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Article:	**Perception of Pak-China Relations in International Press: Comparative Analysis**
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ABSTRACT

This research has been conducted to examine the coverage and slant of China-Pakistan bilateral relationship in the editorial pages (including Editorials and columns) of four noted newspapers (*The New York Times, Times of India, Global Times and Daily Dawn*) in the world. Topic contains media coverage of most of the important developments, such as the "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor" and "Military and Strategic Cooperation", during the time period of January 2015 to December 2019. Quantitative and qualitative content analysis methods were applied to examine the selected categories of Sino-Pak relations. Coverage is analyzed in three dimensions, including positive, negative and neutral, to develop balanced criticism, taking into account both the frequency and the severity of the reporting. The theoretical basis is based on hypothesizes taken from the theory of framing. Study concluded that the Pakistani press gave more coverage to the stories related to Sino-Pak relations than other selected newspapers. Moreover, the Pakistani and Chinese press portray positive, while the Indian and American press cover it negatively. The study contributes to understand the perception of international press about regional affairs.

Introduction

This study has been designed to investigate the difference in portrayal of Pakistan-China relations in *The New York Times*, *Times of India*, *Global Times* and *Daily dawn.* Since the inauguration of CPEC, Pak-china relations gained more importance in international politics as well as it is the hot topic for the international media. American, Chinese, Indian and Pakistani media extensively covering the Pak-China relations and keeps a close eye on the agreements between them. The study focuses on the nature and treatment of the Pak-China relations portrayal in media. Contradictory perceptions of Pak-China relations possibly exist in the American, Indian Chinese and Pakistani public's mind. Such contradictions might also be present in the media of respective countries.

From the 1970s, Pakistan's relations with China began to strengthen in all areas of interest. China has provided significant assistance to Pakistan in the areas of politics, economics, diplomacy and defense. Based on this strong relationship, we see the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as a great achievement. Keeping in view the economic needs of the world, China introduced the idea of Belt and Road Initiative in 2013, which aims to connectthe countries ofregion through the ancient Silk Road (Mahar, 2015). through the Silk Road, China seeks to connect its trade with Central Asia and Middle East, and open access to the Indian Ocean and beyond through Pakistan's port of Gawadar. China Pakistan Economic Corridor is a model of mutual cooperation that will transform the world and region. In 2012, Pak-China Bilateral economic and trade cooperation was influenced by numerous factors both in Pakistan and the rest of the world. In May 2013, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, visited Pakistan , quoted the welcome Pakistan with the catchphrase that "good neighbors are a blessing" and stated that Pakistan is an "iron" brother and reliable friend of China. Moreover, the Chinese called it "Ba Ti" 巴铁 (Iron Brother and Trustworthy Pakistan)"(2021).

As a public representative, media plays a vital role in shaping public opinion (Ji et al., 2016) (; Sheikh, 1997; Yousaf, 2018) and the effects of media are so powerful that it is very difficult to ignore it (Gandy, 1991). Media not only shapes societies (Nity & Singh, 2017) but also forms awareness among the people (Anderson, 2009) and informs policymakers about public issues (Arlt, Hopppe, & Wolling, 2011). In today's world, media has become the most effective means of keeping abreast of current affairs, national and international news (Dearing & Rogers, 1988).There is strong correlation between the importance given to any issue in the media and importance given by people and policy makers. Many studies in the field of communications and International Relations show that the media increases information and awareness, which can influence public opinion about other countries. (Manheim & Albritton, 1983).

The trusting relationship of the last 70 years has made Pakistan and China strategic allies. The Sino-Indian conflict of 1962 and Pak-India war of 1965 have deepened the military ties between the two countries. China has greatly helped in development of Pakistan's defense industry. Pakistan Air Force has developed JF-17 Thunder fighter jet in collaboration with China, which has given Pakistan Air Force the lead in the region. Pakistan is selling these jets to other countries, which is increasing the national income and Pakistan is moving towards defense self-sufficiency. China has also agreed to sell eight submarines to Pakistan, four of which are to be built in China and four at Karachi shipyard and construction plan, which will increase Pakistan's production capacity (Bokhari. 2016). China has also been helping Pakistan develop its own drones.

