

U.S. Media Framing of Foreign Countries Image: An Analytical Perspective

Noshina Saleem

Institute of Communication Studies, University of Punjab, Pakistan

Introduction

Regardless of increasingly global economy, introduction of modern technology, the immense majority of people in the world do not travel internationally; media plays an influential role in portraying other countries images in a striking way. According to McNelly and Izcaray the mass media can contribute to people's understanding — or misunderstanding — of each other's countries (McNelly and Izcaray, 1986, p. 546). Lippmann (1922) observed more than seventy-five years ago; people get their information about the world outside their community through the mass media (as cited in Cho & Lacy, 2000, p. 830). The mass media play a crucial role in constructing the image of various societies and their peoples, as Navasky noted that, "it is based largely on journalism that we make up our national mind" (Navasky cited in Zelizer & Allen, 2002, p. 1). The "images" of countries held by peoples of other countries have long been of interest to students of international affairs because they are generally acknowledged as having an important influence on the relations between nations (McCracken, 1987, p. 183, also in Noshina, 2000, p. 1). The basic intent of this research is to identify various determinants that influence foreign countries image in U.S. on the basis of various studies which focus on foreign countries image in U.S. media. The research literature on the coverage of international news and issues has covered a wide range of topics and embody

a number of different conceptual approaches. Some studies have examined the images of foreign nations, particularly actual or potential enemies, as presented in the media of selected countries. Some of these studies have been international and comparative in scope; others have focused on one nation's media, looking at the coverage of specific countries or of foreign news in general (Larson, 1990). Through the findings of these studies the researcher points out a list of factors that take part in shaping foreign countries images in the U.S. media.

The rationale of this paper is to explore nature of treatment of United States media in framing of foreign countries images in context of the socio-economic, political, military, cultural, and ideological interests. In addition, the two important concepts "framing" and "image" are also defined for the better understanding of the patterns of media coverage.

Framing

To know how the other countries are presented in United States media the understanding of the concept of framing is very important. An analytical technique of framing was developed by social psychologists (Goffman, 1974; Entman, 1991; Gitlin, 1980) to study and explain the role of the news media in defining issues for the public. Several studies suggested that the concept of 'framing' is now more or less established as a field in mass communication studies.

Entman argued in an often quoted, relatively recent definition of framing, "is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (Entman, 1993, p.

52). According to him “frames are information-processing schemata (Entman, 1991, p. 7) that operates by selecting and highlighting some features of reality while omitting others” (Entman, 1993, p. 53). Gitlin (1980) defines media frames as “persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual”. He also challenged researchers to look at persistent patterns not just isolated stories (Gitlin, 1980, p.7., see also Carragee, 1991, p. 6). For McGrath (2002) “framing devices are operative, whether consciously or unconsciously, in the media reporting of unions, feminism, environmentalism, antiracism, lesbian and gay activism, and most certainly anti-globalization protests” (p. 390). According to Goffman, events may be interpreted according to one of three frameworks: natural, social or institutional. Events interpreted according to natural frameworks are perceived as unguided and not subject to moral judgment (he suggests that earthquakes are an example). Actions interpreted according to social frameworks, on the other hand, are described as “guided doings ” and are subject to social appraisals (p. 22). Baran and Davis (2000) stated that the “Goffman’s theory of ‘frame analysis’ is a microscopic theory that focuses on how individuals learn to routinely make sense of their social world” (p. 270).

Frames are the principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters. Framing is considered as a central organizing idea to make sense of event or an issue (Gamson, 1989, p. 157; Gamson and Modigliani, 1987, p. 43). Tuchman (1978) offered a similar definition for media frames: “the news frame organizes everyday reality and the news frames is the part and parcel of everyday reality... [it] is an essential feature of news” (p. 193). Framing is a

term that implies how an event is portrayed in a particular story or article. The notion of framing appears to be emerging as a significant one in the mass communication theorization and research. This theory examines how writers *frame* a story (Atheide, 1976).

James Mann discussed the media treatment of foreign affairs reporting and revealed that

reporters do not always get the story right; neither do their editors and publishers. This is especially the case when they report about distant lands and unfamiliar cultures...the readers, who are already conditioned by the prevalent stereotypes, accept the misleading stories as true and react accordingly. The consequences can be disastrous media effects are enhanced when the information conveyed in stories is unfamiliar to audience and cannot be readily verified through their personal experiences or competing stories. This is why foreign affairs reporting demands the attention of experienced, highly skilled, and well informed reporters” (Mann, 1999, p. 102).

