

## **Spinning Peace Negotiations: Pakistan-Taliban Peace Deals in the International Media**

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### **Abstract**

*The international politics is to a great extent defined and shaped by conflicts or war events in different parts of the world. These include escalations of violence, human casualties and hurdles in peace negotiations. It is imperative to analyze the conflict event itself as well as how the conflict event is defined/ framed by someone with sufficient power and legitimacy to make such an event an issue to be seen as a crisis. The term 'spin' generally refers to the "highly professional selling of the political message that involves maximum management and manipulation of the media" (Grattan 1998, p. 34). Media plays a significant role in developing perceptions about conflicts and peace negotiations and those perceptions affect the entire process and the outcome. Therefore, there is a need to make an in-depth analysis of media reporting conflict and peace negotiations. This study aims to explore international media's coverage and role towards Pakistan-Taliban peace deals after 9/11 i.e. 2006 to 2014. Three international newspapers; daily Telegraph, New York Times, and Gulf Daily News of UK, US, and Middle East respectively, are selected for this study.*

**Keywords:** War frames, peace frames, positive peace, negative peace, conflict and peace, media spinning

### **Introduction**

The international politics is to a great extent defined and shaped by conflicts or war events in different parts of the world. These include escalations of violence, human casualties and hurdles in peace negotiations. At the same time it is important to see that it is just the conflict event itself but also how the conflict event is defined/ framed by someone with sufficient power and legitimacy to make such an event an issue to be seen as a crisis. The information management and spinning of a conflict/ crisis can either make the event a side issue or the most pertinent issue in the national or international politics. The term 'spin' generally refers to the "highly professional selling of the political message that involves maximum management and manipulation of the media" (Grattan 1998, p. 34). While describing the functions of spin doctors, Craig (2003) says, "their functions generally include the control of media access to politicians, the packaging of information for media and public consumption, and most notably, the various forms of direct communication

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with journalists about the interpretations and meanings of political events and comments” (p. 83). Media plays a significant role in developing perceptions about conflicts and peace negotiations and those perceptions affect the entire processes and the outcomes. Hall (1985) cites the editor of the Manchester Guardian, C. P. Scott who said at the end of the World War I, “If people knew the truth the war would be stopped tomorrow. But of course they don’t know and they can’t know” (p. 101)

It is argued that there are many actors that play a role in the process of crisis framing and crisis-related knowledge production. These include traditional and social media, policy-makers, academic circles, independent experts, think tanks and the intelligence departments of governments and international organizations. However, from these actors some of them stand out as more influential in how crisis should be understood and dealt with.

In this context media plays a crucial role. It frames conflict events in such a way that issues are taken from the ordinary politics into an issue which requires immediate action. It not only makes the event, of an urgent importance but also starts suggesting possible action. However, it is also important to see how the situation is framed as a crisis with the interaction of both media and other institutional powers.

The present study investigates the role of media in framing the conflict issue of Afghan Taliban and how the peace process is managed by the media. The study explains the dynamics of media coverage given to Afghan Taliban issue for conflict escalation or peace negotiations, dilemmas of conflict resolution, the processes of post-conflict reconstruction and peace building. It helps to critically examine peace actors and processes as well as the intended and unintended consequences of processes of crisis framing.

This study highlights the relations between media, on the one hand, and political elites, business and the military in the country and hidden roles of national and international agencies on the other hand in the framing of conflict and peace negotiations. It also throws light on how peace negotiations are framed and how mediated knowledge about conflicts and peace negotiations affects the perceptions.

