



RESEARCH PAPER

**Media Coverage and Political Interests: Portrayal of Syrian Conflict
by Saudi and Iranian Press**

Dr. Zahid Yousaf ¹, Dr. Sultan Mubariz Khan ² & Dr. Asia Saif Alvi ³

1. Chairman, Centre for Media and Communication Studies, University of Gujrat, Gujrat, Pakistan
2. Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science & IR, University of Gujrat, Gujrat, Pakistan
3. Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science & IR, University of Sargodha, Sargodha, Pakistan

PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: January 9, 2020	This study focuses to probe the portrayal of pro and anti-government Syrians groups in Saudi and Iranian press. It is hypothesized that Arab news and Tehran times portrayed pro and anti- government Syrians groups differently. It is also hypothesized that press of both countries framed pro and anti-government groups differently. The theoretical framework for this research was based on framing theory. The research follows the quantitative research design content analysis strategy. The times frame was selected from 1 st January to 31 December 2013 and researcher designed a coding sheet by selecting two frames, pro-government and anti-government frame. The data was analyzed through SPSS and Chi-Square test was applied on data .The findings of the study revealed that there is significant difference in portrayal and framing of both newspapers. Both hypotheses were accepted.
Accepted: March 25, 2020	
Online: March 31, 2020	
Keywords: Portrayal, Pro-Syrian, Anti-Syrian Groups, Saudi, Iranian, Media	
Corresponding Author: sultan.mubariz@uog.edu.pk	

Introduction

This study "Portrayal of pro and anti-Syrian government groups in Saudi and Iranian Press" addresses the latest phenomenon of relationship between mass media and perceptions as well as portrayal of events in support of political opinion. That has been the core topic of discussion, analysis and debate for scholars and journalists. The eruption of political rebellion against Asad regime became cherished topic of discussion for different scholarly and analysis forums working at regional and international levels. Mass media have presented diverse interpretations of those events which occurred in this war-torn area. The successful conclusion of various popular insurgencies in the region motivated the Asad's opponents to launch a struggle in 2011. In Syria the popular protests started in January, 2011 and quickly transformed into sectarian conflict. The conflict further

aggravated in the form of civil war which is still going on. The Assad government used brutal forces to suppress resistance but couldn't. The study investigated that how the leading presses of Iran & Saudi Arabia portrayed the pro & anti-government Syrian groups because both Iran and Saudi Arabia emerged as prime supporters of pro & anti-government groups respectively. The study focuses on the period from 1st January 2013 to 31 December 2013 because it was the time during which civil strife aggravated to its worst level. The research expected to contribute in existing body of literature and will pave for coming researchers.

Brief History of Syria

Syria a country belonged to Middle East region is situated in northeastern side of Mediterranean, Turkey shared its southern border with Syria; Iraq is situated in its eastern side and Jordan in south. Comprised of 71,498 square miles or 185,180 square kilometers it's almost similar in size to North Dakota. Syrian total population was estimated to be little more than twenty million in 2009. It means in each square mile almost 280 individuals were residing (Figure 1). Modern Syria is much smaller in comparison of ancient Syria. The whole region situated at eastern coast of Mediterranean which is connecting knot of three continents, was named as Syria by ancient Greeks. Presently this region is divided in several independent states like Syria, Jordan, Israel, and Lebanon. Greater Syria is truly a crossroads. Located at the cost of Mediterranean it is the meeting point of three continents. In ancient time most of the known world was inter-connected through this region (Phillips, 2010). The Syrian Arab Republic appeared as an independent country during the Second World War as a result of successful nationalist struggle for liberation from French occupation. Syria experienced French rule for a brief period as it began after First World War. Syria was controlled by the Ottoman Empire in pre-1st World War period. Earlier Syrian soil witnessed significant events related to founding periods of Christianity and Islam. It was the major battle ground of Muslim-Christian Crusade wars. Its contribution in repulsion of the Mongol attack is also a pride memory of glorious past (Blanchard et al., 2015). The strategic location has always lent Syria a position of vitality. Internal political situation of Syria is crucial for geo-strategic balance of Middle Eastern region. Regional states cannot be oblivious of drastic internal political changes in Syria such as replacement of ruling elite. These states are involved in ongoing struggle for power and civil war in Syria. They are using all the means and resources for the success of their favorites in Syrian conflict. President Bashar-ul-Assad is supported by Iran and Sunny opposition groups are patronized by Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

