

**A Comparative Analysis of the Editorials of ‘The Nation and ‘The News’:  
The Case Study of Pak-India Relations Issues (2008-2010)**

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**Abstract**

The study aims at investigating as how Pak-India relations issues is being represented and portrayed in two leading Pakistan's National newspapers. Two elite newspapers The Nation and The News have been selected for research. This study analyzed the editorials of both newspapers published from February 2008 to February 2010 as the universe of the study. Theoretical inspiration is drawn from the postulates of Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model and framing theory. This research study has employed a combination of the quantitative and qualitative techniques of content analysis to analyze the contents.

**Key words:** Pakistan, India, Relations, Kashmir, Mumbai attacks, Negotiation and Terrorism

**Introduction**

Pakistan-India relations have remained sour ever since the partition of India in 1947. Even before they gained their independence from the British, the two main political parties in India, one representing the mainly Hindu community and the other the Muslims of India were bitterly opposed to each other's political philosophy. Whereas the All India Muslim League, led by Mohammad Ali Jinnah, was demanding a separate country for the Muslims of India, the Indian National Congress, led by M.K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, was against the division of the subcontinent. India and Pakistan are as separate as two nations can be in terms of ideology, polity and nation building.

Pakistan India share much of their common geographic location, but differ clearly in religious demographics. India is a secular country with Hindu majority at about 80% of the total population and Muslims are almost 13% of the total population. On the other hand, Pakistan is an Islamic country with 97% population being Muslim, and only about 1.8% Hindus. Diplomatic relations between the two are defined by the history of the violent partition of British India into these two states, and many military conflicts and territorial disputes thereafter.

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The two countries have not been able to attain a normalization of mutual relations. The two countries have been living in a state of precarious co-existence, frequently disturbed by tension on borders and outbreak of hostilities, like the wars of 1948, 1965 and 1971. Even after fighting the three wars, both countries do not seem poised to building a durable and permanent peace in South Asia; their governments are busy in acquiring more and more armaments and issuing inflammatory statements against each other that could only farther aggravate the already tenuous relations between them. The main area of conflict between both countries is the issue of Kashmir. A major clash between India and Pakistan took place in the Kargil sector on the same issue.

This adversarial relationship has profoundly affected the progress and affluence of the two nations and the quality of the life of the people on both sides of the Great Divide. Almost forty percent of the people of both countries live under the poverty line. In many areas people have no access to clean drinking water. Children, who survive, in spite of unhygienic conditions, have a life span much shorter than in prosperous societies. Both countries have a low literacy rate. Pakistan, more than, population growth due, among other reasons, to lack of adequate funds. Foreign monetary assistance is needed to make up energy shortfalls and built the basic infrastructure required for rapid development. But financial resources are diverted towards building up defense forces to deal with a possible outbreak of hostilities.

In the collective interest of subcontinent, it is imperative for India and Pakistan to develop a policy of mutual trust, confidence and cooperation. It is true that obstacle created by historical antecedents cannot be removed overnight but sincere efforts can be made to have a positive and onward looking approach to various problem.

In South Asia peace and stability would undoubtedly encourage a sense of security and enhance cooperation. But peace can neither be accomplished merely by wishes nor by unilateral conciliatory moves. The quest for peace must be considered a two-way traffic, and all parties must demonstrate sincerely and commitment to this noble goal.

For last few years, a slow & steady peace process is in its way. Means of communication (electronic, print) play very meaningful role in determining the course of events initiating the peace process. Newspapers are very active in this regard. They have remarkable catalytic quality to attract and influence the attitudinal level of those who really matters in the domain of policy formation from basic level to the apex.

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Now a day`s Pakistani press is performing a great effort in creating awareness among people about normalization of relations between both countries, as well as they are projecting the voice of common man regarding this issue.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study deals with the “Indo-Pak relations” and this is the important aspect of study. From 1947 to 2010, both the countries have tense situation. Line of control is always protected by the army of both the countries. Despite that, Kashmir and Kargil conflicts led both the countries to a situation where there is no way out for friendship. Water crisis, Siachen dispute, Samjhota Express issue, Bomb blast in Indian parliament, Mumbai attacks and the situation of Balochistan are the major causes of conflicts.

