

Content analysis of The New York Times,
The Times of London and The Pakistan
Times on the coverage of Afghanistan
(April 15–December 31, 1988)

by

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Signatures have been redacted for privacy

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

A military coup in July 1973, ended the 40-year-rule of King Zahir Shah in Afghanistan. The authoritarianism that replaced the monarchy led to political instability, resulting in one coup after another.

The Soviet Union intervened in support of the Afghan government in December, 1979, in order to fight Moslem guerrillas who were resisting the establishment of a socialist system in the country.

Although a large number of Afghan people had started migrating to neighboring Pakistan and Iran before the Soviet invasion, the influx of refugees to these two countries increased manifold following the Soviet invasion, adding another dimension to the problem.

The world community reacted very sharply against the Soviet intervention as well as against the blatant violation of human rights in Afghanistan. The peoples of the world were almost unanimous in calling for the withdrawal of Soviet forces and respect for the right of self determination of the Afghan people. The United Nations passed consistent and persistent resolutions in this regard. But the Soviet Union turned a deaf ear to these calls. Joined by its puppet regime it would instead call for an end to foreign intervention in Afghanistan. She accused the United States and Pakistan of providing financial and military aid to the Afghan rebels, called

'Mujahidin,' who were opposed to the Soviet intervention and were resisting the Soviet and puppet regime forces. The U.S., thus, became an important actor in this complex situation.

With the change in the Soviet leadership following the death of Leonid Brezhnev, especially after Mikhail Gorbachev's coming into power, the prospects of a political settlement of the problem became bright. The indirect negotiations between Afghanistan and Pakistan which had commenced in June, 1982, under the auspices of the United Nations, culminated in the signing of the Geneva Accords stipulating the withdrawal of Soviet forces by February 15, 1989. The Soviet Union has implemented this agreement but continues to support the unpopular regime in Afghanistan resulting in the continuation of civil war and non-return of Afghan refugees from Pakistan and Iran.

Although the situation in Afghanistan, especially the stories of war between Soviet and Afghan forces with Afghan Mujahidin, has been a hot topic in the world media, these have been particularly highlighted by the media in the U.S. which is the leader of the free world, as well as by the British media which has always voiced its concern for the oppressed people of the world. The Pakistani press, being in the immediate vicinity, naturally offered an extensive coverage.

Problem Statement

The mass media, especially the Western media in their coverage of the Third World, are criticized for providing coverage of single events of high news value. Critics argue that the coverage lacks depth, background information, explanations and analyses of events.

This study will analyze the contents of *The New York Times*, *The Times* of London and a Pakistani newspaper, *The Pakistan Times*, to compare the coverage of the Afghanistan problem by the three papers. This study will try to find out whether the Afghanistan problem received a traditional treatment by the Western press — coverage of single events without any explanations, background information or analysis of events; or, in view of the importance and magnitude of the problem, it received better and extensive attention from the Western press.

The content analysis will be directed toward finding out any differences in the coverage of events in Afghanistan by three newspapers after the signing of the Geneva Accords for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan signed on April 14, 1988.

Rationale and Objective

Besides the people of Afghanistan, Pakistan was worst affected by the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. More than three million refugees are still on the soil of Pakistan. It also acted allegedly as a conduit for the supply of arms to the Afghan Mujahidin. Pakistan is considered to be an ally of the U.S. It would be appropriate to see if there is any significant difference between the coverage of events in *The New York Times*, *The Times* of London and *The Pakistan Times*.

The signing of the accords was a turning point in the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Therefore, a period of eight and a half months (April 15–December 31, 1988) following this point was selected for this study. The rationale for selecting this time period will be presented in Chapter 3.

Based on the problem statement the study will determine if there is a difference in the coverage of events in Afghanistan in the three newspapers.

Besides determining differences in terms of space provided for the coverage of Afghanistan, the study will look into the differences in terms of display of items, sources of stories and, last but not least, whether the content type of the stories was different in the three newspapers or not. In other words, whether the three papers provided different coverage in terms of background information, explanations and statements about effects and expectations. The study would, thus, aim at exploring whether, in view of the importance of the problem, the papers provided similar in-depth coverage or whether there was any significant difference between their coverage.

Plan of the Study

The first chapter contains an introduction to the research problem and the rationale and objective of the study. Chapter 2 deals with literature review. The third chapter contains methodology, which includes statement of hypotheses, coding books and various definitions used in the study. The fourth chapter deals with findings of the content analysis. The final chapter, Chapter 5, is devoted to the summary of the study, lists suggestions for future research and presents conclusions from the research.

Background

Afghanistan means the land of Afghans. "In ancient Iranian, the word Afghan was used to describe a tribal chief, warrior or hero. In Persian, it has meant unruliness and upheaval" (Anwar 1989, p. 1).