Emergence of Conflict

Sudden outburst of protest in Syria during 2011 created a formidable threat for Asads' regime. Protesters' objective was restoration of democracy by getting rid of dictatorship imposed by Bashar al-Assad and his late father. Protesters sought deliverance from cruel authoritarianism. The history of Asads' ruler ship dated

back to 1970s when father of current president came in to power. The government tried to silence the opposition by use of coercion. Government did not seem to hesitate in use of naked force for quelling rebellion. Operation was spearheaded by Asad's loyalist army which was assisted by police and paramilitary forces. Violent response of government was almost unrestrained. Killing of unarmed civilian protestors by direct firing didn't seem to be extraordinary rather it became a norm as reported by various journalist sources and amateur footages. According to BBC report (2015) agitation movement erupted during March of 2011 in the southern city of Deraa. The arrest of young students caused its emergence. They were sent to jail because they were alleged to be involved in painting of hostile slogans against Asad's government. Firing on protest rallies by security forces resulted in killings of several persons. Infuriated by feelings of anger and revenge many more joined the protest movement. The movement expanded throughout the country, clamoring for ouster of Asad. The government's use of force to crush the opposition strengthened the protesters' resolve to overthrow Assad's regime. Within a short duration of three to four months number of protestors swelled considerably. Government harsh attitude instigated violent response by opposition. Demonstration of violent attitude by both sides caused escalation of tension. The political protest transformed in to an open rebellion. Brutal approach to suppress opposition by use of force might be its prime cause. Armed forces personnel were used by government to eliminate opposition. In response opposition also opted for arm struggle. The decision to pick up arms against the government forces was taken by defectors of Syrian Army who earlier left government forces in response to the brutal crackdown on protesters by Asad regime. Armed clashes started between government and opposition forces. It was initiation of Syrian civil war. Both warring factions were trying to get control of maximum areas of Syrian territory. Defection by soldiers associated with regular army increased with passage of time. The trend of defection was more frequent in areas adjacent to international borders of Syria. That created impression of neighbors' involvement in causing defection. Tacit or explicit support for defection by states who were opposing Asad was not an unimaginable phenomenon. Opposition militias took the advantage of that situation to organize itself (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015). By February 2014, U.S. Director of National Intelligence (DNI) James Clapper assessed the strength of the insurgents in Syria as somewhere between 75,000 to 115,000 fighters, associated with more than 1,500 groups. The armed group organized by regime's political opponents chose the nomenclature of free Syrian Army (FSA). It was the major combative group involved in fighting against Syrian troops. Comprised of military defectors and armed civilians, the Free Syrian Army was able to defeat security forces in some areas. That made possible for Assad's opposition to establish its control in the regions of country where government had lost its control. The conflict transformed in to a civil war. Government retaliated with brutality by making use of biological weapons which caused large scale deaths of civilian population too. Many people of rural areas around Damascus became victim of 'Sarin' filled rockets fired in month of August during 2013. Western powers condemned the attacks and alleged

that rockets attacks were possibly planned and executed by Syria's government. Syrian government and its chief international patron Russia laid down counter allegation on opposition (BBC Report, 2015).