### **Historical Background**

The twenty first century is a communication century and media has been used as a tool for disseminating information that makes an impact in the lives of the modern nation states. After the Second World War NATO was made to contain communism, Warsaw pact emerged as a counter balance. In 1991,

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disintegration of the erstwhile Soviet Union unbalanced the modern world. A New World Order coined for monopolizing the world economic resources. Taliban established their rule in 1995 and eradicated the cultivation of poppy. Taliban's ideology was not supportive to US capitalist approach which aims to make money out of anything. The U.S. and its allies decided to use another way out for their success. The stage was set in Afghanistan and Al-Qaida was designed to support the U.S. interventions in the world. According to the U.S. Department of Defense publication, "Active Duty Military Personnel Strengths by Regional Area and by Country, the United States has troops in 135 countries." Today, out of 192 countries of the world the U.S. has intervened in 135 countries of the world. The seventy percent region of the world is under the influence of the U.S.

America blamed Al-Qaida for the destruction of World trade Centre and Pentagon in September 9, 2001. Although, the U.S. investigation could not prove that it was done by Al-Qaida yet it attacked on Afghanistan and maintained its presence there till to-date. Now the exit of US is possible through peace deals with Taliban which has been repeatedly sabotaged. Taliban who have been receiving label of 'good guys' during the intervention of Soviet Union are now labeled as bad guys. There is a need to look into the international media reporting on this issue to determine how media has affected the entire situation.

### **Research Questions**

- How the conflict issues are framed regarding peace talks with Taliban and what logics guide the discourses?
- How media evaluates the processes of peace negotiations in the perspective of positive and negative peace?

According to McLuhan (1964) we are living in a global village where people are connected through wired network. There is an information explosion at a greater speed and at a faster rate. We can come to know about any occurrence of the world instantaneously. It seems as if there exists an informed citizenry which is an essential element of true democracy and results in good governance. But "the media are not observers on the sidelines, reporting as politics and public life unfold before them. Rather, the media are the sites where politics and public life are played out, the sites where the meanings of public life are generated, debated and evaluated" (Craig, 2003; 85-86). Media conglomeration trends and convergence of information sources makes the situation more complex. Who is reporting, whom, for what purpose, is the one dimension to evaluate. The absent discourses, the silent voices,

and the underplayed, is another dimension to evaluate. The analysis of reported events brings forth the concepts of framing, spinning, slanting, twisting, and distorting etc.

Human history is the history of conflicts and misunderstandings. Conflict as a clash of interest seems to be a natural phenomenon. Therefore conflicts are unavoidable however can be managed with strategy and wisdom. Media plays a significant role in developing perceptions about conflicts and those perceptions affect the entire process and the outcome. Media coverage often contributes to escalating a conflict. Sometimes this is desirable; constructive escalation is sometimes the best way for lower-power groups to gain power to effectively advocate for themselves. But often, escalation gets out of control, and leads to increasing polarization, violence, and costs to all sides.

There have been discussions about whether there is an increase in conflicts with the development and modernization of societies or the conflicts have been reduced. It is quite easy for the media to initiate a conflict and escalate it to the global level as compared to its role of resolution and reconciliation. Gilboa (2009) suggests different types, levels and phases of conflicts therefore different strategies, approaches and processes are required to deal with them. The types include interstate and internal, can be of high intensity or low intensity levels. While discussing different phases of conflicts, Gilboa divides them into four and suggests the way of handling each phase. The four phases are; onset-prevention; escalation-management; de-escalation-resolution; and termination-reconciliation. Media can play a significant role at each stage that can contribute to the conflict constructively or destructively. Though media coverage often serves to escalate conflicts, there are ways that journalism can be used to de-escalate conflicts and make them more constructive.

One of the early models of mass communication, Lasswell formulae (1948), helps to develop an understanding of any conflict. The model is based on five questions; who?; says what?; on which channel?; to whom?; with what effect? When we apply all the five questions to understand a conflict we come to know about the main actors of the conflict, their interests or concerns, their power and influence, the stakeholders, and level of conflict. Braddock (19) added the question 'under what circumstances' in Lasswell formulae. The question helps to understand the stage and phase of the conflict. Mass media has the potential to create, change, influence and transform circumstances that can affect the dynamics of conflict.