Generally, Afghanistan is a term used for the Pashtun nation which inhabits a part of Pakistan besides Afghanistan. According to one theory, says Anwar (1989), the Afghans trace their origin to the Indo-Aryan tribes. However, Afghanistan has

numerous ethnic and sub-cultural groups, which are non-Pushtun; e.g., Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks etc.

Afghanistan is located in the heart of south central Asia. It has an area of about 252,100 square miles and a population of 16,592,000, according to 1989 estimates (The World Almanac, 1990). It is completely landlocked, the nearest coast lying along the Arabian Sea, 300 miles to the south through neighboring Pakistan. It has the longest border with Pakistan to the east and south. The Soviet Union is situated in the north and Iran in the west. In the northeast, it shares the border with Sinkiang region of the People's Republic of China for about 50 miles. The capital of Afghanistan is Kabul (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1984).

Previously an absolute monarchy, it was converted to a constitutional monarchy in 1964 by King Zahir Shah, who happened to be the last king.

Afghanistan was carved out as a country having boundaries in the late 19th century as a result of the rivalry between the imperial Britain and Russia. Prior to that, it had been the subject of conquests by foreign rulers, including the Persians, Greeks, the Maurya dynasty of India, and the western Turks. According to Anwar (1989), every Pashtun tribe had its territory, grazing grounds, water and fort. After the Arab domination in the 7th century, it was ruled by a series of Moslem dynasties followed by Genghis Khan in the 13th century.

Afghans became conscious as a nation during the 16th century when their country was divided between the Mughal empire of India and the Safavids of Persia. An Afghan kingdom was founded in 1747. Ahmad Shah Durrani united the Afghan lands after getting them liberated from foreign rulers. He ruled for the next 25 years and extended Afghan rule from Meshed to Kashmir and Delhi, from the Amu Darya to

the Arabian Sea. Next to the Ottoman Empire, Durrani had the greatest Muslim realm in the second half of the 18th century. During the 19th and 20th centuries Afghanistan faced internal strife as well as British and Russian attempts to dominate it. In view of their apprehension that Tsarist Russia intended to expand its territory the British feared a threat to their imperialist rule in India. During the 19th century, the British attempted to invade Afghanistan to forestall the Russian threat but the Afghans forced them to withdraw. In the light of this process as well as their own failure to pacify mountain Moslems in the Caucasus for sixty-five years, the Russians wisely refrained from interfering in the Afghan affairs (Arnold, 1985).

It was only after World War I, that Afghanistan was recognized as a fully independent state at the international level in 1921. In the 1950s and 1960s, it undertook plans aimed at modernization and improvement of the economy. It is still economically backward and lacks the social and economic institutions necessary for this purpose. The geographic location, the rugged mountainous landscape and lack of physical infrastructure are big hurdles in the way of economic development (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1984).

In 1973, King Zahir Shah was overthrown by pro-Moscow General Mohammad Daoud Khan who became president. Daoud had earlier seized power in a bloodless coup in 1953 and had become prime minister. During 1953–63 he signed economic and military agreements with Moscow. As John C. Griffiths observed, “Military aid has usually been the main goal of Russian penetration in the Third World because of the virtual inevitability of military coup or military backing for Communist inspired coup” (Roy, 1987).

Daoud was a fanatical ‘Pathan’ or Pashtun, one of the many ethnic tribes in

Afghanistan. Pathans reside on both sides of the Durand line which is the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Daoud wanted that Pathans should unite under one Pashtunistan. During his rule the Pashtunistan issue with Pakistan was pressed hard by Afghanistan. This led to Afghanistan's increased reliance on the Soviet Union both for diplomatic support and transit facilities for Afghan trade because Pakistan had closed its border with Afghanistan, denying access to the Karachi port on the Arabian coast. However, in spite of Afghanistan's overwhelming economic dependence on the Soviet Union, Kabul maintained a non-aligned foreign policy. Although it had developed friendship with both the western and the Communist blocs, it had pursued an independent foreign policy until the Soviet Union intervened in 1979.

In 1963, the Pashtunistan issue with Pakistan started another round of cold war between the two states. Daoud decided to resign because he felt Kabul had become over-dependent on the Soviet Union. Daoud was followed by governments sympathetic to the West.

In the second phase of Daoud's rule during 1973-78, Afghanistan's increasing dependence for economic and military aid paved the way for deeper Soviet political penetration in Afghanistan's politics which ultimately led to the establishment of a pro-Soviet Marxist regime with Nur Mohammad Taraki as prime minister.

Daoud happened to realize the implications of too close ties with Moscow and began to reassess his economic strategy because the strong economic links between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union were not without obvious political implications. He tried to move away from dependency on the Soviet Union and United States. In addition, Daoud Khan and Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan reached a

tentative agreement on a solution of the Pushtoonistan problem. Besides improving relations with Pakistan, Daoud tried to foster relations with Iran and Saudi Arabia. An agreement was signed with Iran providing for a railroad link with Iran's port city of Bandar Abbas which would have given Afghanistan the much-needed access to the sea as an alternative to the one through Pakistan. It would have lessened Afghanistan's dependence on the Soviet Union due to the closure of the border by Pakistan. The agreement was not implemented. The Soviet Union did not like Daoud's leanings toward pro-American states such as Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia (Roy, 1987).