Seizing the opportunity extremist groups also began to organize and expand their influence in the conflict ridden region. They joined resistance movement against Syrian government initiated by Asad's political opposition. The Carter Centre Report (2014) revealed that The Islamic State (IS), earlier known as the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) and later as the Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS or ISIL), joined the Syrian conflict in early 2012. Jabhat al-Nusra (JAN) an affiliate of Al-Qaida was the other prominent militant organization which became active in Syria. It was already active with the same nomenclature in Iraq. Iraqi branch of JAN provided logistical and financial assistance for the establishment of the organization network in Syria. The two militant groups ISIL and JAN were supporting each other in Syrian conflict during initial period of conflict. Collaboration with ISIS helped al-Qaeda to continue its presence in Syria under the banner of JAN throughout 2012 and 2013. JAN owned sponsorship of six hundred assaults carried out by Jihadists in Syria, including more than 40 suicide attacks with small arms and spontaneous explosive devices. The militant organizations attracted individuals from all parts of the globe. According to U.S. officials, during four initial years after eruption of conflict twenty thousand combaters from other countries joined Syrian militants. Those personnel belonged to ninety different states. Muslim inhabitants of Western countries contributed their share in the form of at least 3,400 fighters for joining combative struggle in Syria. It reflected intensification of the trend to involve foreign recruits in domestic conflicts (Blanchard et al., 2015). Jihadist groups became a significant section of anti-Asad forces. Their contribution was vital in snatching away control of vital areas from Asad's loyalists.. However Jihadist groups were not successful to maintain their unity despite close cooperation between the two groups during early phase of conflict. Their mutual relationship changed drastically. The collaborators turned into arch rivals. The split of JAN with ISIL happened in 2013 when ISIL declared the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in Syria and Iraq. By mid-2013, Syrian opposition was divided in three types of groups; The Free Syrian army (FSA), Islamist Syrian Rebel groups and International Jihadist groups.

The dominance of Syrian ruling party had always been attributed to use of coercive means. The reliance on law enforcement agencies and paramilitary troops to maintain political control continued for decades. In past, during decade of 80s Hafez al-Assad deployed armed workers associated with military wing of Baath Party to quell rebellion launched by Muslim Brotherhood. Those armed personnel laid the foundation of Jaysh al-Sha'bi (the Popular Army). Jaysh al-Sha'bi had secular orientations. Its status as a reserve army remains intact until policy of demilitarization was implemented by Syrian government. All the armed groups were dissolved including Baath Party military faction (The Carter Centre, 2013). Neither al-Jaysh Al-Sha'bi, nor other Baath cadres were able to support government militarily when Syrian uprising sprouted in 2011. Asads' loyalists in

spontaneous response to emerging situation organized themselves in the form of militias. Their avowed goals were protection of existing regime, organization of armed resistance against opponents of Syrian government and strengthening of security mechanism. Those Assad's loyalist groups like to name themselves as Lijan al-Sha'bia (Popular Committees); the opposition stigmatized those as Shabiha (thugs). Shabiha is a derived name. Smuggling groups during preceding periods were termed as Shabiha. All the groups involved in fighting against opposition or emerged as collaborators of government for suppression of dissent were given the common name of Lijan al-Sha'bia. These groups did not remain independent for long. They became part of security apparatus without wastage of much time and resources. State owned security mechanism coordinated their activities. They accepted various administrative responsibilities to ensure their valuable contribution in service of regime. The people associated with these groups were assigned responsibilities at checkpoint, outside mosques and in conflict prone neighborhoods. During initial phase of conflict those local committees were not provided heavy armaments, their organizational structure was not centralized and their membership was not limited to a particular sect but these groups quickly transformed into a sectarian army. The political uprising initiated during early part of 2011 was converted into an armed insurgency in Homs city by the end of that calendar year. Society became divided in various groups. Major line of fissure was sectarian affiliations. Popular committees, mostly comprised of Alawites showed interest in arming themselves. The military successes of insurgents in Sunni populated regions were threatening for Asad and his supporters. They responded it by virtually transforming national army into a sectarian army. Government troops launched fierce counter attack for regaining of Homs during 2012. Official troops got valuable assistance from regime's loyalists. Control of several checking points in areas around the city was held by members of private militias. It is hard to conjecture that was it a strategic compulsion or political expediency to permit rather encourage involvement of private armies at such large scale by Syrian government. But their involvement proved a blessing for pro-Asad forces is an undeniable fact. Sectarian orientation of conflict became more obvious after its expansion in other regions of Syria after Homs. Villages of government supporters were targeted by Sunni militias. The instinct of survival and sentiments of revenge motivated many individuals associated with Alawite, Christian and Druz communities to join violent sectarian conflict" (The Carter Centre, 2013).