The present global political scenario with regional importance has once again highlighted the position of South Asia. The major obstacle in the region for political and economic blocking is Pakistan – India relations.

This study is going to examine that whether the Elite English newspapers (The News and The Nation) in their editorial has played a positive or negative, biased or unbiased role towards government policies regarding new developments in Pakistan-India relations during 2008-2010.

### **Significance of Print Media**

Press is one of the most original and earliest forms of mass media to articulate human communication needs. In Pakistan, press is considered as the most popular, credible and responsible member of the mass media channels. It is also considered that the print media is more credible than electronic media and plays an important role regarding the national and international issues. Print media reflects the real picture of society.

The freedom of press means that press would take a free independent posture on the issues of national interest. The concept of freedom of press and of speech and expression, although a constitutional assurance, played elusive to the press all along; sometimes due to the democratic rulers, and other times because of the dictatorial governments. It is only after a long period and hard struggle that the press in Pakistan has been able to win a considerable degree of freedom itself.

## **Significance of the Newspapers**

The reason of the selection of these two newspapers (The News and The Nation) is that these dailies have huge circulation and reputation among the readers. These newspapers are playing an important role in covering the national as well as international issues and providing information with healthy criticism and responsibility to educate the masses.

### **The Nation**

The Nation has a special position in Pakistan's media, as the most respected publication in English, with firm and constructive views and excellent news coverage.

The Nation is a part of the Nawa-e-Waqt group and thus belong to the oldest news paper tradition in the country, which stated when Hamid Nizami founded Naw-e-Waqt the day the Pakistan resolution was passed in 1940 The Nation is internationally the most quoted Pakistani news paper. The primary objective of editorial page of the news paper is to focus public attention and provide readership on current issues of political, economic and social importance of the city, state, country and world.

Mr. Majeed Nizami is its Chairman and editor in chief. He needs no introduction. One of the most powerful figures in Pakistani media and an eminent and principled journalist, his 46 years in the print (and now electronic) media have been the most influential of any of his peer.

### **The News**

The news is published by the Jang group of newspapers. Mir Shakil-ur-Rehman is its editor-in-chief. It serves both metropolitan and elite audience. It has sizeable staff deputed at Lahore, Karachi and Rawalpindi/ Islamabad and in different other countries. Policy makers, other official and attentive public do not miss its editorials.

The selected dailies belong to the 'known groups of publications'. These newspapers appeared regularly during the period under consideration (2008-2010) and are easy to access from the libraries. The researcher would like to examine the role of newspapers in the perspective of Pakistan-India relations through the editorials of these papers.

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### **What is an Editorial?**

"An editorial is an article in a newspaper which gives the opinion of the editor or publisher on a topic or item of news".

"Special article in a newspaper, giving an opinion on some topical issue, usually written by the editor"

An editorial means a newspaper article written or sanctioned by the editor of a newspaper or magazine article that gives the opinions of the editors or publishers or an expression of opinion that resembles such an article, more specifically an editorial is an article in a newspaper or periodical which gives the views of those who decide its policy. In view of the above definition, an editorial can be described as being actually the essence and soul of the newspaper, quite different from news and feature writing.

The editorial is an unsigned institutional opinion on an issue or event that appeared in approximately the same place on the editorial page each day.

### **Rationale for Selecting Editorial**

The researcher focuses upon the editorials for analyzing Pak-India relations in the newspaper daily The News and The Nation because of the following reasons;

Editorials are considered as the soul of the newspapers, reflector of the 'newspaper policy' and the voice of the owners or editors. Editorials are the channel from which the editor's communicate his / her comments, analyses and suggestions to the readers of the publication. So, an editorial can be called as the subjective viewpoint of the editor. But over the period of time, the editorial scope has broadened. Now just presenting the editor's viewpoint is not the function of editorial. To inform, interpret, evaluate, extrapolate, suggest, criticize, persuade, guide and much more are the expected functions of an editorial in this new age of information. A free and independent newspaper has editorial policy of its own which it follows both in theory and practice.