Moreover, the notion of media frame has been used loosely and often left undefined. It is frequently used in a vague way, or as a metaphor (Tankard et al, 1991, p. 2). In general, news frames are constructed from and embodied in the key words. Jamieson and Waldman (2003) suggested “the metaphor of a frame—a fixed border to determine what information is included and what is ignored” (p. xiii). For Reese, framing is ultimately “an exercise of power” (Resse, 2001, p. 10). Gitlin described to the elite’s control of media frames an essential hegemonic function of media content. In addition, Tuchman’s labeled framing as content production. Both argued that media routines favored elite opinion, thus implicitly making the case that the elite sources are influential in constructing frames. In that sense, frames are indicators of power, as Entman called it as frames are “the imprint of power” (Entman, 1993, p. 55). Furthermore, Gitlin (1980) described frames as “a significant social force” that

formulates public ideology. He studied how and through what kind of frames that ideology was formed (p. 9). Hackett (1984) draws on Gitlin's definition of media frames and he argues that, "the ideology provides a framework through which events are presented" (Hackett, 1984 cited in Mughees, 1993, p. 66). According to Berenger (2004), "frames make messages memorable and understandable" (cited in King & Lester, 2005, p. 626).

Bourdieu (1998) maintained that "even in countries where there is freedom of expression, there is a form of invisible self-censorship. Journalists, writers, and producers realize what is permissible in media, and they pre-edit their own work to be consistent with those perceived norms-all in the interest of remaining employed in the media companies. For example, news producers at ABC "just know" they should avoid stories about new animated movies not produced by their corporate parent, Disney" (cited in Straubhaar & Larose, 2002, p. 54). Media critics, Herman and Chomsky (2000) maintained that the media frame plays a vital role in presenting, shaping or destroying the picture of an event or story (p.xiii). They revealed that the U.S. media framed the Seattle protesters as "all purpose agitators" (*U.S. News & World Report*), "terminally aggrieved" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*), simply against world trade (ABC News), and making "much ado about nothing" (CNN), but the bases of the protesters grievances were almost entirely unexplored (p. xiii).

The literature on framing indicates that, (1) Media frames can play a vital role in stimulating opposition to or support for an event or issue. (2) Media frames provide moral judgment, causal interpretation and remedy/solution for media-focused problems. (3) Media frames generally represent specific ideology. (4) Media frames including

attractive words, metaphors, phrases etc also help to determine the “tone” of media coverage of an event or issue.

Definition of Image

The mass media play a very significant role in the formulation of images and beliefs of the people. John Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge call the media as the “first rate competitors for the number one position as international image former” (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p. 65; see also Tanstall, 1970, p. 260). Cohen further describes that “most of us gather our impressions of our countries and societies from the media” (Mughees, 1997, p. 33).

Lippmann describes the social and political images by labeling them as “pictures in our heads” (Mughees, 1991, p. 8). “Image” is a subtle mental integration of various attributes that the person projects and that people perceive and interpret in light of their beliefs, values and expectations (Renato Taguriri, cited in Nimmo, 1978, pp. 43-44). An “image” is everything a person has learned relevant to a situation and to the acts that occur within it... and image is a tendency composed of thoughts, feelings, and inclinations. Images change constantly with experience (p. 226). Boulding (1969) describes various factors that play an important role in the formulation of national image in international system...The national image is essentially a *historical image*-that is an image which extends through time, backward into a supposedly recorded or perhaps mythological past and forward into an imagined future. The more conscious a people is of its history, the stronger the national image is likely to be. Wars and hostilities among nations also formulate national images as do geographical space, past friendliness and

alliances, and strengths and weaknesses of the nations in terms of military, economic and politic capacity (pp. 424-26). More directly, media's stereotypes, organizational ideology, corporate and government influence, among other factors, help to create and reinforce nation's image in media coverage (Hanan, 2006, p. 7). Besides "many prejudices about nations are carried forward through the generations, so that historical events of long ago remain decisive in nation's image (Kunczik, 1997, p. 3). Therefore, a country's image can be defined as "a representation of a country's positive or negative standing in media, in terms of historical, political, economic, military, diplomatic and religious context" (Hanan, 2006, p. 8).