Regional and global powers, including Iran, Turkey, the Arab Gulf states, Russia, and the United States, responded to the insurgency and conflict in Syria according to their own interests. Funding, weapon supply and political backing of belligerent factions by other states have contributed to the escalation and persistence of fighting across Syria. The exploitation of situation to gain vested interests by regional and global powers caused the escalation of Syrian conflict. Syrian government forces reversed initial setbacks with the help of assistance provided by Iran and Lebanese Hezbollah. Anti-Asad forces succeeded to improve their battlefield performance since late 2014 with the help of external assistance too

(Rand Corporation Report, 2013). It wasn't until the first half of 2015 that efforts by the main opposition backers - Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Qatar - led to the creation of an umbrella group in Syria, known as Jaish al-Fateh (the Army of Conquest). More recently, a new alliance of Kurds, Christians and Arabs, called the Syrian Democratic Forces, has pushed back ISIL militants along the Iraqi-Syria border, signaling the emergence of yet another powerful competitor to President Assad, whose forces today control less than 22% of Syrian territory" (Sary, 2015).

Theoretical work

The fundamental argument of this research is portrayal by media of events in accordance with specific political objectives. That is exploration of media contribution in agenda setting. Framing is attributed to second-level agenda setting (McCombs, Shaw, & Weaver, 1997; Scheufele, 1999). Agenda setting is concerned with vitality of the issues while framing is related to portrayal of selected topics in perspective of different aspects (De Vreese, 2005). The concept of framing is of two types, media frames and audience frames (Sheufele, 1999). Media frames are generally viewed as Information packages that contain "a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events" (Gamson & Modigliani, as cited in Sheufele, 1999). Audience frames are the mental plan that helps to interpretation. (Entman, 1993). The idea of framing refute the positivists opinion that existence of all knowledge is based on unchanging realities. It emphasize that reflection of same reality differently by diverse scholarly discourses produce its multiple pictures (Ross, 2003; Linkon & Guba, 1985; Holzner, 1968; Berger & Luckmann 1966). Mass media as a powerful agent of socialization shape and transform the socio-political milieu. It present events in accordance with public sensitivities and help to strengthen the resolve about achievement of cherished goals (Bennet, 1983; Parenti, 1993; Stillar, 1998, p.1, as quoted in Ross, 2003). An intricate process of multiple interactions is involved in construction of reality. Print media is the potent source of creating figurative images by it written contents. Newspapers might adopt the strategy to tackle issues directly or by alluding to certain facts indirectly. Facts are interpreted contrarily, even the different aspects of same event are preferred by media for coverage and semantic techniques are utilized for desired results (Tuchman, 1978; Goffman, 1978; Parenti, 1993; Van dijk, 1991; Giltin, 1980; Gamson& Modigliani, 1989; Entman, 1993; Domke, 1997; Pan & Kosiki, 1993; Gamson, 1989). Media ranked the available information on the basis of its relevancy with particular events and help to prepare a favorable environment for proliferation of specific ideas (Gamson, 1989; Tuchman, 1978; Giltin, 1980; Tichenor, Donohue & Olien, 1980; Gamson et al, 1992).

Objectives

1. To investigate the major pro and anti-Syrian government groups highlighted in Saudi and Iranian Press.
2. To study that how pro and anti-Syrian government groups were portrayed in Saudi and Iranian Press.

3. To find out the framing differences of Syrian Conflict between in Saudi and Iranian Press.

Hypothesis

H1: There is likely to be a significant difference in portrayal of pro and anti-Syrian government groups in Saudi and Iranian Press.

H2: There is likely to be a significant difference in framing of pro and anti-Syrian government groups in Saudi and Iranian press.