According to Littlejohn and Domenici (2001, pp. 80-81) peace journalism means reframing the following six frames; from negative (the other side) to

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positive; from past to future (blaming the other); from hostile to neutral or positive; from individual interest to community interest; from compliant to vision; from criticism to request.

Reuben (2009) maintains that news media has the capacity to escalate conflict constructively or destructively. In news frames and language choice enables a journalist to report a conflict in different ways. However doing so, media has to compromise the ideal of objectivity and it has to transgress the confines of suggested functions. While reporting conflicts, a reporter has to face certain challenges, “the reporting of positions versus interests, narrow versus contextual approaches to reporting, problem-oriented versus adversarial frames, zero-sum versus positive-sum outlooks toward the conflict or dispute, similarities versus differences, and the denigration of less powerful parties” (Reuben, 2009, p. 77). These choices force media to emerge as a policy maker and a stakeholder.

The promotion of government policies in the media regarding peace and conflict is greatly determined by political circumstances. Olsfeld (1997) critically evaluates the efforts of Rabin’s government to promote Arab-Israeli peace process in the Israeli public. In the perspective of the ‘political contest model’ Olsfeld writes, “Government leaders are in a constant struggle to take control over the political environment, and their level of success has a major impact on the role of the news media. The greater a government’s ability to initiate and control events, to regulate the flow of information, and to mobilize elite support, the greater is the level of media dependence on officials” (1997, p.29). In the initial phase of Oslo process, Israeli media covered the event but government could not develop a consensus on the issue. Ongoing terrorism, lack of control over information and increased political dissent undermined the power and control of Rabin government. In response to these circumstances, media played an adversarial and negative role in the second phase of Arab Israel peace process. As compared to the Jordan peace process, Rabin’s government remained successful by controlling the political environment, developing consensus and authorizing information. In this case media remained dependent and positive towards government policy. This study proposes that competition to get space and promotion in the news media is aligned with political control.

Peace journalism seems directly opposite to conventional journalism. Conformity to prevailing norms strengthens established power. Peace journalism means rejection to conventional journalism. Conventional journalism goes far from society problems, and becomes the power of government. Ersoy (2006) suggests transition of conflict journalism from conventional to peace journalism that is innovative by becoming enabler form

watchdog; becoming communicator from commentator; becoming independent yet interdependent from independent of issues covered; becoming 'in the boat' from spectator and observer; promoting dialogue than debate; suggesting common ground and difference than suggesting difference only; promoting discussion instead of being polemic.

There is a certain bias in the media all over the world as the media inherently nurtures on deviances, negatives, conflicts, and violence. That is why there is an intrinsic contradiction between the needs of media and the needs of peace (Keeble, Tulloch, & Zollman, 2010; Olfefeld, 2011). It is believed that journalist is opposite to war but typically war is the good news for journalism as peace is no news. Media usage and consultation cannot increase in the times of peace. It is also observed that truth is the first casualty in the time of war. With reference to role of media in war and peace, studies have mainly focused on text analysis of print media content (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Perlmutter, 1998; Biazoto, 2011; Lee & Maslog, 2005) few studies analyze visual coverage. Fahmy and Neumann (2011) analyze editorial photographs of Gaza war provided by Reuters, Associated Press and AFP. The study rests upon the perspective of Galtung's competing frames for war journalism and peace journalism. Findings suggest that visual coverage is reactive and victory oriented; children and adolescents are mostly depicted as wounded or dead. Fahmy and Neumann notes that coverage of negative emotions demoralizing Palestinians is high as compared to Israelis coverage which is quite optimistic with signs of hope.