Ryan, C, 2021 stated that "the United States made the mistake of seceding from Pakistan in the 1990s and now US will turn its back on Islamabad and repeat the mistake. We need to engage with Pakistan to assess and address these growing threats.The importance of Pakistan in the geopolitics of South Asia cannot be ignored. The key to stability and peace in the region lies with Pakistan, but the complex relationships of United States and India with China has complicated matters. Pakistan is working for peace and cohesive government in Afghanistan so that Afghanistan does not fall victim to civil war. Even during Ashraf Ghani's rule (who was always spewing poison against Pakistan at the behest of India), Pakistan has been keen on and striving for intra-Afghan dialogue. China also wants peace in Afghanistan and two countries share a common position. According to Chinese media reports, "The Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said that China values the role of all parties working for peace in Afghanistan, especially Pakistan. The spokesman added that, for reconciliation and inclusive peace, China is ready to play its role". (News 15 August 2015).

China has settled border disputes with most of its neighbors, including Pakistan. Thus, geographic proximity, combined with China's policy of paying more attention to neighbors, laid the foundation for Sino-Pakistani relations. Since geography is a constant factor, it constantly influences relationships. Formal diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan began on May 21, 1951. Pakistan was the first Islamic country to formally recognize a communist government in 1950 (Vertzberger, 1983).

The initial relations between Pakistan and China were vague and largely due to common enmity of both the countries with India. After that, the relationship turned into very important strategic relations (Small, 2015).Promoting peace and regional and global harmony is a common feature of Sino-Pak relations. Despite its global status and being a major military and economic power, China has never shown aggression against its neighbors or any country outside the region. Indeed, peaceful coexistence is the trademark of China's foreign policy (Kerr et al, 2008), as well as the main goal of Pakistan's foreign policy (Sattar, 2010).

Literature Review

Many regional and international factors and changes can affect the relations between Pakistan and China and various aspects of these relations academically researched. However, there are very few studies that cover the role of media in Pak-China relations .Lippmann argues that, in the absence of physical links to outside world, the media build the picture of the world in public mind. In reality, they have to rely on the news media to keep themselves aware of the environment. Kunczik, also supported Lippmann, said that information on the country itself and other countries is transmitted through media.

Niazi (2009) mentioned "China-Pakistan Relations: past, present and future," in his discussion that from the early 1950s, Pakistan looked an ally that would favors it against the Indian monopoly. The United States is keen to hold Pakistan as a consumer without understanding its own duties as the patron of its business and opposes the objective of Pakistan. As far as India is concerned, it has produced the people of Pakistan with a sense of sorrow and betrayal. This gives Pakistani leaders a feeling of deprivation and moves their leadership to China. This research showed that in the 21st century, Sino-Pak relations were modified, but the strategic interdependence of the two States was related. China works in collaboration with Pakistan to advance economic and public diplomacy so that its strategic state can develop in order to facilitate people-to people cooperation.

A study conducted by(Hamid M, 2016). Study aimed at investigating the treatment of Pakistani newspapers with Pak-China relationships, Especially China's new Silk Road project, and

construction of new infrastructure and free trade zones. Pakistani media agrees that the Chinese president's visit has painted a positive image of Pakistan. After 9/11, Pakistan was considered a haven for terrorists. But looking at Chinese investment, other countries also feel better about investing in Pakistan. The researcher added that the success of the Chinese vision, of course, depends on peace in the region. Peace in Pakistan and Afghanistan could open trade routes with Central Asia. For this, Pakistani and Chinese media should work together so that this dream of development and prosperity can be fulfilled. Another research article by (Khan, Farooq & Gul, 2016), was an attempt to analyze the CPEC issue in Indian newspapers. it sheds light on how the Indian print media provides irrational information about CPEC and how it influence public opinion through its robust structure. Despite remarkable geopolitical and economic advantages attached to the region, Indian media and political decision-makers criticize the CPEC and worrying about China's growth.