"Image" can be defined as a conceptual picture in the mind of a person, about a person, thing or a country and it may be a product of some specific political, social, or religious background or circumstances. In journalistic terminology, image of a country can be defined in the terms of political, economical, military, diplomatic and religious relations in the changing domestic, regional and international scenario and its effects on the thoughts, behaviors, feelings, and inclinations of the owners of the media organization (Noshina, 2000, p. 6). The "image of a country" in media analyzed through the language used by media, including value-laden (words, phrase, metaphors, sentences and adjectives etc.,) which appear in support or opposition to that country's government policies on various domestic and international issues (Hanan, 2006, p. 151).

Therefore, this study assumes that framing of other countries image ranging from positive to negative and from negative to neutral depending upon the degree of U.S. willingness to protect subject countries interests in accordance to their foreign policy objectives.

Foreign Countries Image in U.S. media

A substantial number of studies have been done on framing of other countries images in U.S. media. The findings of different studies indicate that following factors are involved in shaping of images of subject countries in U.S. media.

1. Influence of U.S. Government Policy on Media's Organizational Policy in

Framing of other countries image

James Mann, in his article on "Framing China" states that the reporters, editors and publishers do not do justice about distant lands and unfamiliar cultures in their reporting especially in the case of China. American media frames related to China change dramatically from decade to decade. He wrote, "In the 1950 and the 1960s, the frame was of China as little blue ants or automatons. In 1970s, following the Nixon administration's opening, the frame was of the virtuous (entertaining, cute) Chinese, displaying their timeless qualities even under communism. In the 1980s, the frame was that China was "going capitalist". And for most of the 1990s, the frame was of a repressive China" (Mann, 1999, p. 102 see also Graber, 2000, p. 44). Similarly, Yu and Riffe (1989) analyzed the coverage of China's national leaders Chiang and Mao in three American new magazines *Time*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News & World report* from 1949 to 1976 revealed that the U.S. media image of other nation's leaders depending upon the status of that nation as a friend or foe in U.S. foreign Interests. They further added that change in relations between nations influenced images of leaders as well. They examined the treatment of both the leaders' image in these U.S. magazines varied with U.S. interests and policy towards China. In the era of hostility between China and U.S., Mao presented in unfavorable manners but in cold war era, due to anti-communist fears, Washington

viewed Mao as an inevitable force and “semi-ally” and the U.S. media presented increasingly favorable coverage of Mao’s (p. 919). Therefore, it cleared that U.S. press followed U.S. government policy line against the friends and foes. Dorman & Farhang (1987) focused on the U.S. press coverage of Iran from 1951-1978 in *The New York Times*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Washington Post*, the *Wall street Journal*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Los Angles Times*, observed that Iran was portrayed differently in different periods by the U.S. mainstream press. Being the most important strategic allies of U.S., Iran in Shah’s rule, had become the largest recipient of U.S. weapons and economics aid. More than forty thousand American military and civilian personnel were working in Iran. They concluded that “throughout the association of the United States with the Shah, the press tended to serve Washington’s shortsighted policy goals by portraying political opposition to regime was nothing more than benighted reactionaries” (p. 3). The picture was totally changed in 1978 revolution when the press and policy makers asserting that the revolt was motivated by fanatical and anti-modern Muslims. They claimed that Khomeini’s government export terrorism. In addition to their public opinion analysis, they maintained that the news media and the U.S. government conveyed various stereotypes to American public.

Therefore, studies of Mann, 1999; Yu & Riffe, 1989; and Dorman & Farhang, 1987, concluded that the U.S. media policy shapes with changing government policies towards subject countries. This policy shift in media was the result of the following factors. (1) U.S. media usually follow the government policy line to protect U.S. interests in foreign policy issues and to help the government by

shaping public sentiment in government's favor on various policy matters, (2) feeling of patriotism, (3) U.S. president's ability to set agenda for various policy issues, and (4) the government media management techniques. For instance, speeches, press briefing and press conferences by administration officials.

