and dust on this historical place. It may mean that DAWN has looked the issue minutely for highlighting the negative impact but TOI has tried to reduce this impression.

For reporting, the TOI adopted "euphemism" device such as *depart slightly early* to make lessen the effects of the social reality that may present a negative picture (van Dijk, 1997). In contrast, the daily DAWN used hyperbolic device in order to highlight the negative features of this visit by using few phrases such as *cancel a planned trip, cutting short, hundred cleaners hired to spruce up the white marble, curfew like, deprive the country's top tourist attraction, orchestrating a clean-up*. Hyperbole is semantic rhetorical device applied in order to exaggerate the negative representation (Van Dijk, 1997).

These narratives and use of lexical items may mean that the TOI has framed neutral image of Obama's early leave, but Dawn has reported the same news in a slightly negative frame by including comments of the social media websites and the historical reference to Shah Jahan that represented the peak of Muslims' era in the Sub-continent.

### **Data Analysis & Discussion: Different News Reports**

The analysis of the two newspapers reports different from one another regarding Obama's visit to India is given below:

#### **Times of India**

##### **Indo-US and Russia**

The TOI has reported that India will continue to work with Russia that is the biggest defense supplier to India and is even making cordial and bilateral relationships with the US. It may mean that India is not ready to leave Russia at any cost because it is offering India weapons and defense arsenals. At the same time, India wishes to focus on its relation with US. This narrative may show the positive frame of India's role between the two

world giants. It may be evident that India welcomes the US move of bilateral relations, but it may not agree to have such relations at the expense of Indo-Russian relations as both countries share a long history of cordial relations in the form of Indo-Russian treaty, India-Russia Declaration of Strategic Partnership signed by Indian PM Vajpayee and Putin in October 2000 (Scott, 2011).

For reporting, the TOI used “actor description” device by using few phrases such as *continue working with Russia, biggest defense supplier* for presenting the importance of Russia for India. Actor description deals with the style used to describe actors (Russia, India) involved in an action for designing discourse (van Dijk, 1997). It may mean that TOI has framed Indo-Russian relations in a positive way where Russia is important for India more than the US.

### **Modi and Obama’s Personal Interaction**

The personal interaction between Modi and Obama and their intimacy broke the deadlock on nuclear deal, which was the real source of stalled bilateral relations of the States. Moreover, Obama on the last stage of his presidency wanted to have bright relation with India to support his report card. Similarly, he was expected to seek friendship and nurture relationship with Modi, who was a *persona non grata* in Washington. Obama and Modi both rose from the modest home to enter in the political elite dominated and preoccupied by the powerful families. Both were “outsiders” and ran inspirational election campaigns by using communication technology to change the course of their nations. It may mean that TOI compares the two presidents’ personal life in order to highlight the personal intimacy and friendliness. Moreover, both of them are presented as champions who won the mind and heart of their masses.

For reporting this interaction, the TOI applied “hyperbolic” devices such as *enjoyed a close friendship, Obama, Modi rose from modest home, transactional leaders, hugging each other, their personal chemistry, outsiders, nurture friendship with persona non grata*, which might refer to the strategy of exaggerating positive self-representation (van Dijk, 1997). This narrative may design a positive frame of the leaders’ political lives, friendship and achievements. Moreover, it may show that not only bilateral relations are going to reach at zenith during their respective periods/tenures, but the personal intimacy and cordiality of the leaders are also improving conspicuously.

### **DAWN**

#### **Indo-US Joint Strategic Vision**

The daily Dawn reported that President Obama and PM Modi agreed for joint strategic vision in Asia for strengthening regional and

economic development, energy linkage and people to people cooperation. Analysts also said that close relations between two for making central Asia their destination for all round connectivity shows that Pakistan is no longer in US agenda. Moreover, they affirm to have regional security, collaboration and sustainable development from Africa to East Asia for free navigation and freedom of over flight throughout the region especially in South China Sea. This reference to over flight is used to stop Pakistan civilians' plans from using its airspace. However, Pakistan was in reference only in context of terrorism throughout the whole trip.

This news report may show that the role of Pakistan is less in the regional decision making process as compared to India, because a comprehensive package of agreement was designed between India and the US. Similarly, the name of Pakistan is used only with the reference to regional terrorism.

Chou (2005) also explained that the history of the US-Pak relations reveals that former one always takes the latter as an asset for its expansion policies, simply by giving a peanut of monetary aids and leaves it in lurch after achieving its objectives. Same history is going to be repeated by alienating Pakistan from the rest of the world in order to increase India's image and hegemony at the regional level by associating Pakistan with the context of regional security issues.

For reporting, the daily Dawn used "implication" device in order to enable the reader to understand from the context by using few phrases such as *Central Asia as a destination, clear give away for Pakistan's role, important drivers of regional and global growth, safeguarding maritime security, freedom of navigation and over flight throughout the region, stop Pakistan's civilian planes from using its airspace, Pakistan named in the context of terrorism, shaping international security, regional and global peace, prosperity and stability, regional connectivity*. This rhetorical device is mostly applied to enable the readers to understand and infer the meanings from the context (van Dijk, 1997). This narrative and use of lexical items and phrases may frame the negative image of the US policies towards Pakistan.

From the above mentioned analysis and discussion, it may be inferred that both newspapers designed positive, neutral and negative frames in order to educate and inform their respective readers by incorporating their national and domestic ideologies in their rhetoric. Moreover, both of them provide more or less the same information by structuring it according to the demands and needs of their domestic policies and the readers' mindset. Similarly, the essence of this visit is nothing except to establish India's regional hegemony to counter the China's role in the

region. Likewise, the US-Pak relations also could not flourish and establish anymore, because Indo-Pak share fraught history, skirmish situation at the Line of Control (LoC) and hostile borders. However, both are nuclear powers in the region and consider one another rival, in such situation it may become very challenging for the US to have equal ground relations with both the states.

This study could not cover the historical relations of Indo-Pak and US relations, because it focused more on whatever was happening during Obama's visit to India. Similarly, major attention was given on the bilateral relations of the two regional giants India and Pakistan with reference to the US influence on them. In this context, future research could be done by including the historical context of trilateral relations of the US, India and Pakistan. Moreover, if possible more than two newspapers reports can be included from the three countries in order to conduct an in-depth and comprehensive study.

## **Conclusion**

Media discourse is effective in destroying or establishing certain images and ideologies in the readers' minds related to any issues whether at national or international level. In the light of findings, the US president's visit to India by ignoring Pakistan is a significant development, which shows the new US approach and policy shift from Pakistan to India entirely. However, the US is not in favor of removing Pakistan completely from its agenda, as India and Pakistan both are necessary for achieving its aims in the region. But, Indo-Pak conflicted history and fraught situation at border (LoC) is making this scenario adverse, which may be evident from the negative image of Pakistan framed by the TOI and the neutral or less positive image of India framed by the daily Dawn. It may also be inferred from the scenario that the US could not get success in accomplishing its objectives of countering militancy and terrorism, until and unless the neighboring atomic powers remove their enmities by resolving all issues.

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