A research conducted by (Yousef, Zia & Ali, 2014), to investigate the representation of China-Pakistan relations in the top newspapers of India, China, Pakistan and America. The theory of Agenda Setting was used in this study to investigate the "Media agenda" by using a content analysis technique to review the contents of the editorial and columns of the selected newspapers. The analysis indicates that the American and Indian press displayed most negative portrayal while the Pakistani and Chinese press observed maximum positive portrayal.

Research Objectives

- The amount of coverage to Pak-China relations in American, Indian, Chinese and Pakistani newspapers.
- How the coverage of Pak-China relations is framed in selected newspapers?

Statement of the Problems

China-Pakistan relations are of great importance. Pakistan is geopolitically an important country and the only Muslim Nuclear power. China is the world's 2nd largest economy with 13.4 Trillion GDP, and rapidly expanding its influence in the world. The history of Pak-China relations is 70 years old. Over time, the interdependence of the two countries' relations has reached economic and defense levels. India is also an important country in South Asian region with 7th largest economy in the world with 2.72 Trillion GDP. India's relations with both China and Pakistan are not ideal. The United States is the only superpower in the world and has a keen eye on Pak-China relations. All these factors together increase the importance of Pak-China relations and also create interest in it for the international media. Media plays an important role in shaping public opinion. The purpose of the study is to analyze the extent and slant of coverage given to the Pak-China relations by (*The New York Times, Times of India, Global Times*, *Daily Dawn*) and how this issue has been given treatment by the selected newspapers from the timeline of JAN 1, 2015 to DEC 31, 2019 by assessing the relevant contents of Editorial Pages through Content Analysis.

Theoretical Framework

The researcher found the framing theory of(Davis & Goffman, 1975) suitable to analyze the portrayal of Pak-China relations in the selected newspapers. Framing theory explains very well the difference of media coverage of same issue and event across different countries. Framing is a technique that has been extensively used in the field of mass communication research. The term framing refers to the manner in which an event is depicted in specific journalistic material, such as an article, news story or an editorial. Under the concept of "Framing', the researcher intends to investigate the nature of framing of Pakistan-China relationship in the American, Indian, Chinese and Pakistani press.Framing theory has ability to present the textual and visual version of any event. According to Tankard (1992), that framing is ability to create an image about any event in

the form of text or visual presentation. The frame defines the situation, to highlight the problem, to establish forms of debate.

Research Questions

1) How much coverage is given to Pak-China relations by Newspapers selected for this study?

2) What treatment (framing) has been given to Pak-China relations by the American, Indian, Chinese and Pakistani press?

3) How the selected newspapers portrayed the Pak-China military and strategic cooperation?

4) What image of CPEC (China-Pakistan economic corridor) has been drawn by selected newspapers?

Hypotheses

H 1: The coverage of Pak-China relation is more in the Pakistani newspaper than other countries.

H2: Pakistani and Chinese newspapers positively portrayed the Pak-China relations.

H 3: American and Indian newspapers portrayed Pak-China relations negatively.

Research Methodology

This work has focused to analyze that how Pak-China relations constructed in selected newspapers. To check the research questions, I choose the content analysis technique for current research which can systematically help a researcher to compress the large number of text into fewer categories. The researcher analyzed the published content of selected newspapers in the editorial page of selected four newspapers as Krippendorf (2004) describes it as a research method for making reproducible and reliable links from data to their context. In content analysis methodology, content may be written words or visual presentation of anything in daily life. Content analysis is a systematic methodology in which data is collected and analyzed by using standard principles and methods to achieve results. In current study stories have been obtained after thoroughly reading the selected newspaper's editorial pages, from January 1st 2015 to December 31st 2019. All the obtained stories regarding Pak-China relations including under study themes, categories and sub categories are analyzed in current study.