2. U.S Media Frames Foreign Countries Image in the Context of National Interests

U.S. media supports their government interests while frame image of other countries. In his article "The news media and World War III", McChensey (2002), criticized U.S. media for supporting U.S government policies and interests. He pointed out that the distorted coverage of other countries and the world events in U.S media are the result of lack of professional journalism, the control of major news media by small number of very large and powerful profit-seeking corporations, and ownership regulations. The U.S. media project and protect the interests of ruling class. In this context, he maintained that since the September 11, on the war of terrorism, the considerable media information context and background have been generated in U.S. news media was conformed by elite premises. By giving the example of CNN biased news coverage, he mentioned, the "CNN explicitly produces different coverage of the war on terrorism for its U.S. channel and its channels that serve the rest of the world" (p. 20).

Yang (2003) used a frame analysis technique, to compares the way in which Chinese media- the *People's Daily Online* and the *China Daily*, and US media- *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, covered the NATO air strikes on Yugoslavia in 1999. The content analysis of 200 news stories reveals that Chinese newspapers and U.S. newspapers adopted two different media frames in recounting the large-scale military action. While the Chinese newspapers framed the air strikes as an intervention of

Yugoslavia's sovereignty and territory, the U.S. newspaper framed the air strikes as a humanistic aid to Albanians to stop the ethnic cleansing initiated by Serbians. The general corresponding reflections of government attitudes toward the air strikes in the newspapers indicate a considerable influence of national interest on media frames in newspapers. The author concluded that in international news reportage, national interest often outweighs other factors to play an active role in framing media texts.

Reta, (2000) depicts the way by which the *Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, presented major issues and actors in the 1994 South African elections in the context of U.S. national interests. In addition, U.S. media framed issues in a way to encourage negotiation, reconciliation, free and fair elections and the formation of an all-inclusive government. By contrast, the media discouraged violence, belligerence and separatism. Similarly, they projected a favorable image of South African pro-election groups or personalities, while they disfavored all forces that stood against elections and a future government of national unity. Coverage was found to be reflective of American journalistic values of ethnocentrism and social order. She concluded that the US media framed issues and actors in the South African elections based on American democratic values. To sum up, these studies (McChensey, 2002; Yang, 2003; & Reta, 2000) concluded that U.S. media generally support U.S. national interest and policies while framing of other countries image. (a) When there is a high level U.S. interests involved in an issue or country, the U.S. media give more attention it. (b) U.S. media protect and project national interests Vis-à-vis U.S. competing powers such as China and Russia.

3. U.S. government influence on U.S. media's contents

In every democratic society, despite of private media ownership, government influence on media is visible. Kim (2000) study *The New York Times & The Washington Post* comparative news coverage of the Kwangju & Tiananmen pro-democracy movements in the context of U.S. media and government interdependent relationship, revealed that these newspapers portrayed the Tiananmen movement more positively than the Kwangju movement. His findings also suggested that in the reporting of the Tiananmen and the Kwangju movements, these newspapers were considerably influenced by the U.S. government's responses to the movements and its foreign policy. Solomon (1992) argued that three leading U.S. weeklies coverage of El Salvador from 1989-1992 shared "a frame that U.S. policy [towards EL Salvador] was well meaning and honorable" (p. 65). This resulted, among other things, in the news magazines avoiding mentioning any of U.S. responsibility for the appearances of death squads in Latin America during the 1960s and 1970s. "Such information", Solomon wrote, "would have undermined U.S. claims to moral high ground in El Salvador" (p. 65).

In short, the American press by informing and influencing the general as well as the attentive publics on the world events, affects the substance of United States foreign policy. The extent and character of the media coverage of foreign affairs was inescapable factor in high-level policy deliberations.

4. Economic interest as a determinant in framing of foreign countries image

Park (2003) examined the frames used by the videotaped news stories utilized in the U.S. television coverage of Korea and Japan revealed that the news stories about these two countries' political relations with the U.S. generally utilize cooperative frames. This study focuses on the topics including; relations with the USA, Economics,

Demonstrations and protests, and Disasters. The study maintained that the Japanese economy was heavily framed as a rival, while Korean economy was generally framed as cooperative. The demonstration and protest stories showed a clear contrast between Korea and Japan. The U.S. television networks framed demonstrations and protests in Korea in a chaos frame, while in Japan, these incidents presented in a democracy frame. The frame analysis of disaster stories showed a dominance of a sympathetic frame for both countries. The U.S. media framed Foreign Countries image as positive where significant U.S. economic interests are involved. Various studies concluded that (1) corporate influence on media organizations compels them to frame a friendly image of a country where vast U.S. economy interests are involved, and (2) U.S. government also adopts a favorable policy towards those where U.S. consider it has visible interests there, that also convinced U.S. media to frame a positive or friendly image of that country in their coverage.