Method

This research is concerned with analysis of written script so it is a content analysis project. Combinations of quantitative and qualitative methods have been utilized for examining the data. The editorials selected for analysis were published by Saudi and Iranian newspapers, *Arab news* and *Tehran times* respectively. The period chosen for analysis of those newspapers' editorial contents was year 2013. The content analysis is systematic description and classification of contents according to specific criteria (Berger, 2011; p.205). According to opinion expressed by Krippendorff (1980), technique of content analysis assists the researchers in formulation of valid arguments, its verification by supplementary evidences and authentic conclusions. There is no significant difference in its utility for both types of research whether qualitative or quantitative (Ibid). The important steps which a researcher while doing content analysis must adopt are efficient techniques of coding and constructing units which are measurable (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006; p.209-211). Replicating this particular technique used by scholars of other social sciences helps in making analysis of contents published by mass media with sophistication (Bertrand & Huges, 2005). In the process of content analysis objective and systematic system of categorization is adopted to record the communicated messages in the summarized form which are easy to compare (Paisley, 1964). Beside description of processes it helps to derive inferences. The descriptions of contents provide the answer of question related to nature of events and inferential analysis explains cause and effect relationship (Danielson & Jackson, 1963). It is said that content analysis facilitate the identification of links between environment and process. A coding sheet technique is adopted by researchers to investigate the newspapers' stance but it can't provide sound analysis. A researcher must be cautious while ascribing codes because without proper comprehension of the whole paragraph it can be deceptive. Terminology is hard to comprehend without authentic knowledge of the whole context (Khan & Farish, 2005). The opinion of Saudi and Iranian nations about the conflict of Syria as reflected by their press is examined by technique of content analysis. The press in both states is under government control so official policy of both countries can be discerned by making analysis of these newspapers papers. The editorials are considered as reflection of policy followed by a media group or a newspaper. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used simultaneously to supplement each other for a sound analysis. Opinions communicated through editorials were analyzed qualitatively. The

opinion expressed by a particular editorial was analyzed by reading it with meticulous approach and then it was placed in related category. Reliability of this particular method has been verified by several researchers who have conducted similar types of studies (Yousafzai & Rawan, 2009). According to expressed scholarly opinion the approach was mandatory for justification of adopted categorization (Positive/Negative/Neutral); as it require content analysis with complete understanding of proper context without which it could cause to astray (ibid). A specific event got how much attention was gauged by frequency of related editorials with in specified time. Furthermore, by assigning numerals to the recorded responses (themes) the data was displayed in statistical form. The statistical tests were applied to check hypothesis and explain results. The quantitative analysis was done with the help of computer software called SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The results derived by quantitative analysis strengthened the qualitative explanation

Frames and Categories expiation:

A- Pro-Syrian government frame

B- Anti-Syrian government

Under these frames the researchers studied that how Arab news and Tehran times framed the pro-government Syrian groups and slants showed tilt of newspapers, positive/negative/neutral. While the anti-government frame manifested that how both newspapers framed the anti-Assad groups and slant showed the tilt of both newspapers, positive/negative/neutral. Frames for pro-Assad groups actually are the attributions used in both newspapers. By conducting a polite study, attributions were clear. The Arab news attributed the pro-government Syrian groups as part of the cruel Assad's regime which has been involved in brutal killings of innocent civilians. While the Tehran times attributed the pro-Assad groups as supporters of government fighting against militancy and chaos. 'Tehran Times' appreciated their struggle for unity and stability of Syria. The anti-government groups were hailed by 'Arab News' as freedom fighters who were making sacrifices for the emancipation of oppressed masses of Syria.. The Tehran times considered the anti-Assad groups as anti-state foreign funded bands of rebels who were creating chaos and disturbance.

Positive:

Editorials those support and favor the pro-government groups and condemn the anti-Assad groups are categorized as positive.

Negative:

Editorials those condemn the pro-government groups and favor the anti-Assad groups are categorized as negative.

Neutral:

Editorials that neither support nor condemn the pro and anti-Syrian government groups are categorized as neutral.

