

Framing of Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) in Pakistani English Leading Newspapers, A Historic Regime Change Movement.

Dr. Aqsa Iram Shahzadi

Assistant Professor, Institute of Media and Communication Studies,
Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan (mrsaqsairam@bzu.edu.pk)

Ayesha Nawaz

Lecturer, Govt Gordon Graduate College, Rawalpindi.
(ayesha97nawaz@gmail.com)

Faisal Rehman

M.Phil Scholar, Institute of Media and Communication Studies, Bahauddin
Zakariya University, Multan

Abstract

The research explored the frames used to explain the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) in two mainstream English newspapers of Pakistan, The Nation and Daily Times for the sake of coding different frames used in these newspapers. For this study the researchers have analyzed 197 editorials that were related to PDM only and were published on the editorial pages of both the newspapers. Census study was applied for quantitative content analysis methodology, so all the editorials related to positive or negative coverage of Pakistan Democratic Movement were studied under this particular study. The theoretical framework linked to this research is framing theory of media. The data was coded in the preexisting categories of gaming frame, strategic framing, interpretative framing, Objective framing, political balance, political imbalance, personalization, institutionalization, negative framing and positive framing of Pakistan Democratic Movement. The analysis reveals that The Nation used gaming frame personalization Negative framing for PDM and published more articles on editorial pages related to PDM as compared to Daily Times. Daily Times used personalization frame and positively framed PDM. Furthermore, strategic and interpretative frames were found in moderate amount while objective framing and political imbalance frame were not observed at all in the analysis in any newspaper and gaming frame was lesser used in Daily Times as compared to the Nation. the difference in the framing techniques of both the newspaper is that Daily Times framed the issue by being Pro PDM and The Nation framed it as Anti PDM.

Keywords: *Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), framing theory, Pakistani Press, historic movement*

1- Introduction

With the advent of technology, the communication gap has been reduced and the political awareness and participation of masses and institutions is revolutionized after

the advent of printing press and electronic media. The spread of information got quicker with the advent of different mediums (Paul Lazarsfeld, 1948). Pakistan is a democratic country, so it has various political parties with various manifestoes and interests (H Shehzad, 2022). The Ruling party right now is Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz which came into power after dismissal of X Prime Minister Imran Khan by running a country wide movement named as Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) formally came into limelight in September 2020. The agenda of this movement was to demolish the government of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI). They also have a slogan which in Urdu is “Vote ko izzat do” and in English is honor and respect the vote of the public of Pakistan (F Batool, 2021).

It is a coalition of opposite parties against sitting government. the issue stated in All Party Conference (APC) is that Imran Khan didn't come into power through fair and just election but by the selection of military establishment, Framing studies are always important as they exhibit the hidden policy of the newspaper slanting or angling process (Oxford Analytica, 2020). The newspapers chosen for the research are The Nation and Daily Times as these are two leading newspapers of Pakistan by circulation. The Pakistan Democratic Movement was launched on 20th September 2020 so the best representation of the movement in both the English dailies is after September 2020. So the researcher chose the coverage of three months period after the movement started, which includes October 2020, November 2020 and December 2020 as the coverage of PDM was maximum during these months (M Joshi, 2022).

Public is more interested in the narration of the events as compared to the construction of the story (TM Khan, 2020). But the construction of news is a very important factor to be examined by the researcher to access how social contexts are reproduced in the views of the readers. The readers of the newspapers are undergoing through a process of opinion building by being exposed to the framed content of the newspapers. The researcher explores how media presented the movement in his opinion articles or editorials. The researcher found out if the newspapers supported the manifesto of all the eleven parties? Or it supported the activities of PTI; the sitting government at that time? (M Mehdi, 2022) 2-

Literature Review

2.1 Framing Theory

Framing theory revolves around the methods and techniques to unfold the hidden meaning and tell the undescribed events hidden in the textual discourse or visual data (M Cissel, 2012). Media framing is directly explained by the statement that media personnel prepare the frames for communicating certain propaganda or highlighting a certain issue though an

identified process and put it in the minds of the masses. In the current study the frames used by The Nation and daily Times were analyzed using Framing Theory that how media present this issue. The framing through language consists of three key elements that are language, thought and forethought (Fairhurst, 1996). Media extends frames through use of words and pictures, placing the issue on prominent places in newspaper and continuously repeating the issue in every edition of the paper. Media affects the thought process of people by giving them food for thoughts with the help of angling the socio-political issues in a certain manner. Media affects the forethought when people act according to media (Becker, 1984).