5. U.S. Media Framed Foreign country's Image as negative where U.S. Interests are insignificant

Poornananda (1998) analyzed that third world countries especially South Asian countries coverage in U.S. media was very marginal during five years from 1992 to 1996. In his article on "Coverage of South Asia in two leading U.S. newspapers," he found that *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Washington Post*, gave very little coverage to South Asia. Only negative stories which were generally based on crimes, disasters, and conflicts, failure of governments, institutions and individuals were focused while areas including science, arts and culture were significantly marginalized.

In another study, “Asian News in Four U.S. Newspapers”, Bukhory (1989) rejected the long-held view regarding the Western media’s news coverage of Asia is characterised by negative reports that focuses on crises and conflicts. He took a fresh look at the issue using a set of hypotheses to test coverage in four prestigious U.S. newspapers, the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and the *Washington Post*, and argued that the oft-heard complaint was groundless, at least when it came to major U.S. newspapers. He pointed out that *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times* and *Christian Science Monitor* gave 35.5%, 21.3%, 26.9% and 30.8% coverage to Asian affairs in the year 1986-1987. This coverage was relatively higher than the previous years. He also found that U.S. press gave respectable coverage to those Asian countries where it has political economic and military interests e.g., China, Korea, Philippines, Japan and Pakistan. Conversely, other countries of the region were neglected or marginalized in the coverage of these newspapers. The *New York Times* gave maximum coverage to Asian affairs as compared to other three newspapers in the year of 1986-1987. He noticed that in terms of thematic subjective categories the news of Asian countries about conflict and crises, of domestic affairs, foreign relations, disasters and terrorism and crime were dominated in all four U.S. papers. He also suggested that “U.S. newspapers do not have foreign correspondents and thus depend heavily on wire services. Foreign correspondents have a great responsibility to the international community to report and disseminate news, views and images of various nations of the world (p. 232). His study concluded that the U.S. press had been inconsistent (sometime supportive and sometime adversarial rather negative) in covering Asian news because sometimes, wire services provide incomplete or slanted information.

In his study of foreign news coverage of 72 countries, titled "Developed and developing nations' news in U.S. wire service files to Asia", Giffard (1984) concluded that American wire services especially the A.P. and U.P.I. in their coverage of developing countries were overwhelmingly negative, biased and marginalized (p. 19).

To sum up, the studies those argued that the U.S. media framed negative image of third world countries and give biased coverage presented the following reasons. (1) The U.S. media follow government policy. When relationship between the U.S. and the country in policy debate are tense, U.S. media framed negative image of that country. (2) The U.S. media focuses on negative aspects such as, famine, political unrest and hunger instead of development, science and technology while covering third world countries.

6. Influence of Media's Personnel bias and stereotypes and its impact on framing of Muslims countries Image

A sufficient amount of literature was available related to the coverage of image of the Muslim World in the U.S. media that provided a comprehensive knowledge about the treatment of Islam and Muslim world in the U.S. media.

Said (1987) observed that the tone of the Western media was against Islam, and the Western media portray Islam as a violent and destructive religion for individuals and civilisation (p. 93). During the 1979 hostage crisis, ABC commentator asked an "expert" whether being a Shi'ite Muslim meant being "anti-American", he replied that it did. Over film footage of Muslim crowds chanting "God is Great", ABC commentator Frank Reynolds said that he supposed their real meaning was: "Hatred of America". Similarly, CBS's Walter Cronkite spoke of Muslim hatred of this country (Said, 1981 also see Mughees, 1995, p. 35). Esposito (1992) in his book *The Islamic threat: myth and reality*,

gave a detailed picture of Islamic history, emergence of Islam, misinterpretation about Islamic laws and practices, gap between Western and Islamic world, the Islamic revolutionary movements in all parts of the world, particularly in Iran and Algeria, and Rushdie affair, the civil war in Lebanon, Operation Desert Storm, the turmoil in the Soviet republics in Central Asia, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, presented an overview of Western media's biased treatment with reference to Muslims and Muslim world (see chapter 6). Esposito further wrote about Edward Said's critique of orientalism, maintained "that though at time excessive, was insignificant in identifying deficiencies and bias in the scholarship of the past. However, new form of orientalism flourish today in the hands of those who equate revivalism, fundamentalism, or Islamic movements solely with radical revolutionaries, and who fail to focus on the vast majority of Islamically committed Muslims who belong to the moderate mainstream of society" (p. 202). He further asserted that