Universe of the Study

All the editorials and Articles published in *The New York Times* from US, *Times of India* from India, *Global Times* from China and *Daily Dawn* from Pakistan considered as basic unit of analysis during the period of 5 years from 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2019.

Population of the study

All the articles which have content regarding Pak-China relations are the population of this research.

Sampling

The entire editorial Pages (Editorials and Columns) published in The New York Times, Times of India, Global Times and Daily Dawn related to Pak-China relations and selected the specific issues during the period of 05 years from 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2019. In this way purposive sampling technique used to select the Articles related to concerned issues.

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in written content a paragraph of entire story or complete story which address the any under study categories regarding Pak-China relations have been consider the unit of analysis for current study.

Categories to be analyzed in research

The researcher found these categories are related to the aim of study which I want to analyze in the phenomenon of Pak-China relations. The categories and subcategories are following.

1) Military and strategic support
   - JF 17, Submarines, Radar system, Marry time Security, Beidou navigation satellite system, joint border patrolling.
2) China Pakistan economic corridor (CPEC).
   - Trade with China (free trade agreement), Foreign direct investment, Gawadar port, Land Leasing, Special Economic Zones, Power plants, Railways, Connectivity with (CARs) Central Asian Republics.

Study Period

The current study explored the Pak-China bilateral relations in international press. In this way, editorial pages (Editorials and Columns) selected from The New York Times, Times of India, Global Times and Daily Dawn from 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2019 period of 5 years.

Coding Sheet

To analyze the data, I designed coding sheet and divided it into three directions.

Positive/Favorable/Supportive

Articles or paragraphs considered positive if it favors the Pakistan government stance on the under study issues in Pak-China relations

Negative/Unfavorable/Unsupportive

Article or paragraph considered negative if it overall impression is unfavourable about stance of Pakistani government on the under study issues of Pak-China relations.

Neutral

Article or paragraph considered neutral if it has no positive or negative portrayal of Pak-China relations.

Criteria of Coding Slant

a. If the number of Positive paragraphs in the entire story would be more than the negative or neutral then the story would be coded into positive.

b. If the number of negative paragraphs in the entire story would be more than the positive or neutral then the story would be coded into negative.

c. If the number of neutral paragraphs in the story will be more than that of positive or negative words or lines or paragraphs then the story will be treated as neutral.

Data analysis and findings
This research is based on the coverage from four international newspapers. The coverage is based on the views regarding military and strategic support and Pak-China economic corridor. This chapter is comprised of two section, descriptive analysis and inferential statistics.A huge amount of data is got simplified by descriptive statistics in a sensible way.

Descriptive Analysis
Each descriptive statistic reduces the amount of data into a simpler, faster summary. In this study, charts are often used to help you understand large amounts of data and the relationships between pieces of data. Graphs are generally faster to read than raw data. They are used in a wide variety of fields and can be created on a computer using a graphical application. Some chart types are more useful for representing a specific set of data than others. For example, data that categories (positive, negative, and neutral) in percentages are displayed in a pie chart.Scatter plot is also drawn to show the association between newspapers and categories. It is an informal method of correlation.

Table 1Overall Coverage of the selected categories in all newspapers regarding positive, negative and neutral(p: positive, n: negative & nt: neutral).