Colonel Robert W. McCormik states that a newspaper is an entity, not a limb of the greater organization. Its editorial is the product of an organization rather than the work of individual.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical framework is considered to be an essential part of the research. It is infact the base of any study. There are many theories encompassing media's relations with the outside world. But no theory in the discipline of mass communication can be termed as a universal theory. Various scholars go on interpreting media's relationship with the society differently. However, it is a fact that it is essentially the media, which tells us about the world outside our direct contact. The researcher has found the following theories which are very helpful for this study:

- Herman and Chomsky's Propaganda Model
- Theory of Framing

## **Research Methodology objectives**

The research questions would examine that how the Pakistani English newspapers "The News" and "The Nation" react or frame the various ups and downs in Pak-India relationship. This study covers the answers of following research questions.

1. How much coverage is given on the issues under discussion Pak-India relations by "The Nation" Lahore from Feb, 2008 to Feb, 2010?
2. How much coverage is given on the issues under discussion of Pak-India relations by "The News" Lahore from Feb, 2008 to Feb, 2010?
3. How is the Pak-India relations issues treated by "The Nation" Lahore?
4. How is the Pak-India relations issues treated by "The News" Lahore?
5. What are the similarities and differences among "The Nation" and "The News" Lahore in the editorial coverage on the subject under discussion?

## **Hypothesis 1:**

The News supports Pakistan's foreign policy on Pak-India relations.

## **Rationale 1:**

Due to its progressive approach The News has a supportive attitude towards government's policy on Pak-India relations issues.

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### **Hypothesis 2:**

The Nation opposes Pakistan's foreign policy on the under discussion issues of Pak-India relations.

### **Rationale 2:**

The Nation is considered a conservative nationalist news paper and seemed to be conservative towards its set principles regarding Pak-India relations, so due to this reason The Nation is not in favour of Pakistan's government policy towards India.

### **Methodology**

To address the research questions, content analysis technique has been used in this study. Both the quantitative and qualitative techniques of the research have been used for the study. Content analysis is by definition a quantitative method. The purpose of the method is to identify and count the occurrence of specified characteristics or dimensions of text, and through this, to be able to say something about the messages, representations of such text and there wider social significance. The classic and much quoted definition of content analysis comes from the first major review of the method, Bernard Berelson's content analysis in communication research, published in 1952: *Th*

### **The Universe**

This study considered the editorials of The Nation, The News, from February 2008 to February 2010 as the universe of the study.

### **Sample Frame**

The editorials of both the newspapers on the issues Kashmir, negotiations and Mumbai attacks regarding Pakistan-India relations during February 18, 2008 to February 18, 2010 are selected as the sample frame.

### **Sample Size**

The editorials having same dates of both the newspapers on the issues under discussion of Pak-India relations are drawn as the sample size of the study.

### **Unit of Analysis**

In this study, the unit of analysis is the editorials of The News and The Nation.

## Findings

This chapter comprises quantitative and qualitative findings. Quantitative findings show comparative topical coverage of the editorials of 'The News' and 'The Nation' on the issues of Kashmir, Negotiations and Mumbai attacks. While the qualitative findings show the comparative topical direction of the editorials of both the newspapers. Five tables for each analysis along with the figures have been compiled in this regard to illustrate the Pak-India relations through a comparative study of editorials of 'The News' and 'The Nation' During 2008-2010.

Before this the researcher sorted out the topics that were focused on the selected editorials of both newspapers. These topics are "Kashmir" (Talks over Kashmir, LOC conflict, tension etc), "Negotiations" (offer the talks, rejection of peace over true composite dialogue and "Mumbai attacks".