this trend (and deficiency) has been reinforced by the realities of the marketplace. Publishing houses, journals, consulting firms, and the media seek out that which captures the headlines and all too often confirms stereotypes and fears of extremism and terrorism. Think how often any reference to an Islamic organization inevitably includes adjectives like "fundamentalism", "conservativeness", and "extremist" (p. 202).

Mughees-uddin (1995), "Image of Iran in the Western media", indicates that the major reason of negative image of Iran in the U.S. media is its "Islamic Character"-- which is portrayed as a threat to regional peace, security and the interest of U.S. and Israel. Generally, the Western media portray Iran as a "terrorist", or a "fundamentalist" country. The notion of Islamic fundamentalism is mostly attributed to Iran and Iranian Muslims. He describes that the Western media is not only critical towards Islam but also helps to promote stereotypes about Muslim world and Islamic values. He concluded that

the U.S. media has tried to create conflict and misunderstanding between Islam and Christianity by portraying Christianity as a symbol of tolerance and free market economy, whereas Islam as a religion of non-tolerant people (pp. 41-42).

Mughees-uddin (1994), in his study about the coverage of Algeria's Islamic Movement (FIS) in U.S. elite press argued that the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times* misperceived, misunderstood and misinterpreted Islamic movement in Algeria. These three newspapers showed their skepticism about the future agenda of FIS as anti-West, and anti-women, causing immigration of moderates to Europe and France, a radical foreign policy, violation of human rights and to establish Iranian type of government in Algeria. Besides the army coup in Algeria, these newspapers did not criticize the military action in their editorial coverage but portrayed it as a "legitimate action" (p. 245). He concluded that the negative image of FIS in U.S. elite press was the result of stereotypical perception of Islam, deep rooted rivalry between Islam and Christianity, misinterpretation of Islam values and traditions, and to consider Islam as a great threat to American interest and supremacy in the world.

Poole (2000), in her article 'Framing Islam: An analysis of newspaper coverage of Islam in the British press' summarized the common themes as follows: "Islam is a threat to British society and its values, Islam/Muslims are deviant, irrational, different and unable to fit in British society, Islam is an antiquated religion, Muslims are undifferentiated, Islam is marginalized as newsworthy on the basis of dominant news values and women are marginalize as significant actors" (Poole 2000, p. 162). In addition, she also pointed out that Islam is represented as "media villain" (Poole, 2002, p. 41) in the British press. Similarly, Edward Said states that "in west, the Arabs are

frequently presented as a menace, a terrorist, a shadowy figure who operates outside of the accepted value system and is therefore to be feared and mistrusted” (p. 15). In addition, Perlmutter described “communism as a disease and Islamic fundamentalism as a plague” (Perlmutter, 1993 cited in Hanan, 2006, p. 156).

Of course, Islam phobia in the media is by no mean a new occurrences; it has in fact been a consistent theme in Western’s media coverage of the Muslim world ever since the end of cold war. The 9/11 tragedy and its consequent events exacerbated the situation beyond control, causing a vitriolic backlash of hostility from the Western media towards all that is Islam (Duranni, 2005, p. 21). Kaddour (2002) maintained that the incident of 9/11 created a great opportunity for the media to freely propagate stereotypes about Muslim world.

The media depicted Islam to be filthy and evil...Islam now breath fear. The so-called war against terror became a war against Islam...Men in beards and women in veils now became hard-line terrorists.

These studies concluded that Islam, Muslims and Muslim countries were misinterpreted and misrepresented in Western Media due to following reasons:

1. Lack of understanding about the Islamic culture, tradition and values by the Western media, image-makers, writers, critics, scholars and politicians.
2. American media consider Islam as potential threat after the fall of communism.
3. The Western media presented Islam as a conservative, backward and extremist religion and a threat to modernized West.
4. Islam as a competitor to Christianity and Judaism and never get along with West.
5. Misinterpretation of Islamic concept of ‘Jihad’ and freedom of women

6. Western media condemned Islamic revolution, reawakening and resurgence of Islam around the globe e.g., Algeria and Iran more recent Taliban's regime in Afghanistan. In addition, to consider Muslim countries military and nuclear developments as a threat to world community in general and U.S. Israel in particular.
7. The convergence and divergence of U.S.-Islamic countries relations.