Another study highlights the manipulated portrayals in the media and its impact on the perceptions of audience. After 9/11 three different surveys at different points in time, regarding the perceptions of Americans about the 9/11 connivers reveal changing perceptions of Americans. In response to an open ended question that whom Americans believed is behind the 9/11 attacks, the survey shortly after 9/11 showed that less than 3% of respondents suggested Saddam Hussain or Iraq; the survey in 2003 revealed that 44% of respondents believed that most or some of the hijackers were Iraqis; the survey results of 2005 suggested that 64% believed that

Saddam Hussain has connections with Al Qaeda and 47% believed that Saddam Hussain supported hijackers to attack. Boaz (2005) concludes in the light of these survey results that American mainstream media outlets are responsible for these changed perceptions.

An American independent journalist Dahr Jamail reported some firsthand accounts on US-Iraq conflict. Jamail (2007) mentions, "I wondered what I might do to bring the information I found reported in other countries back to

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the uninformed, horribly misled population of my own country...I went to Iraq for personal reasons. I was tormented by the fact that the government of my country illegally invaded and then occupied a country that it had bombed in 1991. Because the government of my country had asphyxiated Iraq with more than a decade's worth of 'genocidal' sanctions (in the words of former United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq Denis Halliday). The government of my country then told lies, which were obediently repeated by an unquestioning media in order to justify the invasion and occupation" (p. 3).

With reference to Canadian media coverage of Afghan war, Keeble, Tulloch, & Zollman (2010) maintain, "in a time of war the news media must be most skeptical, most adversarial; they should accept nothing and question everything. Instead, like their American counterparts, the mainstream Canadian media have adopted the role of stenographer to power, and cheerleaders for the war team. Although this performance has served the establishment well, it is a disservice to the public, the troops, and to the victims in Afghanistan" (pp. 298-299).

There has been a lot of research on war time propaganda and it is established that media has the potential to work as weapons of war in subtle ways. Now the question arises if media are equally capable of working as tools for peace processes. McLaughlin and Baker (2010) consider peace processes equally propagandistic as compared to the conflict. They maintain, "Persuading for peace is no less propaganda because of its association with civil society and its apparently benign intentions, for it displays a coherent set of ideas and values that seek to mobilize people to act and behave in the interests of power" (McLaughlin & Baker, 2010, p. 11). The power interest resides in transforming and disengaging politically charged public sphere into a apolitical public sphere in the wake of increasing economic inequalities and economic crunch. Mainstream elite media is constantly engaged in manufacturing consent in favor of power corridors. That is why attack of USSR in Afghanistan appears in the media as 'invasion' and attack of US on Afghanistan appears as 'war on terrorism'.

Role of media is equally important in the post-conflict peace building scenario as during the conflict. Curtis (2000) examines the viable options and challenges for media in the post-conflict peace building process in Rwanda and Bosnia. He suggests that there is a need to integrate local media peace building activities with the overall peace building framework and strategy. The analysis of local media projects suggests media's key role in post-conflict peace building.

Another study suggests the significance of local stakeholders in the sustainable peace process. McGregor (2006) in his study about peace process in Sri Lanka highlights the theoretical and real aspects of a peace process. The author contends that conflicts are complex in nature and can rarely be reduced to bilateral disputes however the peace negotiations are usually bilateral in nature and tend to ignore the grassroots perspectives and concerns of civil society. In the case of Sri Lanka, peace processes at macro level were much focused. For successful and sustainable peace processes, all levels of a society needs to be engaged.

Global Peace Index (GPI) that measures the level of peacefulness of countries comprises of quantitative and qualitative indicators. Peacefulness is calculated on three broader themes; the level of safety and security in society; the extent of domestic or international conflict; and the degree of militarization. Ten indicators are devised to measure the level of safety and security in society which are as follows; level of perceived criminality in society; number of refugees and displaced people as a percentage of the population; political instability; political terror scale; terrorist acts; number of homicides per 100,000 people; level of violent crime; likelihood of violent demonstrations; number of jailed population per 100,000 people; and number of internal security officers and police per 100,000 people. Five indicators are devised to measure the extent of domestic or international conflict which include; number of external and internal conflicts fought; estimated number of deaths from organized conflict (external); number of deaths from organized conflict (internal); level of organized conflict (internal); and relations with neighboring countries. Degree of militarization is calculated through military expenditure as a percentage of GDP. In terms of qualitative and quantitative indicators the table below shows the details:

Qualitative Indicators for Global Peace	Quantitative Indicators for Global Peace
Political Terror Scale	Estimated number of deaths from organized conflict (external)
Military capability/sophistication	Number of armed services personnel per 100,000 people
Ease of access to small arms and light weapons	Military expenditure as a percentage of GDP
Relations with neighboring countries	UN Peacekeeping Funding
Political instability	Volume of transfers of major conventional weapons as supplier (exports) per 100,000 people
Level of organized conflict (internal)	Number of external and internal



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Level of violent crime	conflicts fought Number of displaced people as a percentage of the population
Perceptions of criminality in society	Number of homicides per 100,000 people
Likelihood of violent demonstrations	Number of jailed population per 100,000 people Number of internal security officers and police 100,000 people Number of deaths from organized conflict (internal)

According to GPI (2012) report, the most peaceful country in the world is Iceland followed by Denmark and New Zealand. Somalia is with the least peace followed by Afghanistan and Syria.

According to Galtung (1985) there are two types of peace, positive peace and negative peace. Positive peace is based on proactive approach and characterized by preventative solutions for the facilitations of more integrated society. While negative peace is characterized by the absence of fear of violence or violence. Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) defines positive peace as, “the set of attitudes, institutions and structures which when strengthened, lead to a more peaceful society” (GPI, 2012, p. 68). To evaluate empirically, it divides positive peace in further eight separate domains and twenty one indicators. The following table shows all the domains and indicators devised by IEP (2012, p. 72)

Domains of Positive Peace (DPP)	Indicators of Positive Peace (IPP)
1. Well functioning government	1. Government effectiveness 2. Rule of law 3. Political culture
2. Sound business environment	4. Global competitiveness report 5. Index Of Economic Freedom And Business Freedom 6. GDP Per Capita (PPP)
3. Equitable distribution of resources	7. Inequality Djusted Human Development Index (IHDI) 8. Life expectancy 9. Infant mortality

4. Acceptance of the rights of others	10. CIRI Empowerment Index
	11. Gender Gap Index
	12. Intergroup Cohesion
5. Good relations with neighbors	13. Interpersonal Safety and Trust
	14. Extent of Regional Integration
6. Free flow of information	15. Press Freedom Index
	16. World Press Freedom Index
	17. Internet Usage
7. High levels of education	18. Mean Years of Schooling
	19. Secondary School Enrolment Rate
8. Low levels of corruption	20. Control of Corruption
	21. Corruptions Perception Index

According to PPI (2012), Sweden, Norway and Finland secured top three positions respectively for the positive peace evaluation. GPI (2013) notes, "There has been a 5% deterioration in the Global Peace Index score over the last six years, indicating a less peaceful world" (p. 6). The report further explains about Pakistan, "According to the Global Terrorism Index, terrorism related violence caused 1,468 deaths in Pakistan in 2011 (the latest available year). The most serious clashes took place in the Federally Administrated Tribal Areas (FATA), especially Orakzai, Khyber and North Waziristan, where US drone strikes continued. Sectarian violence also increased in 2012; the Institute for Conflict Management reports 113attacks against the Shia minority, while ethnic violence in Sindh province eased, with fewer reported attacks and riots in Karachi" (p.22).

Peace can be envisioned in the presence of democratic participation, open communication, tolerant solidarity, educated citizens, transparency in systems, human rights, and gender equality, national and international security. In a broader cultural context there is a need to promote win-win approach instead of lose-win approach. Media emerge as a main stakeholder in the promotion of win-win approach for the peace propagation.