Newspapers	Military and strategic support			CPEC			Total (%)
	P	n	nt	P	N	nt	
New York Time	0	9	4	0	9	0	
	13			9			22 (4.96)
Times of India	0	26	0	1	41	2	
	26			44			70 (15.80)
Global Times	8	1	0	21	0	0	
	9			21			30 (6.78)
Daily Dawn	62	1	8	131	65	54	
	71			250			321 (72.46)
Total (%)	119 (26.87)			324 (73.13)			443

Table 2   **Military and Strategic Support**

      Newspapers Names

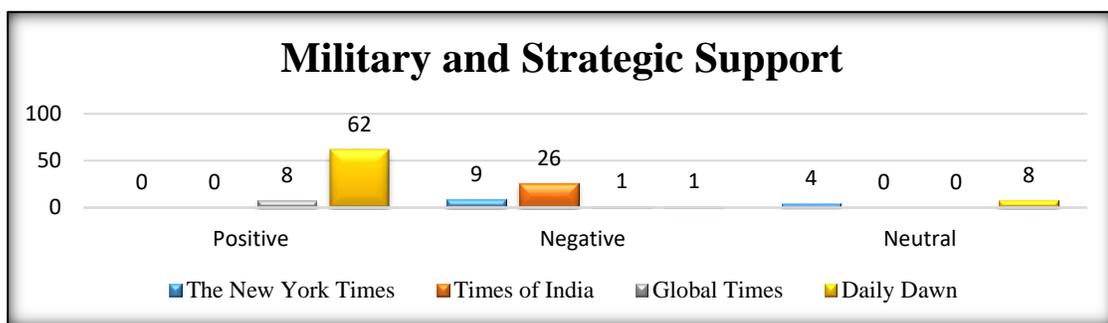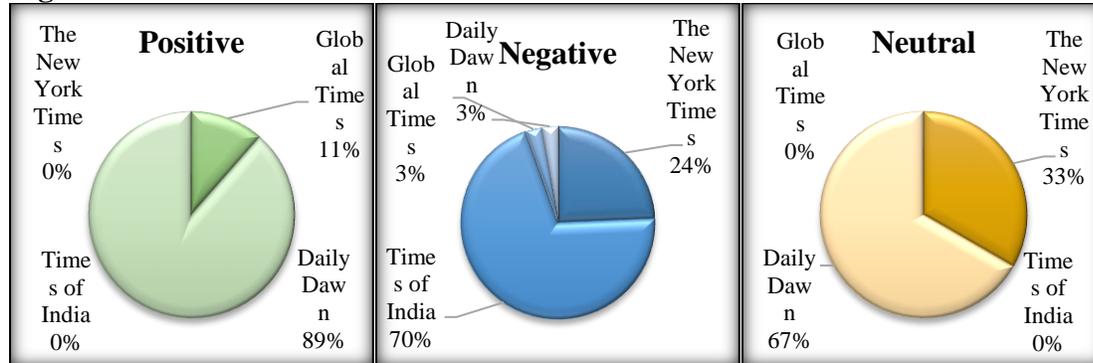| Categories	The New York Times	Times of India	Global Times	Daily Dawn	
Positive	0	0	8	62	70
Negative	9	26	1	1	37
Neutral	4	0	0	8	12
Stories	13	26	9	71	**Grand Total**
					119

Figure 1

Figure 2

Table 2, figure 1 & figure 2 depict the descriptive analysis of the four newspapers portraying Military & Strategic support. The *Global Times*& the *Daily Dawn* newspapers have exposed positive tone as 11% and 89% respectively. In *Times of India* (70%) &*The New York Time* (24%) has shown negative tone. The New York Time has neutral tone with 33% about Military & Strategic Support. The *Daily Dawn* is observed to have most positive high percentage about Military & Strategic support.