An important event was the approval of a new constitution by the Loya Jirga (Great National Assembly of Notables) in 1977. Shortly after that, the two major leftist organizations, the Khalq (people) and the Parcham (flag) reunited against Daoud Khan after a 10-year separation. Besides massive anti-government demonstrations, a number of political assassinations were carried out, resulting in the arrest of leftist leaders. But before one such leader, Hafizullah Amin, could be arrested, he was able to conspire with party members in the armed forces in devising a coup which resulted in the overthrow and killing of Daoud Khan and his family. The Republic of Afghanistan was thus born on April 27, 1978.

After the April Revolution, Moscow was more apparently involved in the affairs of Afghanistan. Although the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) alliance of the Khalq and the Parcham which formed the government in Afghanistan, did not declare its full commitment to Communism, political developments in Afghanistan led to increasing dependence of the Taraki government on the Soviet Union. Therefore, the April Revolution was a turning point in the political history of Afghanistan leading to the military intervention by the Soviets in December 1979

(Roy, 1987).

Two factors were responsible for dependence on the Soviet Union. Firstly, the instability of the Marxist regime; or in other words, in-fighting between the Khalq and the Parcham factions of the PDPA; and, secondly contradiction between the Islamic and tribal base of the society on the one hand and the Marxist regime on the other. The alliance succeeded in bringing about the revolution but it had never been a cohesive political organization, lacking popular support.

The leftist movement in Afghanistan had enjoyed a very brief period of public support during its first experiment in a liberal parliamentary system in 1949–52. The conservatives were successful in maintaining the it status quo. In fact, the Afghan people were not prepared for the April revolution. The centuries' old feudal and Islamic base did not allow the absorption of the revolutionary secular policy advanced by the Khalq — the larger section of the PDPA, with lower middle class connection. The Parcham, with upper middle class connection, however, considered that people were not ready for the revolution due to the influence of the rightist Muslim divines.

The fragile Khalq-Parcham coalition started to fall apart within a year of the April revolution because the Khalq leaders were conspiring to strengthen their hold on the government. Most of the Parcham leaders, including Babrak Karmal, Nur Ahmad Nur and Anahita Ratebzad, were removed from the cabinet and sent abroad with ambassadorial assignments. The government of Taraki and Amin announced a number of reform programs including the elimination of usury, equal rights for women, land reforms, and administrative decrees in classic Marxist-Leninist rhetoric. The people living in the rural areas assumed that the Khalqis were Communist and pro-Soviet.

According to Agwani (1981), the reforms antagonized large segments of the population. The people thought that basic Afghan cultural values were being threatened. But nothing serious happened until the uprising in Nurestan in the summer of 1978. "The rich and the poor alike resisted what they called the atheistic Marxist government" (Roy, 1987, p. 18).

Although the government born out of the revolution was weak, Moscow took the opportunity to act as the protector of the revolution. A Treaty of Friendship, Good-neighborliness and Cooperation was signed on December 5, 1978. Article 4 of the Treaty says, "Acting in the spirit of the tradition of friendship and good-neighborliness, as well as the United Nations Charter, the parties to the treaty will consult each other and, with mutual consent, will take appropriate measures to ensure the security, independence and territorial integrity of both countries. In the interest of reinforcing the defense potential of the parties to the treaty, they will continue to develop cooperation in the military sphere" (Sen Gupta, 1986, p. 85). This treaty was used as a justification for the Soviet intervention in December 1979.

The resistance against the Marxist regime slowly mounted. Small scale revolts spread to the whole of Afghanistan together with periodic bomb explosions in the capital city, Kabul. On February 14, 1979, the U.S. ambassador Adolph Dubs was killed culminating in the elimination of U.S. aid to Afghanistan. Hafizullah Amin became prime minister on March 28, 1979; although Taraki retained the posts of president of the Revolutionary Council and secretary general of the PDPA. The Afghan people continued their opposition resulting in the collapse of the armed forces. The Amin regime asked for and got Soviet military advisers, weapons and supplies.

What really rattled Moscow was the Herat uprising on March 19, 1979 when 30

Soviet advisers were murdered by the rebels. By June 1979, Moscow decided to give more direct help to the Kabul regime. A battalion of about 400 men was provided for the security of Bagram airport, 20 miles from Kabul (Nayar, 1981).

In view of growing insurgency, the Soviet Union was planning to intervene on a large scale when Prime Minister Amin, in a pre-emptive strike liquidated and had Taraki killed. The latter had been president and general secretary of the PDPA since March 1979, much to the displeasure of the Soviet Union (Nayar, 1981).