According to Entman the opinion of any person can be shaped, molded or manipulated by the media (J Matthes, 2009). Many political parties run their campaigns on media to gain public attention and develop interest in their party motto, they use particular frames like the emotional and sacrificing frame used by Pakistan People Party in the name of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto to gain sympathy vote of the public. Framing affects when it is spontaneous and repetitive. Indian media uses sensationalism frame whenever it has to cover Pakistan (N Abraham, 2019).

According to Noam Chomsky, media framing intentionally or unintentionally, directly or indirectly always act upon the policy of that media organization (PJ Davies, 2022). One of the major factors is that if media frames the sitting government as negative the government will stop giving them advertisements which is the main source of revenue for newspapers and electronic mediums. The other factor is seeking public attention if the media doesn't add suspense, negativity, sensational or hype creating frames then the traffic on that newspaper or TV channel drops as people want entertainment as well information called infotainment (Neuendorf, 2018).

Western media uses the frame of communism against China and Russia for a very long period of time and now the frame changed to fear or War on terror (S F Pratt, 2022). War on terror is just the cover of the book actually western media is framing Muslims as Extremists and violent and somewhere as terrorist. People of Afghanistan, Syria and Kashmir were slanted as terrorists in western media while Pakistani media frames them as militants. This way the fear frame sustains in the routine of elite media the issue that creates fear in the minds of the masses change but fear frame sustains (Chomsky, 2002).

The major function of media is to spread diverse opinion, report socio-political events, provide platform for discussion and advocacy of rights, holding people accountable or watchdog role, window to the world role and making sure the involvement of masses in political process (C Naoroz, 2021). But while performing all these function the main function of gatekeeping affects the filtering and editing of the news according to the policy of organization, external pressures and editor's subjectivity. the claim of this movement was that Imran Khan is not elected but selected prime minister and the working bodies behind his selection are military establishment and agencies (DD Freyenberger, 2013).

2.2 Research Questions

RQ1: What are the most important frames in The Nation in the coverage of PDM?

RQ2: What are the most important frames in Daily Times in the coverage of PDM?

RQ3: What are the least prominent frames in The Nation in the coverage of PDM?

RQ4: What are the least prominent frames in Daily Times in the coverage of PDM?

RQ5: Which newspaper framed PDM positively?

RQ6: What is the difference between framing of both newspapers?

RQ7: Which newspaper gave more coverage to PDM?

RQ8: which newspaper playing up frame for PDM?

3- Methodology

The researchers have applied the best suited method to this study. The data of this study includes the editorial analysis and slanting perspective practiced by certain media channels (Riffe, 1997) The content analysis method is applied to quantitative investigations and researches that could produce reliable and generalizable results. Today framing is a frequently applied paradigm in the discipline of communication and can be accessed through content analysis (Bryant, 2004). The proper definition of content analysis was given as it is a

study of messages extended on media and is quantitative in nature irrespective of the context of the phenomenon and the traits of variables (Neuendorf, 2002).

The meaning of media text exploration was initiated in 20th century (Hansen, 1998) this

This study aims to analyze the representation of Pakistan Democratic Movement which was a coalition of 11 leading political parties of Pakistan against a single party Pakistan Tehreek E Insaaf. The population of this research is *Daily Times* and *The Nation*. These are the two most important and leading English dailies in terms of circulation. As it is a census study so sampling is not required. The unit of analysis of this study is the articles given on editorial pages of both the newspapers. The time frame opted for this study is three months from October 1st to December 30th 2020. This time frame is used because the movement started from September 2020 against the government of Imran Khan the claim of this movement was that Imran Khan is not elected but selected prime minister and the working bodies behind his selection are military establishment and agencies.