7. U.S. Media framed Country image as negative where U.S. involved in war

Soderlund & Schmitt (1986) analyzed 160 news items appeared in North and South American press related to El Salvador's civil war. Their study revealed that the U.S. newspapers gave almost double coverage compared to Canadian media. In addition, the treatment of South American papers was more negative than North American newspapers. Which were "more international" in their portrayal of the crisis, they did not present this international involvement in a positive light (p. 274). In another study of the coverage of Cuban image in major news networks of Canada (CBC and CTV) and the United States (ABC, CBS, and NBC) from 1988 to 1992, Soderlund, et al. (1998) revealed that the Cuban image in both countries television were negative since Cuban revolution and the end of the Cold War did not change, in any fundamental way, the Cuba's image in their coverage. They also pointed out that the Cuban image in U.S. television was dominantly influenced by 'conflict and confrontation frames (para 1).

Hachten & Hachten (1992) argued that in reporting the Gulf war, the U.S. media, CNN and other television broadcasts with the help of newest technology of small, lightweight cameras, portable up-links, digital editing, and suitcase-sized satellite telephones made it a "real-time war". Especially CNN gave live bloody images of Gulf

war on television screen for the whole global audience. The Gulf War was a violent conflict between Iraq and coalition forces led by the United States, which lasted for 42 days but turned the world into global community. He found that “this live global coverage passed through the prism of deep cultural difference between West and Islam. To the West and some Arabs, Saddam Hussein (the former Iraqi President) was a dangerous, reckless tyrant, to millions of other Arabs and Moslems, he was as a hero who stood up to the West--a modern day Saladin” (p. 305).

The various studies revealed that U.S. media supported U.S. foreign policy when U.S. involved in war or conflict and U.S. media were always highly critical to those countries from which U.S. involved in confrontation because of the following reasons (a) U.S. media helps to organize the American as well as the world public opinion in the favor of U.S. government policies, (b) U.S. media framed enemy state as a potential threat to U.S. interests, and (c) focuses on socio-economic, military and political weakness and confronting state and project American core values including, democracy, freedom of speech and expression and torchbearer of peace and tranquility.

8. U.S. Media reliance on official sources and its impact on Framing of Foreign Countries Image

Some studies referred that U.S. media depends on U.S. official sources while framing foreign countries image in their coverage in general and in war or crisis situation and especially in war against terrorism, in particular. Luther & Miller (2005) in their study, framing of the 2003 U.S.-Iraq war, found that the news media do value the right of individuals to engage in protests, but tend to focus on the “spectacle” of the protests. Moreover, if the protests are viewed as challenging elite consensus or upsetting the status

quo, the media tend to delegitimize, marginalize, or dismiss the efforts of the protesters through various techniques such as relying on official sources or using negative expressions to describe the protesters (p. 80).

Griffin and Lee (1995) conducted a visual content analysis of photographs appeared in American news magazines including, *Times*, *News Week*, & *U.S. News and World Report* during the Gulf War 1991- 'Operation Desert Storm', explored that all three news magazines portrayed narrow and virtually identical patterns of pictorial coverage of U.S. arsenal, U.S. troops and U.S. political and military leaders and deliberately ignored the pictures of Iraqi troops, Iraqi civilians casualties and anti-war demonstrations etc. They also claimed that the U.S. media presented one sided view of war. Griffin (2004) gave the comparative pictorial analysis of three American news magazines, *Times*, *News Week*, & *U.S. News and World Report* regarding coverage during three U.S. military incursions into Southwest Asia: the 1991 Gulf War, the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The study revealed that patterns of media coverage of both Afghan and Iraq war were similar to those witnessed in the photographic coverage of Gulf War 1991. He maintained that the nature of photographs appeared in these U.S. based news magazines were promoted U.S. perspective of wars. He further maintained that the analysis of news-magazines photographs from the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan reaffirmed that the published pictures of the mainstream press did not provide natural, spontaneous, or independent views of locations or occurrences. It seemed that the press only promote and reinforce those versions of events that have already been established in public discourse and implanted in media institutions by powerful social interests. In addition, he observed that these news magazines presented and supported the