**Table 1.1. Comparative Topical coverage of The News and The Nation on the issues of Kashmir, Negotiations and Mumbai Attacks**

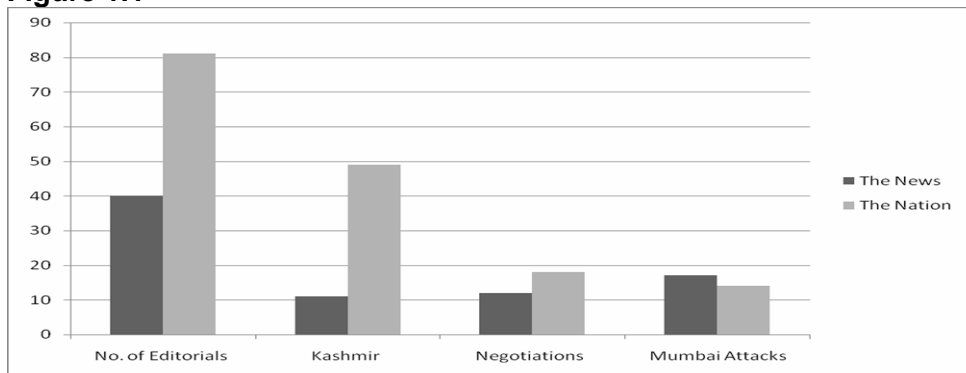
Newspapers	No. of Editorials	Kashmir	Negotiations	Mumbai Attacks
The News	40	11	12	17
		27.5%	30%	42.5%
The Nation	81	49	18	14
		60.5%	22.22%	17.28%
Total	121	60	30	31
		49.59%	24.79%	25.62%

This table shows that coverage of the editorials of The News and The Nation on the issues, Kashmir, Negotiations and Mumbai attacks. The table illustrates that both newspapers published 121 editorials on the issues under discussion. Out of them 60 editorials (49.59%) published on Kashmir issue, 30 editorials (24.79%) published on negotiations and 31 editorials (25.62%) published on Mumbai attacks. The News gave 27.5% coverage on Kashmir issue, 30% to negotiations and gave 42.5% editorial coverage to Mumbai attacks. On the other hand The Nation wrote 60.50% on Kashmir issue, 22.22% on negotiations and 17.28% on Mumbai attacks. This table reflects that overall the issue of Mumbai attacks was more discussed by The News while The Nation discussed comparatively more Kashmir issue than the other two issues during the period of study.



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**Figure 1.1**



**Table 1.2. Comparative Topical direction of editorials of “The News” and “The Nation” with reference to topics**

**1. Kashmir Issues**

<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>No. of Editorials</b>	<b>Favourable</b>	<b>Unfavourable</b>	<b>Neutral</b>
The News	11	63.64%	0%	36.36%
	27.5%			
The Nation	49	75.51%	24.49%	0%
	60.5%			

This table shows that The News published 11 editorials and The Nation published 49 editorials on Kashmir issue. It indicates that 27.5% editorials of The News covered the issue of Kashmir while 60.5% editorials of The Nation covered the Kashmir issue. The News published 63.64% editorials in favour, and 36.36% neutral while The Nation published 75.5% editorials in favour and in 24.49% editorials opposed the government’s policy on Kashmir issue. This table reflects that mostly matter of the both newspapers on Kashmir issue is in favour of the government’s policy.