Findings

Table: 1
Pro-Assad

Newspaper		Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Tehran Times	Positive	21	13.5	7.5
	Neutral	6	13.5	-7.5
Total		27		

Findings of table 1 related to editorials of Tehran Times depicts a very clear tilt of the newspaper in favor of Assad's government. From 1st January to 31 December the Tehran Times daily newspaper of Iran penned 27 editorials on Syria. Out of 27 editorials, 21 were positive and 6 neutral. It means that Tehran Times openly supported the Assad government and opposed the anti-government groups.

Table: 2
Anti Government

Newspaper		Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Arab News	Negative	17	9.0	9.0
	Neutral	1	9.0	9.0
Total		18		

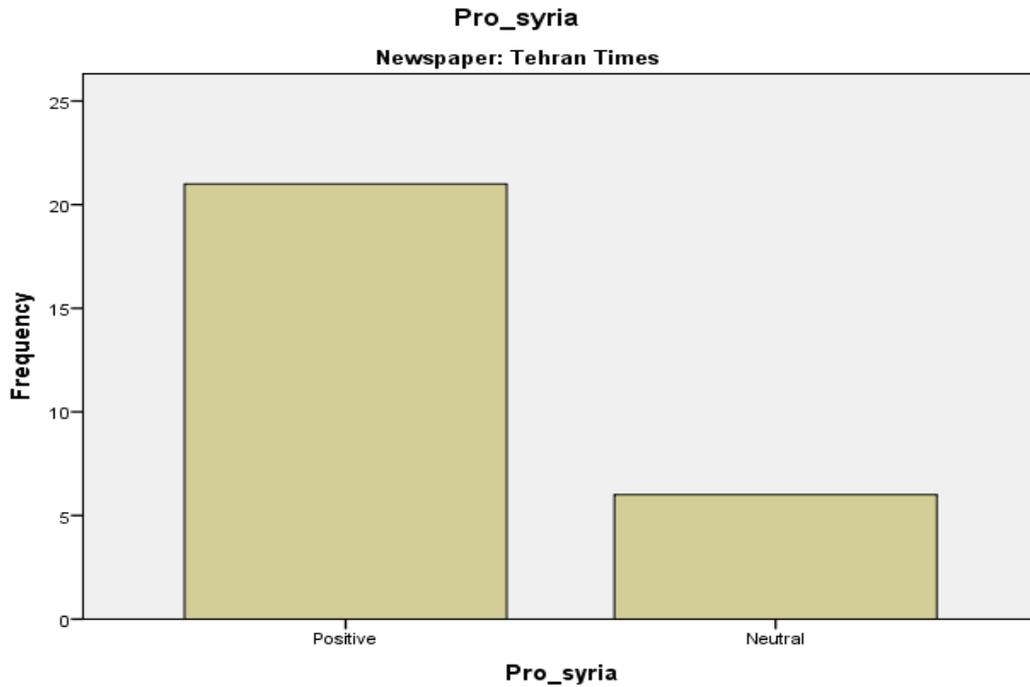
Table 2 shows the findings of Arab news that's slant is very clear. From 1st January to 31 December the Arab news daily newspaper of Saudi Arabia put space 18 editorials on Syrian conflict. Out of 18 editorials, 17 were negative and 1 was neutral. It means that Arab news openly condemned the Assad government and favored the anti-government groups.

Test Statistics

Newspaper		Anti-Govt	Pro-Govt
Arab News	Chi-Square	14.222 ^a	
	Df	1	
	Asymp. Sig.	.000	
Tehran Times	Chi-Square		8.333 ^b
	Df		1
	Asymp. Sig.		.004

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 9.0.