Washington official version of wars. In reality information war was tightly controlled on television by U.S. government. Both the electronic and print media in U.S. supported American foreign policy and intentionally marginalized the coverage of anti-war protests and the casualties of Iraqi civilian population by American forces. Instead of criticizing attack, U.S. media legitimated the U.S. attack on Iraq by labeling it as a step towards the restoration of democracy in Iraq. A close analysis of recent U.S. war photojournalism indicates that photography linked with recorded technology, economic, social, and political forces that shape the limits and priority of representation. Dimitrova & Strömbäck (2005) study of content analysis of the framing of the Iraq war 2003 in the elite newspapers- the Swedish, *Dagens Nyheter* and the U.S., *The New York Times* revealed that there were a significant difference in coverage of these newspapers in terms of focus and frames. *The New York Times* focused on the military conflict frames while the responsibility and anti-war protest frames were more common for the Swedish war coverage. The U.S. newspaper, however, relied heavily on official sources both government and military. In addition, the tone of the war coverage was also differed across the two nations. *The New York Times* Supported the war while the Swedish newspaper was more critical to U.S involvement. They also discussed both countries political and media systems and linked their impact on war coverage. In a nutshell they maintained that *The New York Times* supported U.S. policy on Iraq war while Swedish newspapers- *Dagens Nyheter* gave more balanced coverage.

The studies which talk about the dependency of media on official sources revealed that (1) the official sources set the tone of media coverage by providing slanted

information, (2) limited the media influence on government policy line, and (3) reduce the media's quest for investigating reporting.

9. Media Ideology as a determinant in framing Foreign Countries Image

Media's ideological position plays vital role in shaping countries image in media coverage. Dijk, (2001) observed that in editorials and op-ed articles, the ideologies of the journalists somehow influence their opinions, which in turn influence the discourse structure of the opinion articles (p. 21). Giving an analysis of the opinion articles of *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* which were taken to express a variety of more or less liberal and more conservative opinions and ideologies, depending on the issues at hand, while at the same time exhibiting fragments of an overall 'American' ideological perspective on news events and the world. He stated that ideologies are reflected through discourses. Such words, sentences, propositions, structure, context, categories etc are used that shows ideological biased of the media. He maintained that "another strategy [of U.S. media] is to compare a target enemy with another, certified enemy, e.g. Gadhafi with Saddam Hussein, and Saddam Hussein with Hitler, and all of them with devils and demons (p. 60). According to him the U.S. and the Western media tried to portray Gadhafi as an evil and U.S. air strikes on innocent civilian as a legitimate and justified action (p. 60).

Conclusion

The above discussion concluded that U.S. media gave substantial favorable coverage to those countries where it's political, economic and military interests are involved. In other words U.S. media support U.S. policies on foreign affairs and framed foreign

countries images accordingly to government's interests. Contrarily, some studies pointed out that U.S. media also opposed government policies but this opposition is marginal and issue specific in nature depending upon the involvement of U.S. interests and intensity of the government media differences on those issues.

On the basis of large body of literature review, this study presents the following conclusions that provide a framework for analysis of foreign countries image in U.S. media. (1) U.S. media projected as well as protected the interests of ruling class. (2) U.S. media relied on government sources that play a vital role in shaping media coverage according to government's point of view. For instance, President Bush and other leading government officials declared Iran and North Korea as "Axis of Evil", and "Rouge States" in their speeches and press briefings that shape the trend of U.S. media coverage towards these countries. (3) U.S. media exaggerated or sometimes marginalized the coverage of various issues to support government point of view for organizing public opinion in the favor of the government. (4) U.S. government sometimes provided ambiguous or selective information to media that leads to positive or negative position framing of foreign countries image in U.S. media. (5) U.S. media sometimes exaggerated the enemy's power or draw the attention of policy makers to certain policy issues that ultimately benefited government by organizing public opinion in the favor of government. (6) U.S media legitimizes U.S. military actions and magnified U.S success and enemy's atrocities.

To sum up, media organization's ideological stance, government manipulation, corporate and ownership influence and media personnel stereotypes and prejudices also play a vital role in shaping foreign countries image in U.S. media.

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