### **Qualitative content analysis of Daily Telegraph, New York Times, and Gulf Daily News**

Qualitative analysis of the news stories published during 2006-2014 in Daily Telegraph, New York Times, and Gulf Daily News is conducted in the perspective of war and peace frames. War frames include; identified victims, exaggerating the wrongdoings, episodic coverage, justify the attacks, elite-oriented coverage, labeling and demonizing, one-sided story, and criticizing peace talks, while peace frames are; anonymous victims, mitigating the

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wrongdoings, thematic coverage, condemnation of the attacks, people-oriented coverage, avoidance of labeling and demonizing, voice of all, and encourage peace talks.

### **Anonymous or identified victim**

*News York times, Daily Telegraph, and Gulf Daily News* have also used anonymous victim frame for casualties occurred during attacks on Taliban whereas identified victim frame is used for reporting the casualties during the attacks by Taliban. In contrast with *Gulf Daily News*, these frames are not explicitly used by *Daily Telegraph*. There are many news stories which have used identified victim frames for the casualties of Taliban, mostly when their leaders are targeted but other casualties are reported with 'unidentified victim frame' by using disclaimers, hence representing uncertainty over the identity of deceased. However, explicit 'identified victim frame' is used occasionally, reporting the death of Taliban leaders by anti-Taliban forces as a gesture of victory over Taliban.

### **Mitigating or exaggerating the wrong doings:**

Passive sentence structure, implicit description of the attack and euphemistic terms can be used to mitigate the wrong doings while active sentence structure, explicit description of the attack and offensive terminologies exaggerate the wrongdoings which can incite unrest as well as contributes to the legitimacy of war. Articles of the all the three newspapers depicted the brutalities and violence of Taliban in Afghanistan by using 'exaggerating their wrongdoing frame'. For example an article published on 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2011 in *Daily Telegraph* reports about miserable situation caused by the partisans of Taliban and making lives of the people difficult. On the other hand, US drone strikes have been described as killing only militants in order to eliminate them from Afghanistan and to bring stability in the country. Destruction caused by drone strikes and the killings of the civilians is not mentioned in any of the news story.

### **Thematic or Episodic**

Iyengar and Simon (1993) argue that media may apply thematic or episodic frames while covering a news story in a particular direction. The episodic frame portrays general issues in terms of specific events, focusing on a particular person or event and giving live, on-the-scene coverage and good images. Whereas thematic frame provides more general information along with context and background information. (as cited in Stawicki, 2009). Similarly, Benjamin (2007) suggests that episodic frame focuses on

individuals, single event, private realm to provide detailed information as compared to thematic frame which focuses on issues, trends over time, public realm so as to suggest better policies. All the three newspapers have focused more on episodic frame as compared to thematic frame.

### **Condemn or justify the attacks**

One of the important frame which is used during conflict/ war coverage is 'condemn the attacks or 'justify the attacks'. Selection of these frames describe that how a conflict is covered, whether it contributes to war journalism or peace journalism. By using 'condemn the attacks frame' peace journalism is promulgated whereas by using 'justify the attacks frame' suggests that it is war journalism. The dominant frame which is used by the three newspapers for covering the peace deals is 'justify the attacks frame' as it gives legitimacy to the war. Attacks on Taliban are repeatedly justified by linking them to 9/11 without any evidence.

### **Initiative taken for peace: 'People oriented' or 'elite oriented'**

Stawicki, 2009 claims that in order to promote peace, journalists can emphasize the benefits peace brings, raise the legitimacy of groups or leaders working for peace, identify possible solutions, and help transform images of the enemy. On the other hand, to work against peace, they can emphasize the dangers of compromise, raise the legitimacy of those opposed to concessions and reinforce negative stereotypes of the enemy. The coverage of conflict can use two type of frames for elaborating the initiatives taken for peace. Galtung's model mentions 'people-oriented' frame in peace journalism whereas 'elite-oriented' frame is mentioned for war journalism. Further he elaborates people-oriented frame in which people are focused while in elite oriented frame only elite and government officials are focused. All the three newspapers have frequently applied elite-oriented frame as compared to people-oriented frame.