Table 3   **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor**

Newspapers Names

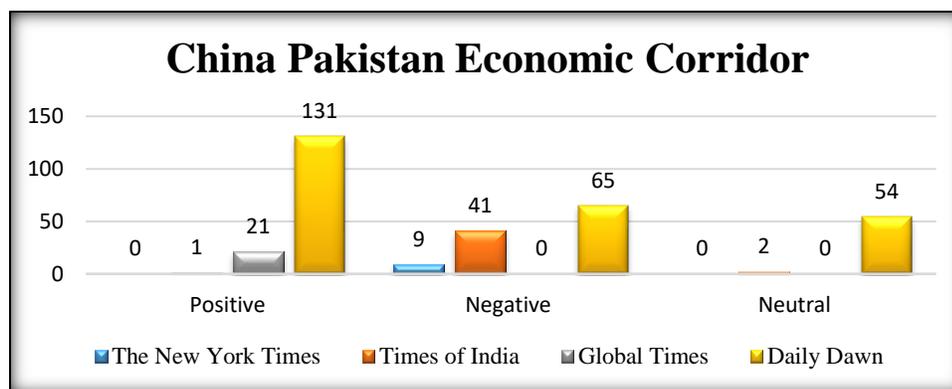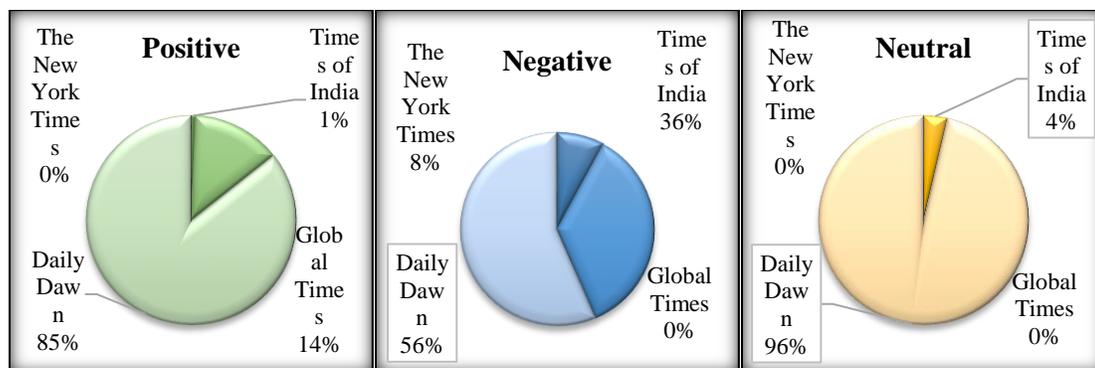| Categories	The New York Times	Times of India	Global Times	Daily Dawn	
Positive	0	1	21	131	153
Negative	9	41	0	65	115
Neutral	0	2	0	54	56
Stories	9	44	21	250	**Grand Total**
					324

Figure 3

Figure 4

Table 3, Figure 3 & figure 4 demonstrate the descriptive analysis of China-Pak Economic Corridor, indications of included newspapers in research. In the China-Pak corridor *Daily Dawn*&*Global Times* have publicized positive response towards the corridor relation showing percentages as 85% and 14% respectively. *Daily Dawn* has presented strongly high percentage in the China-Pak economic corridor in all categories as positive, negative & neutral. But there is also a conflict in views of different authors of Daily Dawn representing 56% as negativity but at the same time 96% of neutral tone for China-Pak economic corridor is also observed in Daily Dawn.

Inferential Statistics

Logical statistics have two main uses:

➢ Making estimates about populations
➢ Testing hypotheses to draw conclusions about populations

We have used Spearman's rank correlation to find the correlation between newspapers and categories (positive, negative and neutral). To test the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, we used Chi-square test of association which is developed by Pearson. As different newspapers have different views about the different aspects of CPEC and Military and Strategic Support. We have found p-value value either the results are significant or insignificant

Table 4

Study Variables	Correlation	χ^2	p-value	Result	Level of significant
Military and Strategic Cooperation	-0.670	110.438	0.000	Significant	0.05
CPEC	-0.108	114.501	0.052	Significant	0.05

Table 5   **Chi-square (Pearson's) test of Association Between Four Newspapers and Category regarding Military and Strategic Support**

Sr.no	Observations	Spearman's Rank Correlation	Chi-square value	p-value (Result)
2	119	-0.670	110.438	0.000 (Significant)