Figure 1.2

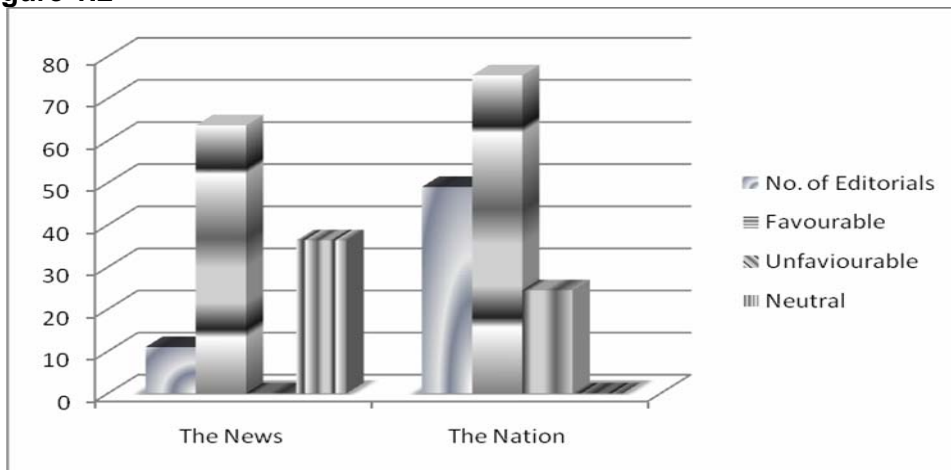


Table 1.3

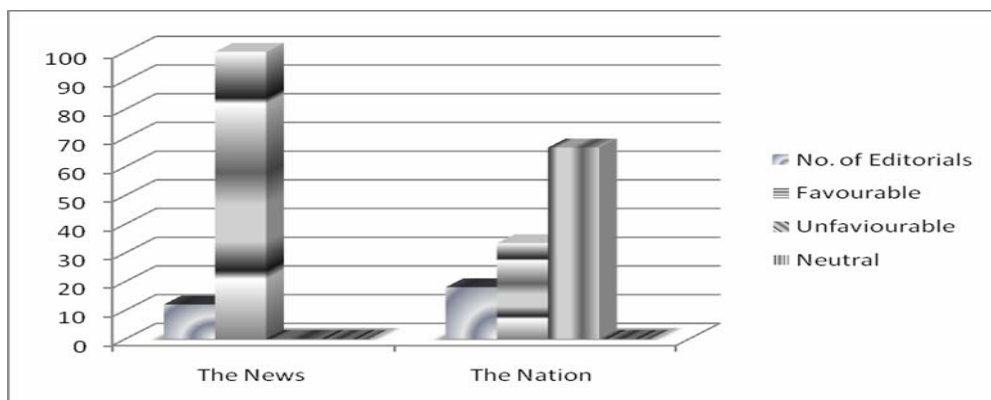
## 2. Negotiations

Newspapers	No. of Editorials	Favourable	Unfavourable	Neutral
The News	12	100%	0%	0%
	30%			
The Nation	18	33.33%	66.67%	0%
	22.2%			

According to this table The News published 12 editorials and The Nation published 18 editorials on the topic of negotiations. It indicates that 30% editorials of The News and 22.22% editorials of The Nation covered the topic of negotiations. This table point out that 100% editorials of The News in favour of the government’s policy whereas 33.33% editorials of The Nation supported government’s policy and 66.67% are opposed towards government’s policy on the topic of negotiations. This table shows that The News fully supported the government’s policy while The Nation mostly opposed the government on negotiation.

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**Figure 1.3**



**Table 1.4**

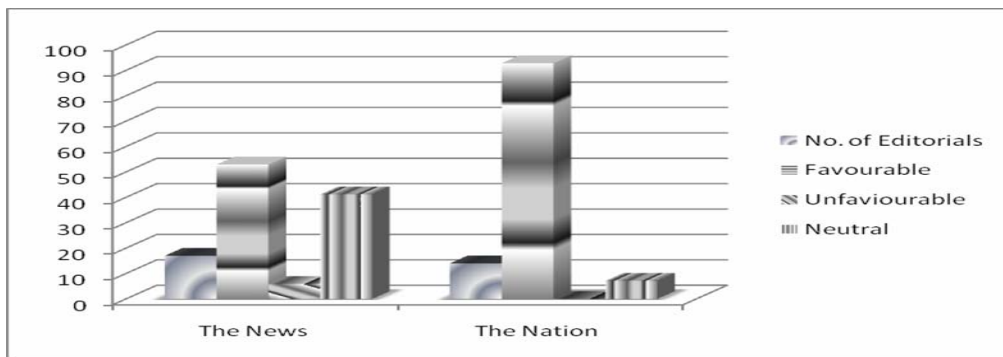
**3. Mumbai Attacks**

<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>No. of Editorials</b>	<b>Favourable</b>	<b>Unfavourable</b>	<b>Neutral</b>
News Paper	No. of Editorials	Favaourable	Unfavourable	Neutral
The News	17	52.94%	5.88%	41.18%
	42.5%			
The Nation	14	92.85%	0%	7.15%
	17.28%			