On December 27, about 20,000 Soviet troops crossed the border preceded by a massive Soviet airlift of troops, equipment and supplies to Kabul. In a coup, Amin was replaced by Babrak Karmal who became president of the Revolutionary Council and prime minister of Afghanistan and general secretary of the PDPA (*The Pakistan Times*, April 15, 1988).

By December 31, the Soviet forces numbering more than 50,000 acting under the Afghan-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Good-neighborliness and Cooperation had apparently put down a rebellion by Muslim tribesmen who opposed the Marxist rule and consolidated the puppet regime of Babrak Karmal. The Soviet Union argued that the intervention was necessitated by interference by external powers such as the U.S., China, Pakistan and Iran which were accused of aiding the anti-government guerrillas (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1984; Roy, 1987; *The Pakistan Times*, April 15, 1988).

The Soviet decision to intervene in Afghanistan largely emanated from the fear that the collapse of the Marxist regime in Afghanistan due to the growing insurgency and the unpopular policies of Hafizullah Amin, might lead to the possibility of American and Chinese influences seeping into Afghanistan providing a vulnerable window

on the Soviet-Afghan border to anti-Soviet forces. The reported aid to the Afghan Moslem insurgency by several Muslim countries, especially Iran and Pakistan which were experiencing a wave of Islamic fundamentalism, made Moscow worried about the resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism in Afghanistan and its resultant destabilizing impact on neighboring Soviet Central Asia.

The armed Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was regarded by Pakistan as a severe blow to the precarious balance of power in a sensitive region. Its repercussions subjected international detente to a dangerous strain. Its reverberations placed an enormous stress on the fragile but now tremendously improving structure of relations between great powers.

As a next door neighbor, Pakistan has been directly affected by the exodus of innocent men, women and children from Afghanistan. It undertook to help them in the fulfillment of its Islamic and human obligation. Over three million Afghan refugees are still taking refuge in this country. Although Pakistan has been able to get tremendous U.S. military and economic aid besides aid and assistance from a number of friendly countries, it has been sharing nearly half of the expenditure on refugee relief and rehabilitation. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Program and other relief organizations have provided the rest of the money through contributions.

The spillover of the Afghanistan problem and its security implications imposed upon Pakistan an extraordinary role. It could not remain insensitive to the tragedy that had befallen its next-door neighbor, nor could it be oblivious to its potential for escalating into an even bigger conflagration. It took a principled stand and adhered firmly to it. An overwhelming majority of countries supported the United Nations

resolutions calling for the political settlement on the basis of a complete withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan, restoration of its sovereignty, independence and non-aligned status, respect for the right of its people to determine their own political and social system free from outside intervention or coercion, and creation of conditions conducive to the voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees in safety and honor.

In order to promote such a political settlement, Pakistan participated in indirect negotiations with the Kabul regime through the personal representative of the United Nations secretary general. The Soviet leadership publicly proclaimed its intention to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan as soon as foreign intervention ceased to exist in that country. In fact, it could not afford the collapse of its puppet regime in Kabul.

After the death of Leonid Brezhnev, the Soviet policy showed visible signs of Soviet intention to act on their words. Mikhail Gorbachov termed Soviet involvement in Afghanistan as a bleeding wound in view of the losses in terms of men and material the Soviet Union had to suffer.

The single most important factor contributing toward the Soviet decision to withdraw from Afghanistan was the heroic struggle of the Afghan guerrillas.

As early as January 27, 1980, several Afghan resistance groups united to create the Islamic Alliance. The resistance was launching successful offensives against the Soviet forces. In October, 1982, an explosion in the Salang Tunnel, the vital road link to the Soviet Union resulted in the death of more than 1000 people, including 750 Soviet troops. The United States has been supplying arms to the resistance since the beginning of the problem but the supply of Stinger missiles in 1986 changed the complexion of the war in a radical way.

Although the U.N.-sponsored talks between Kabul and Pakistan started in 1982,

an agreement could not be reached until 1988. The Geneva Accords stipulating the withdrawal of Soviet forces by February 15, 1989 were signed on April 14, 1988. The Soviet Union and the United States signed the accords as guarantors to the implementation of these agreements. The Soviet forces were withdrawn on schedule but the war between the Afghan regime and the Mujahidin continues to this date. In the beginning, the Mujahidin could not succeed to form a government-in-exile. They were also not able to overthrow the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul, as expected by the western world, because it had huge stock of sophisticated arms and equipment supplied by the Soviet Union.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The methodology adopted in this study is content analysis. The definitions of content analysis have been changing with new developments in the technique and application of content analyses as a research tool. In early analysis, Berelson (1952, p. 18) defined content analysis as a “method for objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of a text.” The researcher has to be clear about exactly what is intended to be looked at, and create suitable questions so that the answers can be well quantified.

In this study the coverage given to Afghanistan by the three newspapers and specifically the content type, i.e., the extent of background information, explanations and statements about effects and expectations are the manifest content. Systematic content analysis can be used to record this content.