3.1 Operationalization of variables

Entman's (1993) coding criteria is used as the coding scheme for framing the editorial contents into their number of valence.

- Gaming frame
When media gives the political coverage of Individuals, parties or institutions as a game, game refers to an activity in which one group has to win while other has to loose (Albert, 2012)
- Strategic frame
This frame is macro level frame that includes the surrounding aspects of the political activity like planning, execution, failed or flawed strategies and policies (Albert, 2012)
- Interpretive frame
It is practiced where journalist enjoy more power and freedom of speech to control the publishing news. It is a subjective approach where the analysis of the journalist is given as it is without further filtering the news analysis (Skovsgaard, 2013).
- Objective frame
It is impartial reporting where the views of the journalists are not mixed with the data.
- Political balance

When newspapers give equal coverage to all the parties in a democratic system it is known as Political Balance (Hoppman, 2012).

- Political imbalance

When one party is given more coverage as compared to the other parties than this practice is known as political imbalance.

- Personalization

When the activities of politicians are regarded as an individual effort but not a team success or he is regarded solely for his own efforts not as a party leader or member than this is known as personalization (Aelst, et. al., 2017).

- Institutionalization

This is group work effort, when media such as newspaper comments on the group activity more rather than criticizing or appreciating single person then this is known as institutionalization which is opposite to personalization.

- Negativity

The news analysis mostly contains criticism on political practices, misconduct of politicians, their scandals, their failure and its causes, the allegations from masses are also part of routine while politically analyzing data in newspapers (Esser, 2017)

- Positivity

When the positive side of politicians is highlighted in the media like reporting related to development and successful execution of a plan it is called positive framing of that politician or party.

- Frequency

The frequency of occurrence of a particular angle (positive or negative) of a particular story reflects the policy of the newspaper especially when it comes to newspapers and particularly its editorial page.

- Placement

The placement of an event, story, photograph, caption, advertisement and cartoon is of supreme importance specially in creating the priority order among the audience. The placement can be of three types, stories on top of the page are the most important issues under the masthead then lesser important issues are placed in the middle and least important like letter to editor are placed in the bottom of the page.

4- Findings

Table no. 01

Framing Analysis of Editorial page of *The Nation*

Framing	October		November		December	
	Placement	Frequency	Placement	Frequency	Placement	Frequency
Gaming Frame	Middle	9	Top	7	Top	4
Strategic	Bottom	1	Top	2	Top	3
Interpretative	Top	2	Middle	4	Middle	2
Objective	0	0	0	0	Bottom	2
Political Balance	Bottom	2	Middle	2	Bottom	4
Political Imbalance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Personalization	Top	9	Top	8	Middle	5
Institutionalization	Middle	3	Bottom	2	Bottom	1
Negativity	Top	12	Top	9	Top	5
Positivity	Bottom	2	Bottom	3	Bottom	2
Monthly Total	40		37		28	
Total	105					

According to table.no.01, the gaming frame was used 9 times in editorials of October 2020 reflecting that this newspaper used the terms like Captain for Imran Khan and no ball and white ball or sixer for his activities and plans especially while reporting the content related to PDM. The next most prevalent frame used is personalization which means that this newspaper in its 9 editorials reflected the descriptions which appreciates the actions and statements of a single person rather than the whole party in terms of political scenario, The Nation criticized Nawaz Sharif, Asif Ali Zardari and Molana Fazl Ur Rehman

separately for their corruption cases, offshore companies, fake health issues and political fall rather than criticizing them as a whole in the articles, on the other hand the newspaper mostly appreciated the efforts of Imran Khan alone not the Whole Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf for its policies. The third most prominent frame in the newspaper is Negativity, The nation criticized PDM for its policies and called it as an alliance of corrupts, thieves and people who use to be thick enemies in the past. Gaming frame remained on the top or middle of the editorial page while personalization and negativity frame remained consistent on the top of the editorial page in the article under mast head. The total editorials which covered the issue of PDM during three months period are 105 which is more than the articles in Daily Times.