This table illustrates that The News published 17 editorials and The Nation published 14 editorials on the issue of Mumbai attacks. It indicates that 42.5% editorials of The News and 17.28% editorials of The Nation covered the issue of Mumbai attacks. The News published 52.94% contents in favour, 5.88% against and 41.18% neutral regarding Pak government stance on the issue of Mumbai attacks. While The Nation published 92.85% contents in favour, 7.15% neutral and gave no critical coverage to the issue of Mumbai attacks.

The table shows that The News and The Nation supported the government stance on Mumbai attacks and neutral coverage of The News on under discussion issue is also significant.

**Figure 1.4**



**Table 1.5**

**Total Comparative Topical direction of editorials of editorials of “The News and The Nation” with reference to topics**

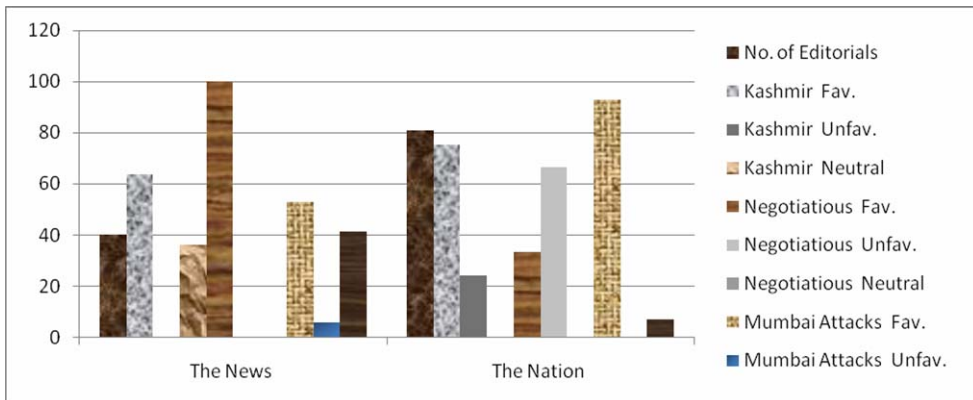
News papers	No. of Editorials	Kashmir Issue			Negotiations		Mumbai Attacks			
		Fav. %	Unfav. %	Neutral %	Fav. %	Unfav. %	Neutral %	Fav. %	Unfav. %	Neutral %
The News	40	63.64	00	36.36	100	00	00	52.94	5.88	41.18
The Nation	81	75.51	24.49	00	33.33	66.67	00	92.85	00	7.15

This table illustrates the total comparative direction of editorials of The News and The Nation on the issue under discussion with reference to topics, Kashmir issue, Negotiations and Mumbai attacks. It reveals that on Kashmir Issue, both newspapers supported the government’s policy. On the issue of negotiations The News fully supported the government’s policy while The

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Nation opposed the government’s policy. On the issue of Mumbai Attack, both newspapers supported the government’s stance and The News also gave some neutral coverage to this issue.

**Figure 5.5**



### **Results**

In the light of findings and analysis this section deals with the results of the research questions and testing of hypothesis.

#### **Question No.1**

How much coverage was given to the issues under discussion of Pak-India relations by The News Lahore from Feb, 2008 to Feb, 2010?

Findings reveal that “The News” Lahore published 40 editorials during the period of this study on under discussion issues. The news wrote 27.5% editorials on Kashmir issue, it wrote 30% editorials on Negotiations and 42.5% editorials on Mumbai attacks.

#### **Question No.2**

How much coverage was given to the issues under discussion of Pak-India relations by “The Nation” Lahore from Feb, 2008 to Feb, 2010?