According to Budd et al. (1967, p. 2), “content analysis is a systematic technique for analyzing message content and message handling — it is a tool for observing and analyzing overt communication behavior of selected communicators.” They maintain that content analysis allows observations to be carried out without fear that the attention will bias the communicator, something that will be more difficult if the analysts were trying to watch at the scene.

Later, Holsti (1969) modified this definition, stipulating that the content analysis

must not only be objective and systematic in its approach, but that it must include a general description of the manifest content of a text as well.

Kerlinger in 1973, as cited by Wimmer and Dominick (1987, p. 166) defines content analysis as “a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner for the purpose of measuring variables.” There seems to be an agreement on objectivity, systematic approach and quantitiveness. “Objectivity” requires that each step in the research process be carried out on the basis of clearly formulated rules. “Systematic approach” implies consistent application of these rules to include or exclude the content or categories. “Quantitiveness” means the recording of statistics about the content. Quantification also allows “to summarize results and report them with greater parsimony” (Wimmer and Dominick, 1987, p. 166). However, according to George (1959) and Rosengren (1981), quantitiveness is usually defined in a strict manner but in practice it is vague.

Besides these criteria, some researchers emphasize coding only the “manifest content” — only those items which appear explicitly relevant to the questions of study. According to Stempel III (1981a), the content must be coded as it appears, independent of the coder or researcher’s perception.

Rodriguez (1971) observes that in content analysis observations can be made several times since the messages are in permanent form; e.g., in newspapers. This enables repetition of a study and correction of errors, if any.

Length of news items primarily determines the extent of coverage given to a particular theme or subject.

The prominence in display and location of news in the newspaper pages is another

aspect relevant to this study. Research has shown that different parts of a newspaper have different attention values. Important news is printed on the front page (Gitau, 1979). While making comparisons of three newspapers' coverage, prominence of display of news about Afghanistan will be one of the major points in this study.

Smith (1984) analyzed coverage of the Angolan civil war in the *New York Times* and *The Times* of London. A sample of stories over a two-year period was selected and analyzed according to specific categories: length of articles, reporting agency, source of information, etc. He found, *inter alia*, that *The Times* had more coverage in terms of inch space, and that *The Times* stories used staff written stories more than *The New York Times*.

Gabriel (1988) reported that *The Times* of London had wider coverage of Malaysia in terms of the number of articles on Malaysia and the types and number of the various categories than *The New York Times*. She had devised 13 different categories for her study. She reported that *The New York Times* gave more prominence in display.

Chang et al. (1987) observed that apart from other variables, geographical distance contributed significantly to the discriminant function in distinguishing between events that are covered in the U.S. media and those that are not. Although Chang's study was based on the methodology of formulating themes or categories and their relationship with the coverage of events in the American media, it gives support to this researcher's expectation that geographical proximity is important in the coverage of events.

In view of these studies, it is expected that *The Pakistan Times* would provide the largest amount of coverage of Afghanistan, followed by *The Times* of London

and *The New York Times*. *The Times* of London would provide more coverage and prominence to news about Afghanistan than *The New York Times* in the light of studies mentioned above, as well as in view of the historical and political links of Britain with the South Asian region.

In analyzing the content of newspapers, looking at sources of news is important, the reason being that variation in news content about the subject under study would have occurred because news was supplied by different news sources (Gitau, 1979).

Although Gitau referred to news source as distinct from news agency, staff reporter, etc., this observation may be also true with regard to the latter as a news source.

Pakistan is a developing country having limited resources. Its mass media obviously cannot afford large contingents of foreign correspondents. These media depend largely on international agencies to obtain international news such as that related to Afghanistan. Pakistan does not have a press as free as the U.S. or British press. Therefore, there is a need to study the use of different sources by a Pakistani newspaper and compare it with two western papers. The analysis about the use of different sources by different newspapers will also provide an opportunity to see the difference in coverage among the newspapers being analyzed, as far as the use of staff reports and dependence on international news agencies is concerned.

It is expected that *The Pakistan Times* would have used international news agencies more than any other source because the Third World media have little means to get news from sources other than international agencies. If this expectation is supported by results of this study, it would help in future research to see if international news agencies only set the agenda for the Western media or also for the Third World

media. Larson (1979) said that the international news agencies really set the agenda for the Western media.

However, in view of the important developments taking place inside Afghanistan, during the period of study, *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London are expected to have relied heavily on their own correspondents. This view is supported by Hart (1963, p. 70), who reported that the U.S. and Canadian newspapers have a “good portion of their news written by their own staff members and by special correspondents indicates the interest in the other country.”

Apart from other reasons, stated above, deep U.S. and British interests in Afghanistan would result in more staff coverage by *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London.