Table.no.2

Framing Analysis of editorial page of *Daily Times*

Framing	October		November		December	
	Placement	Frequency	Placement	Frequency	placement	Frequency
Gaming Frame	Middle	3	Middle	3	Bottom	1
Strategic	Top	3	Top	4	0	0
Interpretative	Bottom	2	Middle	7	Middle	4
Objective	Middle	2	Bottom	2	0	0
Political Balance	Bottom	3	Bottom	1	Bottom	3
Political Imbalance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Personalization	Middle	6	Top	3	Middle	4
Institutionalization	Bottom	4	Middle	2	Bottom	3
Negativity	Bottom	3	Bottom	1	Bottom	2
Positivity	Top	10	Top	7	Top	9
Monthly Total	36		30		26	
Total	92					

According to table.no.02, the gaming frame was used 3 times in editorials of October 2020 reflecting that this newspaper used lesser terms like Captain for Imran Khan and no ball and white ball or sixer for him especially while reporting the content related to PDM. The next most prevalent frame used is personalization which means that this newspaper in its 9 editorials reflected the linguistic discourse which appreciates the actions and statements of a single person rather than the whole party in terms of political scenario, Daily Times criticized Imran Khan a lot of times for selecting Usman Buzdar as CM of Punjab, a very wrong and provoking move that can lead him to failure, this newspaper supported PDM's objectives of fair elections and respect of vote. on the other hand the newspaper mostly appreciated the past efforts of Nawaz Sharif and criticizes Imran Khan as a story teller as he couldn't fulfil his promises related to the development in New Pakistan.. The third most prominent frame in the newspaper is Positivity, Daily Times strongly supported PDM for its policies and demand of dismissal of Imran Khan selected by military establishment. The positive framing of PDM was the most prevalent category observed from the data and all the editorial on top of the editorial page positive supported the members, policies and statements of PDM. The second most prevalent frame was personalization mostly published on the middle page articles. The last frame which remained evident among others is gaming that was mostly published on middle or bottom of the editorial page. The total number of articles that incorporated the matters related to PDM are 92 which is lesser than The Nation.

5- Discussion & Conclusion

A page is specified in the newspaper to publicize the editorial, editorial note, cartoon, opinion columns and letter to editors in English newspaper. The main editorial is published under the mast head of the newspaper. The layout of this page is novel from front page, back page and other pages of the newspapers. The extent of the article includes 200-500 words (Van Dijk, 1992). The routine includes collection, selection, angling, copy making, source addition and placement on the newspaper, printing and dissemination of information (Becker, 1984). The framing process includes the mixing of objective data which is 5W and 1H and the textual elements that are words and pictures with the background context of the study like subjective views of the editor and policy of the organization (Kosicki, 1993).

This research seeks the frames that the journalists penetrated in the editorial content of the data while covering the issue of Pakistan Democratic movement on the

editorial page of two leading English dailies, The Nation and Daily Times which are among the most circulated English newspapers of Pakistan.

RQ1: What are the most important frames in The Nation in the coverage of Pakistan Democratic Movement? The most important frames in The Nation are **game framing, personalization and negativity frame**. The number of occurrence of game frame based editorials is 9, personalization frame is also found in 9 editorials and the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) was framed as negative in 12 editorials. The words used that exhibited the usage of game frame were hit the ball, sixer, no ball, out and the words that depicted the usage of personalization frame are Imran Khan as an all-rounder, Nawaz Sharif as a corrupt and the one who faked his ailments to leave the jail and the court hearings, Bilawal Bhutto as useless Oxford grad. The words that reflected the negative framing of PDM in The Nation are alliance of thieves, alliance of foes with a long history of blaming each other and claiming that Imran Khan is right when he said that Sharif is attacking the Pakistan army on the behest of Indian friend Modi and Sharif brothers reading books behind bars.