Findings state that “The Nation” Lahore published 81 editorials during the period of the study on under discussion issues. The Nation published 60.50% editorials on Kashmir issue, 22.22% editorials on Negotiations and 17.28% editorials on Mumbai attacks.

### **Question No.3**

How was the Pak-India relations issues treated by “The News” Lahore?

The News gave coverage to selected issues Kashmir issue, Negotiations and Mumbai attacks. Findings reveal that The News favoured the government stance in 63.64% editorials while it remained neutral in 36.36% editorials on Kashmir issue. On Negotiations The News supported the government policy in 100% editorials. The News supported government policy on Mumbai attacks in 52.94% editorials it opposed the government policy in 5.88% editorials and it remained neutral in 41.18% editorials.

Findings shows that The News supported government policy on all under discussion issues in 70% editorials while it opposed government in 2.5% editorials and it remained neutral in 27.5% editorials. It means that The News supported government policy on Pak-India relations and its neutral editorial coverage is also significant.

So, the hypothesis No.1 that The News supports Pakistan’s foreign policy on Pak-India relations issues, proved true.

### **Question No.4**

How was the Pak-India relations issues treated by “The Nation” Lahore?

The Nation gave more editorial coverage on Pak-India relations issues, Kashmir issue, Negotiations and Mumbai attacks. Findings shows that The Nation supported government policy on Kashmir issue in 75.15% editorials while in 24.49% editorials opposed the government policy. On negotiation, The Nation criticized the government in 66.67% editorials and favored the government policy in 33.33% editorials. The Nation gave 92.85% supportive editorial coverage to government on Mumbai attacks and it remained neutral in 7.14% editorials.

Overall finding reveals that The Nation favored the Government policy on Pak-India relations issues in 69.14% editorials while it opposed the government in 29.63% editorials and it remained neutral in 1.23% editorials.

There is a common perception that The Nation is a conservative nationalist newspaper and it opposes the government foreign policy on Pak-India relations issues but according to the findings of the study The Nation supported the government policy in 69.14% editorials and it opposed the

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government stance in 29.63% editorials while it remained neutral in 1.23% editorials.

So, according to the findings the hypothesis No.2 that The Nation opposes Pakistan's foreign policy on Pak-India relations issues, is rejected.

### **Question No.5**

What were the similarities and differences among "The Nation" and "The News" on the editorial coverage on the subject under discussion?

Findings shows that quantitatively, the editorial coverage of The Nation was double as compared to that of The News because The Nation published 81 editorials and The News published 40 editorials. On Kashmir issue, The News supportive attitude was 63.64% more than its neutral attitude while the supportive attitude of The Nation was 75.5% and it opposed in 24.49% editorials.

On negotiations, The News gave 100% supportive coverage to government of Pakistan while The Nation supported in 33.33% editorials and opposed government's stance in 66.66% editorials. On the issue of Mumbai attacks the attitude of The News was 52.94% supportive, 5.88% critical and 41.18% neutral while The Nation supported the government's stance in 92.85% editorials and remained neutral in 7.14% editorials.

### **Conclusion**

The objective of the study was to examine the attitude of Pakistan Press towards government's stand. Whether it has favored its government or not on under discussion issues with India. How much coverage did the press give to Pak-India relations during the period of the study? Did the press support or oppose government on issues with India and what were the similarities and differences between the two English newspapers on the subject under study.

To study the attitude of the press towards government's stance on issues with India, The News and The Nation were selected from English press because both are very well known English newspapers and they always give importance to international issues concerning Pakistan. This study based on quantitative and qualitative content analysis in which the researcher selected the editorials of The News and The Nation having same dates on the issues under study of Pak-India relations, during Feb, 2008 to Feb 2010. Editorials show the opinion and policy of a newspaper organization. Two coders were trained and assigned to identify the issues, directions and items of selected editorials whether they were supportive to government policy opposite or

neutral policy. Coding sheet and instruction of coding were also provided to the coders. Three topics Kashmir issue, Negotiations and Mumbai attacks were deduced from the editorials of the both newspapers. Researcher compared, analyzed the deduced issues, both newspaper with each other and with the standpoint of the government. In the light of findings, analysis & discussion the answers of research questions were tried to find out.