No media studies involving content analysis, except Downing (1988) and Binda (1989), have been found which deal with the Afghanistan problem, probably because the events in this country are a recent happening. It is expected that a number of researchers would be working at the moment to analyze the various facets of media coverage of the Afghanistan problem.

Downing (1988) analyzed the Soviet media coverage of Afghanistan from 1976–1986, showing that several familiar themes, from unpopular guerrillas fighting against the Soviets and their puppet regime, to national security, are used to justify the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. The study, a qualitative analysis, makes a comparison of U.S. coverage of El Salvador from secondary sources, indicating some intriguing parallels. Downing (1988, p. 28) observed:

Neither superpower’s media may be said to offer a remotely satisfactory account of these Third World wars in which they are deeply embroiled.

But neither did the greater volume and consistency of Soviet reporting furnish a qualitatively superior coverage in either accuracy or comprehensiveness.

Commenting on U.S. media and foreign policy, especially with regard to El Salvador, Bennett and Edelman (1985, p. 169) said:

The tragic price that the U.S. people pay for this distorted communication is the virtual absence of learning about world problems and new approaches to solving them. The political process, burdened with these constraints, becomes more a forum for belief reinforcement and superstitious learning than an arena for constructive dialogue, critical insight, and creative action.

Downing's study did not deal with quantitative analysis of the coverage or sources of news as well as the extent of explanatory or predictive nature of news stories.

Binda (1989) was a qualitative study of the coverage of Afghanistan problem by the Soviet newspaper, *Pravda* from 1979 to 1985.

While no similar study of a historical event in the Third World could be found, several studies which examined specific subjects over a period of time using a variety of content analysis methodologies were looked at.

Much has been written about the Western media's coverage of the Third World — how certain stories coming out of certain countries are more readily displayed in the elite press than are other stories from other countries (Semmel, 1976; Gerbner and Marvanyi, 1977).

There are studies which suggest that Western coverage of the Third World lacks in certain aspects. There is particular emphasis, the perception runs, on calamity

stories — the “coups and earthquakes” mentality, as it is sometimes called (Smith, 1984). Lent (1977) and Masmoudi (1979) commented that Western coverage of the Third World is said to be obsessed with crisis.

Adams (1964) indicated that the emphasis in foreign news was put on such “hard news,” as politics, economics and news about conflict, crimes and wars. His finding was reinforced by Chang (1967) in the study of Utah dailies which found that “hard news” predominated in international coverage. Chang also found that 75 percent of the foreign items in those papers were straight news items.

Supporting this conclusion Hartgen (1979) reported that the China-related news in four American newspapers was event-oriented. He speculated that most of the news about China was event-oriented because visible events were easier for reporters to record than underlying causes or issues, given language and cultural barriers. Reporters covered visible incidents because they were relatively easier to comprehend. So, the stories which they reported were generally narratives of events with the emphasis on what happened, with little attention to the context of events.

Merrill et al. (1972) reported the same results but they said that there has long been a realization among world journalists that too little “interpretative” or “explanatory” writing found its way into the international communication stream.

Weaver and Wilhoit (1981) pointed out that it may be argued that overt conflict is in fact more characteristic of nations in the Third World than in the rest of the world. But, Albritton and Manheim (1985) said that this argument ignores the sensationalist forms of the coverage besides overlooking the aspect of superpower rivalry and the supply of arms to promote these conflicts.

Compared to the great majority of Western media, Soviet and Soviet-bloc media

provide much fuller coverage of foreign affairs (Gerbner and Marvanyi, 1977; Sreberny, 1984). Barton and Gregg (1982) found that Middle East coverage reiterated certain limited themes and avoided detail, complexity, or ambiguity. This observation is supported by Said (1981) and Shaheen (1984). According to Gerbner and Marvanyi (1977), U.S. coverage of Latin America has been minimal. McAnany (1983) wrote that the coverage of Central America is dominated by crisis reporting. Charles et al. (1979) commented that U.S. foreign policy and trade interests largely explain the priorities of sub-Saharan African coverage. This view is complemented by Downing (1975) in the documentation of the dominance of white opinion in British coverage of Africa.

Herman (1985) said that the U.S. media commentary on political repression in the Third World has been said to be highly selective, with governments allied to the U.S., such as Indonesia and El Salvador, given little or no criticism on their human rights record.

The studies mentioned above point out the lack of coverage of events in the Third World by the Western media but do not consider the importance of the various constituents which make a story richer in terms of explanatory or predictive aspects.

Hedman (1981) points out that the mass media have often been criticized for choosing single events which are supposed to carry high news value. Background information, explanations and analyses of events are ignored. This is especially true in the case of international news.

Himmelstrand in 1970, as cited by Hedman (1981), believes that the mass media must "communicate structures;" and not just report single events happening in the developing countries in order to create a permanent interest about developing

countries among their audience.

Hedman's (1981) study covered international coverage in Swedish daily newspapers. This study will try to analyze the coverage of Afghanistan problem in three newspapers of different countries to find out the extent of difference in their coverage.