RQ2: What are the most important frames in Daily Times in the coverage of Pakistan Democratic Movement? The most important frames in Daily Times are **personalization and positivity frame**. The number of occurrence of personalization frame is found in 6 editorials and the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) was positively framed in 10

editorials. Daily times also used the personalization frame to criticize the dull and incompetent nature of Buzdar the CM of PTI and quoted and criticized the statements of Imran Khan when he said I have no threat of opposition movement. The words that reflected the use of positive frames for all party alliance or PDM were continuous repetition of the slogan of PDM “respect the vote” and their cartoons criticized the poor performance of PTI government, a cartoon depicting Imran Khan holding a bowl and begging from IMF.

RQ3: What are the least Prominent frames in The Nation in the coverage of Pakistan Democratic Movement? The least important frame used in The Nation newspaper is **Strategic framing, political imbalance and objective framing** while the frames that were used in a moderate practice in The Nation are political balance, institutionalization and interpretative framing.

RQ4: What are the least Prominent frames in Daily Times in the coverage of Pakistan Democratic Movement? The least prominent frame used in Daily Times newspaper are **gaming frame, political imbalance and objective reporting** while the frames used in a moderate practice in Daily Times are interpretative frames, political balance and institutionalization frame.

RQ5: Which newspaper framed Pakistan Democratic Movement positively? The researchers analyzed The Nation and Daily Times and found out that Daily Times positively supported and portrayed PDM alliance. In routine practices of media there are two ways to positively frame an issue, individual, matter, event and organization, the first way is that the newspaper appreciates the efforts of one group and other practice is that it criticizes the activities of the other group. **Daily Times** used both the framing and slanting techniques to positively portray the Pakistan Democratic Movement. The words used by Daily Times to appreciate the PDM's manifesto and objectives are Polarized alliance vs government, establishment or the people are important; seeks PDM. The other slanting technique includes criticism of Imran Khan Government that it needs reforms, what happened with housing scheme, how government will handle opposition protest and cartoon reflecting Buzdar is wearing boots bigger than his size.

RQ6: What is the difference between framing of both newspapers? The major difference lies with the **choice of frames** The Nation used game framing to appreciate or simply stating the activities of Imran Khan and used the negative frame to criticize the members of Pakistan democratic Movement and their statements against military establishment. The other difference is that The Nation kept Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf on the **upper half page** of the editorial page and Daily Times kept representing the Pakistan democratic Movement on the upper half editorial page.

RQ7: Which newspaper gave more Coverage to Pakistan Democratic Movement?

The Nation gave more coverage to the Pakistan democratic movement but the intention of frequently publishing editorials on this issue was to clear the image of Imran Khan and to counter the criticism that PTI government was facing. The total number of editorials published on the issue related to PDM on the editorial page of The Nation during three months period (October, November, and December) are 105.

RQ8: Which newspaper used playing up frame for Pakistan Democratic Movement?

The newspaper that used the playing up technique for framing Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) is **Daily Times**. It placed all the editorials related to Pakistan Democratic Movement on the upper half of the editorial page throughout the time period of three months and gave it importance by allocating 3 to 4 columns to these editorials most of the time and positively framed the members of Pakistan democratic movement.

The literature suggests that the headlines in news and other newspaper articles are the reflection of the editor's subjective approach, his partisanship bias and the inclined political policy of the newspaper (F Batool, 2021). The editorials of Daily times exhibited Pro PDM policy as they gave more positive coverage to PDM objectives and members while The Nation remained biased towards criticizing PDM members mainly on the basis of corruption and money laundering charges they hold. The prominent frames in both the newspapers were personalization and positive or negative framing of PDM. Gaming frame remained observable in The Nation whenever it commented on Imran Khan's plans and actions.

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