The quantitative findings of content analysis of editorials of The News and The Nation from Feb, 2008 to Feb, 2010 reveal that both newspapers gave coverage to Pakistan India relations in their editorials. Total number of editorials about Pak-India relations in The News and The Nation was 121. Among them, The Nation published 81 editorials while The news published 40 editorials. On Kashmir issue 60 editorials were published. Out of 60 editorials, The Nation published 49 editorials while The News published 11 editorials. On Negotiations, 30 editorials were published; The Nation published 18 editorials while The News published 12 editorials. On Mumbai attacks, 31 editorials were published, The Nation published 14 Editorials whereas The News published 17 editorials.

Qualitative findings show that The News supported government on Kashmir issue in 63.64% editorials and remained neutral in 36.36% editorials. The News gave 100% supportive coverage to government on negotiations. On Mumbai attacks, The News supported government s stance in 52.94% editorials, criticized in 5.88% and remained neutral in 41.18% editorials. On Kashmir issue, The Nation supported in 75.5% editorials, criticized in 24.49% editorials. On Negotiations, The Nation supported government in 33.33% editorials and criticized in 66.67% editorials. On the issue of Mumbai attacks, The Nation supported the government's stance in 92.85% editorials and remained neutral in 7.14% editorials while it gave no critical coverage to government on this issue.

Findings reveal that The Nation supported the government's policy on Kashmir issue; Mumbai attacks and it opposed the government's policy on Negotiations. The Nation emphasized on the permanent solution of the Kashmir issue according to UN resolutions. It believes that the future of peace in South Asia by and large depends on the Kashmir issue. The Nation endorsed the president reaffirmation of Pakistan's commitment on Kashmir issue. The Nation supported the government's stance on Mumbai attacks.

Pakistan always tries to reduce tensions in the region and condemn the terrorism. The Nation endorsed the Pakistani efforts in this connection. It endorsed the Pakistani response on the investigation on Mumbai attacks. It criticizes India for not providing relevant evidence for investigation. The Nation



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criticized the government's policy regarding Negotiations. The Nation believed on meaningful negotiations between both countries. It criticizes the government's willingness of unconditional dialogue with India.

The News supported the government's policy on Kashmir issue. The News appreciated the president's efforts for highlighting the Kashmir issue on international forum. The News supported government's trade diplomacy and other CBM's with India on Kashmir issue.

Fruitful negotiations to normalize the relations between India and Pakistan are welcomed by Pakistani government. The News fully endorsed the government's policy on Negotiations. The News supported Pakistan's stance on Mumbai attacks and also remain neutral to some extent. The News criticizes India for not doing cooperation with Pakistan on the investigation of Mumbai attacks. It writes that without sufficient evidence it is extremely difficult to conduct a meaningful inquiry. The News invites the attention of both sides to be realistic and try to understand the solution of issue in a mature way.

As the prime object of any research is to explain and clarify the various phenomena of the world, the importance of the theoretical framework is therefore obvious. Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model and the theory of framing was used in the theoretical framework of the study.

The period of the study lasted for two years and the publication of 81 editorials in The Nation and 40 editorials in The News shows their serious concern towards the Pak-India relations issue. The Nation gave more importance to the subject than The News. The Nation played a watchdog role by criticizing government on Negotiations and Kashmir issue.

Both the newspapers also showed patriotism by favoring government of Pakistan against Indian allegations. Whenever, India held Pakistan responsible for terrorism in India, both newspapers criticized India a lot and favored Pakistan and opined that Pakistan government was not involved in any terrorist activity in India.

In brief, it is concluded that English Press in Pakistan gives a lot of importance to international issues relevant to Pakistan. Press is also free in Pakistan to criticize government and it is playing a watchdog role and press also shows patriotism like other institutions during times of conflict with other countries.

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