There can be different types of articles in the newspapers: News, features, editorials, opinion columns, etc. In a study about the content analysis of American and Indian newspapers, Vilanilam (1972) used a rough categorization of articles into news and features without defining what is meant by features. "News" was defined as "that part which signalizes an event."

Annersten and Martin in 1975, as cited by Hedman (1981) distinguished between "news" — that is, "pure news reports in the form of telegrams or statements and interviews" — and "commentaries" — "analyses in the form of comments, debates or features which may, of course, also contain interviews. There is room for personal opinion."

According to Hedman (1981), this distinction is closely similar to the one made in Britain between "news" and "current affairs." As observed by Hedman (1981), the distinction between "interpretative news" and "spot news" seems more relevant for our purposes.

Himmelstrand in 1970, as cited by Hedman (1981), defined "spot information" as information which reports an episode or a single event of a dramatic, engaging nature without putting the episode or event into any perspective, and "information which gives background and perspective" as information which describes chains of events or structures where episodes or single events are clarifying examples. All articles which are not "spot information," may be defined as "interpretative news."

To operationalize the concepts, different criteria are used. These may be length, statements, explanations, backgrounds, etc. But, Hedman says that there may be many examples in which the length of the articles bears no relation to its richness of information. Similarly, he says that a variety of statements coming from different sources may not describe different things. However, if statements about the effects of a certain event and statements about expectations are contained in the article, these can affect the reader's opinion about the importance of the event to a considerable extent. So far as the criterion of explanations is concerned, it can provide rich information if an event is shown to be related to other events because the readers can understand the event in a better way by means of such explanations. When it is difficult for the papers to give explanations of a certain event, background information can prove useful to enhance the reader's understanding of the event.

DeMott (1973) showed that "interpretative news" articles are longer, contain more stated opinions and give more background information than other articles. They are also more closely related to "soft news" than other types of articles.

Excluding the variable of length, there can be two types of information in newspaper articles — explanatory and predictive:

Articles providing explanations—Articles containing background information and, or chains of explanations.

Articles providing predictions —Articles containing statements about effects.

—Articles containing statements about expectations.

Hedman (1981) gave the following typology regarding the extent to which an

article may contain explanatory and predictive information:

Articles		Giving explanations	
		Yes	No
Giving predictions	Yes	COMMENTS	PREDICTIONS
	No	EXPLANATIONS	REPORTS

Comments is used to mean articles which both explain a certain event by referring to earlier events or processes in the minds of individuals or groups or which contain general information which may affect the readers' understanding of the information. In addition, they contain statements about future effects of the explained event or about different expectations.

Predictions contain information about effects and expectations of the future, but do not contain background information and explanations. This type of article is probably relatively rare.

Explanations contain one or several chains of explanations and/or general background information.

Reports are merely reports of facts and do not give explanations, background, or statements about effects and explanations. This type of article is often referred to as "spot news" or "spot information."

Hedman (1981) found that most articles which dealt with international affairs are event oriented and do not contain any general background information "to enable the reader to put the information into perspective." The articles usually lack explanations about the cause of events as well as statements about the future, thus limiting the

reader's ability to follow what happens next.

This may be true for all newspapers whether published from the West or the Third World. This study would try to find out the approach of three newspapers, two from the western world and one from a developing country, toward foreign news coverage, and that too on a topic which attracted the attention of the whole world.

Although it is obvious that the coverage by *The Pakistan Times* would be more than the other two papers, it would provide a good measure to compare the coverage provided by the two elite papers of the developed world, i.e., *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London with *The Pakistan Times* to find out any significant difference between them.

As Hedman (1981) found that a "large percentage of articles about other countries are event-oriented and give no general background information to enable the reader to put the information into perspective," it would be worthwhile to study where the newspapers of the Third World do stand themselves.

Although the present study is restricted to the coverage of Afghanistan, it would be useful to make a comparison of a Third World newspaper with papers of the developed world to see if there is any difference in the coverage of Afghanistan.

A few studies about the American newspapers have been mentioned. However, no studies could be found on any Pakistani newspaper.

Keeping in view the studies mentioned in this chapter, there is considerable scope to study the coverage of Afghanistan in *The New York Times*, *The Times* of London and *The Pakistan Times*.

The Pakistan Times is published from a developing country. The other two papers belong to the western world. The criteria for the selection of these newspapers

and their attributes have been mentioned in detail in the next chapter. Suffice it to say that *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London belong to a free press system and fall into the category of elite newspapers. These are considered to be independent and pursue interpretative journalism and endeavor to provide wide coverage of domestic and international news.

The literature mentions the criticism that the western press confines itself to the coverage of disasters and conflicts in the Third World. Its coverage of foreign news lacks necessary depth.

Studies mentioned in this chapter indicate that international news in the western press was confined to the coverage of events or in other words, it was basically hard news, lacking interpretation or comments.