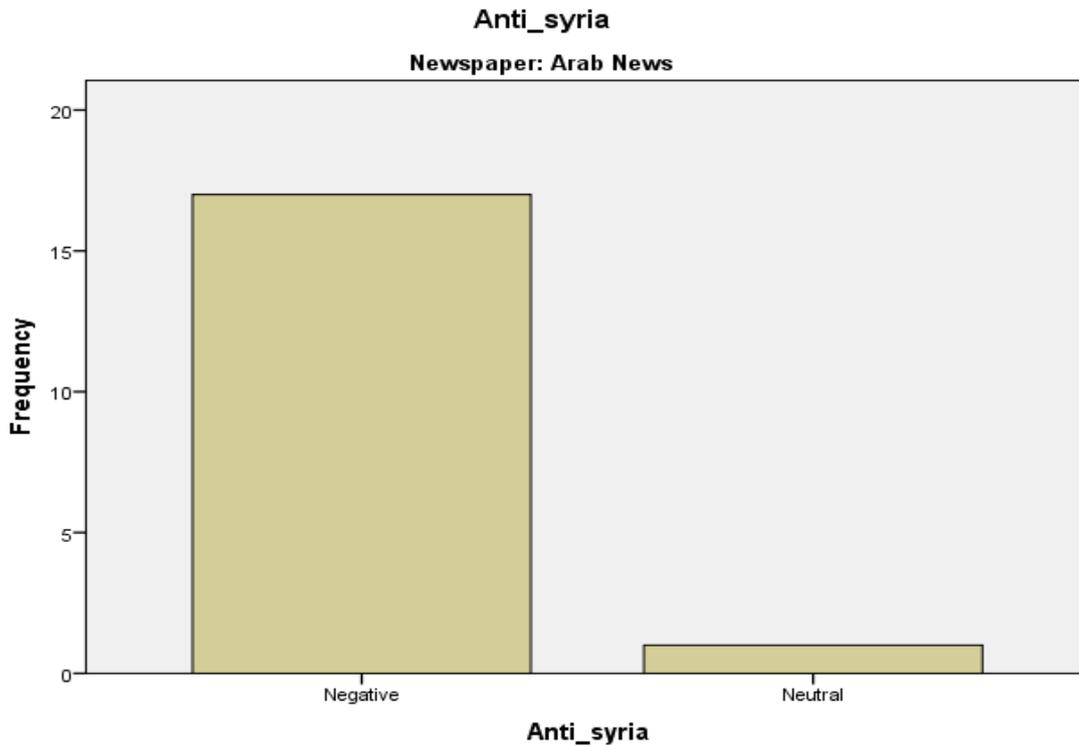
b. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 13.5.



Graph-1 is about pro-Syrian Government groups

Graph one (1) is a bar graph, which is graphical presentation of Table for easy understanding and Eye-catching presentation.

Graph-1 is representation of pro-Syrian government groups by 'Tehran Times'. 'Tehran Times' is a state owned newspaper of Iran. According to findings as represented in above graph the most prominent category is positive which is graphically at 21st level. Positive means Tehran Times openly support the pro-government Syrian groups. The neutral slant is as in graph is at 6th level. That shows that 6 editorials of Tehran Times did not favor or oppose any belligerent party.



Graph-2 is about Anti -Syrian Government groups

Graph-2 is representation of Anti- government Syrian groups by Arab News. Arab News is a state owned newspaper of Saudi Arabia. According to findings as represented in above graph the most prominent category is category is negative which is graphically at 17th level. Negative means Arab news openly condemn the Anti- government Syrian groups. The neutral slant in graph is at 1th level. That shows that only 1 editorial of Arab news did support any side.

Discussion and Conclusions

“Portrayal of pro and anti-Syrian government groups in Saudi and Iranian press” is hot topic for debate and discussion all over the world. The Syria attracted the attention of the world more and more with the passage of time. The findings of present study cover the period of year 2013. The researcher selected two newspapers, one is Tehran Times, and the most circulated newspaper of Iran and second is Arab News, the most circulated newspaper of Saudi Arabia. The study focuses on pro and anti-government groups of Syria. Researcher discussed the frame attributions and divided three categories for slant understanding, positive, negative and neutral. Tehran times published 26 editorials in 2013 on the selected topic. As showed in table and graph that 21 editorials were positive for Assad’s government, it means that Tehran times openly favored the pro Assad groups and 6 editorials showed neutral stance. On the other hand the findings of Arab news were very different from Tehran times. The Arab news wrote 17 editorials against

Syrian government stance and only 1 editorial showed a neutral stance. It means that Arab news openly supported the anti-government groups.