### **Labeling and demonizing or avoid-labeling frame**

Language plays vital role during the coverage of a conflict. Words choices describe leanings of journalists towards promoting peace or war. During the coverage of a conflict, journalists may use 'label frame' or can apply 'avoid-labeling frame', the former depicts war journalism and the later depicts peace journalism. By using 'avoid labeling' frame, journalist give unbiased and neutral coverage to the conflict which shows non-partisan approach of the journalist. On the other hand, demonizing/ malicious adjectives frame leaves the impression of biased coverage and promotes the conflict. Ideological

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orientation of the journalist can be observed through the types of adjectives he uses for both parties. Usually, malicious/ demonizing adjectives dehumanize the party/enemy and make the reader apathetic towards the killings moreover it helps to legitimize and justify the war. Mostly malicious adjectives are used to identify the party as criminal whereas claiming the other party as savior. Taliban are labeled and demonized often by all the three newspapers. Terms like, militants, fundamentalists, insurgents, and guerillas are frequently used for Taliban. For example, the story of *Gulf Daily News* (March 07, 2006) says, "Gunship helicopters again pounded insurgents as sporadic fighting continued in Miranshah... [T]he fundamentalist Taliban regime in Afghanistan... [T]he militants asked officials in Miranshah for a ceasefire and for peace talks... [T]he insurgents "must stop firing ...[C]apture these two miscreants" (Headline: 120 pro-Taliban militants killed).

### **Voice of all or one sided story**

Wolfsfeld (2004) argues that the main function of agenda setting is not only to tell the people what to think but also to tell the people what to ignore (as cited in Stawicki, 2009, p. 11). Galtung's model suggests that if a journalist is reporting only the viewpoint of government officials while avoiding the viewpoint of the local people or the opponents, it is partisan approach and such coverage contributes to war journalism. This one sided representation justifies the brutal acts of government.

For example, in the *Gulf Daily*, 16 (55%) out of 29 news stories used one sided frame in which only one party view is projected. However, 11 (69%) out of 16 news stories used one sided frame to project the view point of government and military of Afghanistan, US and Pakistan. Only 5 (31%) out of 16 news stories presented the viewpoint of Taliban. On the other hand, 13 (45%) out of 29 news stories used 'voices to all sides' in which viewpoints of both parties were presented.

### **Encourage peace talks or criticism on peace talks**

Encourage peace talks frame is used less frequently in overall coverage as compared to criticize peace talks in all the three newspapers. 'Encouraging peace talk frame' is usually used during the commencement of peace negotiations between Afghan government and Taliban with the support or consent of western allies whereas, peace negotiations between Pakistan and Taliban have always been criticized by all the three newspapers. America has always condemned and criticized peace negotiations between Pakistan and Taliban as she is of the view that it may strengthen the hold of Taliban and can accelerate attacks on American 'coalition troops' in Afghanistan. An article

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of *New York Times* published on February 5, 2010, says, "... [P]ast peace deals with the Taliban have allowed the militants to tighten their hold."

An article of *Daily Telegraph* published on October 05, 2006 criticizes peace talks between Pakistan and Taliban. The article reads;

In recent months, US officials have voiced concern over another peace deal that Pakistan signed with militants and elders last September. They claimed cross-border infiltration by militants from Pakistan into Afghanistan had tripled since the deal was agreed in North Waziristan. (Taliban threat to renew attacks, 2006)

In the light of above mentioned war and peace frames, it can be concluded that role of a journalist is crucial in conflict or war situations. Since media provides a communicative space and enables peace stakeholders to develop and promote peace narratives across all media content and genres, be it factual or fictional, news or drama, situational comedy or tragedy, documentary film or talk show, opinion editorial or feature. There is a need to train journalist for the promotion of peace.

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