Table 6   **Newspaper vs Categories Cross tabulation**

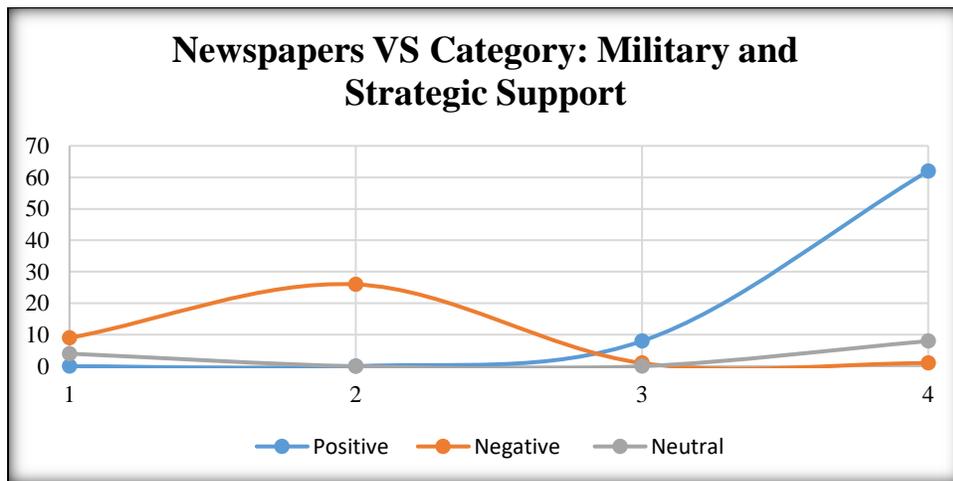|			Categories			Total
			1	2	3	
Newspaper	1	Count	0	9	4	13
		Expected Count	7.6	4.0	1.3	13.0
	2	Count	0	26	0	26
		Expected Count	15.3	8.1	2.6	26.0
	3	Count	9	1	0	10
		Expected Count	5.9	3.1	1.0	10.0
	4	Count	61	1	8	70
		Expected Count	41.2	21.8	7.1	70.0
Total		Count	70	37	12	119
		Expected Count	70.0	37.0	12.0	119.0

Figure 5

Spearman's Rank Correlation Co-efficient = -0.670 indicates the presence of a strong negative correlation between Categories (+ve, Neutral, and –ve) in four different newspapers (*The New York Times, Times of India, Global Times and Daily Dawn*) with p-value = 0.000 and N = 13 regarding Military and Strategic Support.

Table 7   **Chi-square (Pearson's) test of Association**

Between Four Newspapers and Category regarding China-Pak Economic Corridor

Sr.no	Observations	Spearman's Rank Correlation	Chi-square value	p-value (Result)
1	324	-0.108	114.501	0.052 (Significant)

Table 8   **Newspaper vs Categories Cross tabulation**

			Categories			Total
			1	2	3	
Newspaper	1	Count	0	9	0	9
		Expected Count	4.3	3.2	1.6	9.0
	2	Count	1	41	2	44
		Expected Count	20.8	15.6	7.6	44.0
	3	Count	21	0	0	21
		Expected Count	9.9	7.5	3.6	21.0
	4	Count	131	65	54	250
		Expected Count	118.1	88.7	43.2	250.0
Total		Count	153	115	56	324
		Expected Count	153.0	115.0	56.0	324.0