The findings of the study proved the hypothesis H1 assumed by researcher.

H1: There is likely to be a significant difference in portrayal of pro and anti-Government Syrian groups in Saudi and Iranian Press.

Both newspapers Tehran times of Iran and Arab news of Saudi Arabia portrayed the pro and anti-Syrian government groups differently. The Tehran times published 21 editorials to support Assad while Arab news published 17 editorials to support anti-government groups. So H1 proved.

The findings also affirm the hypothesis H2 which is

H2: There is likely to be a significant difference in framing of pro and anti-Government Syrian groups by Saudi and Iranian press.

The researcher has discussed the frame attributions of both newspapers. Researchers mentioned different attributions which affirm that Tehran times and Arab news used different frames in context of attributions to favor or oppose pro and anti-Syrian government groups. So the H2 also proved.

References

- BBC Report. (2015). *Syria: The story of the conflict*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26116868>
- Berelson, B. (1952). *Content analysis in communication research*, New York: The Free Press
- Bertrand, I & Hughes, P (2005). *Media Research Methods: Audience, institutions, texts*. London. Palgrave
- Bennett, W. L. (1990). Toward a theory of press-state relations in the United States: *Journal of Communication*, 40(2),103-125.
- Berger, A. A. (2011). *Media and Communication Research Methods: An Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 2 nd Ed. Los Angeles and London: Sage Publications.
- Berger, P.L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company.
- Blanchard, C. M., Humud, C. E., & Nikitin, M. B. D. (2015). *Armed Conflict in Syria: Overview and U.S. Response*. Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33487.pdf>
- De Vreese, C.H. (2005). News framing: Theory and typology. *Information Design Journal + Document Design* 13(1), 51-62.
- Domke, D. (1997). Journalists, framing, and discourse about race relations. *Journalism & Mass Communication Monographs*, 164, 5-55.
- Encyclopedia Britannica (2015). *Syrian Civil War*. Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/event/Syrian-Civil-War>.
- Entman, R., (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), pp. 51-58.
- Gamson, W.A. & Modigliani, A. (1989). Media discourse and public opinion on nuclear power: A constructionist approach. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 95, 1-37.
- Gitlin, T. (1980). *The whole world is watching: Mass media in the making and unmaking of the New Left*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. New York: Harper & Row.

- Holzner, B. (1968). *Reality construction in society*. Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing Company.
- Khan, F. R. & Farish, U. (2005). Media coverage of the ideological other: Evidence from Newsweek and Economist. *Gomal University Journal of Research*, 21 (1), pp. 36- 44. ISSN. 1019-8180.
- Krippendorff, K. (1980). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to it Methodology*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publication, INC.
- Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage.
- McCombs, M.E., & Shaw, D.L., & Weaver, D.L. (1997). *Communication and Democracy: Exploring the Intellectual Frontiers in Agenda-Setting Theory*. Mahwah, N.J. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Pan, Z., & Kosicki, G. M. (1993). Framing analysis: An approach to news discourse. *Political Communication*, 10 (1, Jan.-March), 59-79.
- Paisley, W. J. (1964). Identifying the unknown communicator in painting, literature and music: The significance of minor encoding habits. *Journal of Communication*, 14 (1), 219-237.
- Phillips, D. A. (2010). Syria. In Gritzner, C. F (Ed.). *Modern World Nations*. New York, US: Chelsea House Publications.
- Wimmer, D.R. & Dominick, J.R. (2006). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*. 8th Ed., London & Belmont, CA: Thomson, Wadsworth
- Yousafzai, Farish Ullah, Rawan, Bakht. (2009). How the Pakistani press framed the execution of Saddam Hussein. *Global Media Journal*, 2 (2).