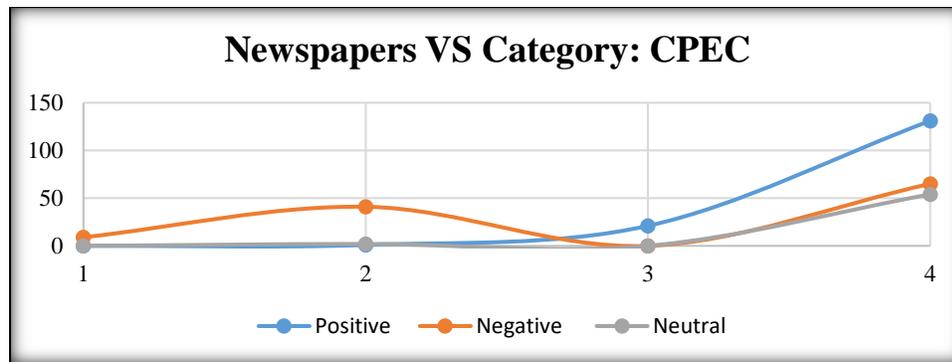**Newspapers VS Category: CPEC**

Figure 6

Spearman's Rank Correlation Co-efficient = -0.108 indicates the presence of a strong negative correlation between Categories (+ve, Neutral, and –ve) in four different newspapers (*The New York Times, Times of India, Global Times and Daily Dawn*) with p-value = 0.052 and N = 324 regarding Pak China Economic Corridor.

Conclusion

The main issues and concerns regarding China-Pakistan bilateral relations determine the argument of the study: 1) China-Pakistan economic corridor, 2) Military and strategic support. Using the theoretical framework for framing presented by Bateson (1972), the final section offers answers to research questions in light of the analysis performed using a mixed method, qualitative-quantitative. The results indicate that both categories in the context of Pak-China bilateral relations get more editorial page coverage in *Daily Dawn*. Chinese and Pakistani press portrayed the positive picture of under discussion categories while Indian and American press negatively portrayed the CPEC and Military and strategic ties between Pakistan and China. China Pakistan Economic Corridor got more coverage as compare to military and strategic relations. As researcher selected the time period of January 2015 to December 2019, the time when CPEC was inaugurated and other MOUs was signed during the visit of Chinese President XI Jinping, from 20-21 April 2015. CPEC project enhance the Pak-china bilateral relations in all sectors like, trade, diplomacy, geopolitics and strategic ties. These developments increase the importance of these relations and attract the international media.

To answer the research question, amount of Coverage to Pak-China relations by selected four newspapers? There is a difference between the overall editorial coverage, *Daily Dawn* Shares the (72.46%) of the total coverage, *Times of India* (15.80%), *Global Times* (6.78) and *New York Times* shares (4.96). when we examine the difference in the amount of coverage between selected categories, CPEC shares (73.13%) while Military and strategic relations got (26.87%) of total coverage. The study approves the main hypothesis that, the coverage of Pak-china relations is more than other selected newspapers. Research question 2 is about the treatment (Framing) of prominent issues or categories. The answer is that, Pakistani and Chinese press frame positively to CPEC and Pak-China military and Strategic relations while American and Indian press negatively portray the under study issues. The *Global Times*& the *Daily Dawn* newspapers have exposed positive tone as 11% and 89% respectively. In *Times of India* (70%) & The *New York Time* (24%) has shown negative tone to Pak-China military and strategic ties. This answer approves the 2nd hypothesis that, Pakistani and Chinese Press positively portrayed the Pak-China Relations. There is a significant difference of coverage amount and framing of Pak-China relations between the selected

four newspapers. This study generally approved the earlier studies as, a study concluded that, the overall results shows that the Pakistani and Chinese news media have portrayed most of the positive while American and the Indian newspapers have portrayed mostly negatively (Yousaf et al, 2014).

Suggestions for Future Studies

After analyzing the content of the articles of all the selected newspapers, the following proposals were presented, and newspapers should follow these proposals in order to bring objectivity in terms of public awareness and policy making. Overall, by incorporating the proposed guidelines into their reporting policies, newspapers can play a significant role in bridging disruptive policy gaps and provide a great social service to the population of a war-torn region. This research is limited to the analysis of only newspapers of four countries. The importance of Sino-Pak relations as well as China Pakistan Economic Corridor has increased since the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. The importance of these relations in terms of stability in the region can be analyzed. The impact of electronic media is greater than that of Print media, and even more so, the whole world has shifted to social media, where people have easy access to information. Various aspects of Pak-China relations can be researched on social media.

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