The U.S. and Britain have always opposed the spread of Soviet influence in any part of the world. The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan has been a matter of serious concern for the governments as well as the press in the western world. The Pakistani press was concerned because of the obvious threat to Pakistan's security as well as its closeness to the situation in geo-strategic terms besides its collaboration with the western world to resist the continuation of Soviet presence in the neighboring Afghanistan.

A reference was made in the literature to the lack of information in the western coverage of the foreign news. In this context, there is a need to examine the point regarding lack of depth in stories about the Third World. For this purpose, an analysis is required to look into the extent of explanatory and predictive material in the news about Afghanistan. Although it would be difficult to generalize the results of this study to all situations, the literature mentioned in this context will form the basis

of analysis to research the allegations that western media's stress on event-oriented coverage and lack of depth in terms of explanations and future expectations about events obstructs the flow of information to the developed world's population besides creating a sense of frustration and alienation among the people of the Third World.

Although Hedman (1981) excluded the variable of length in his study besides opposing the analysis of sources of news for deriving any conclusions, there are other studies which have used length of news stories, prominence in display and sources of news as important variables in determining the richness or importance of news.

In order to compare the richness of information in the three newspapers, the study will use the typology evolved by Hedman(1981), as described on pages 24 and 25.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Several researchers have provided definitions of content analysis which have been discussed in the literature review. For reasons stated in Chapter 2, this researcher considers Berelson's (1952) definition to be adequate.

Selection of Newspapers

Three newspapers, *The New York Times*, *The Times* of London and *The Pakistan Times* were analyzed for this study.

The choice of these newspapers was basically made in view of the role played by three countries where these papers are published, i.e., the U.S., Great Britain and Pakistan, vis-a-vis the Afghanistan problem.

The United States and Britain have been in the forefront, along with the various nations of the world, in condemning the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, since the very first day — December 29, 1979. While the U.S. provided full political, economic and military support to the anti-Soviet forces in Afghanistan, Britain also did not lag behind in forging material support for the millions of Afghan refugees, besides, of course, extending moral support for the 'Mujahidin.'

Pakistan was the country most affected by the Soviet action. Most strategists believed that the Soviet Union's plan was aimed at the ultimate annihilation of

Pakistan in order to fulfill the Soviet dream of reaching the warm waters of the Indian Ocean (Arnold, 1985).

The New York Times and *The Times* of London are both elite papers. Their collection of news is not limited to their own countries; hence they are considered international papers. Merrill (1968) explains that elite newspapers are always geared toward providing news to the educated classes who are not only aware of the current issues but they also take keen interest in updating their knowledge of what is happening around the world. These are mainly opinion leaders, public officials, scholars, journalists, theologians, lawyers and judges and business leaders. These newspapers are read in other countries by those people who are anxious to keep themselves abreast of world affairs.

Merrill (1968, p. 63) says that “*The New York Times* leads all papers of the world in its widespread collection and publication of news and views ... [and its] international reporting has always been considered one of its strongest areas.” Although as compared to *The New York Times*, which has a circulation of 900,000, (1,056,924 according to *Gale Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media*, 1990), *The Times* of London has a circulation of 350,000 (467,216 according to *Editor and Publisher International Yearbook*, 1987); it has a good record of standard as a balanced, civil and reliable paper (Merrill, 1968 and 1983).

In short, *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London are recognized elite papers of international stature. Their impartiality, authoritativeness, accuracy and wide coverage of international events are qualities enough for selecting them for this study.

As far as *The Pakistan Times* is concerned, it is considered to contain an au-

thoritative account of government policies. It is one of the pioneer English language papers in Pakistan. Although this paper may not be working in the same environment as the other two papers selected for this study, its coverage of foreign affairs is more independent and free of government control than the coverage of domestic events. It is difficult to know the circulation of Pakistani newspapers but according to Editor and Publisher International Yearbook (1987), it has a circulation of 75,000 for its two editions published from Islamabad, which is the federal capital and Lahore, capital of the largest province Punjab.

Period of Study

The study covered the period between April 15, 1988 and December 31, 1988. It may be mentioned again that the Geneva Accords for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan were signed on April 14, 1988. The coverage of this event was carried in the papers on April 15, 1988. The withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan was completed by February 15, 1989.

The rationale for selecting this time period was to determine how the three newspapers were following the developments in Afghanistan after the signing of the Geneva Accords. It would have been proper to analyze the papers until, at least, May 1989 to see how the three papers were following the developments in Afghanistan not only after the signing of the accords but also after the withdrawal had been completed. Important events like occupation of vast areas of Afghanistan by the Mujahidin occurred either before or after this date, i.e., February 15, 1989.

Unfortunately, the copies or microfilms of *The Pakistan Times* were not available after December 31, 1988. Moreover, a longer period of study would have required

more time for research which was a big constraint for this researcher.

Population

All issues of the three papers for the period mentioned above, except Sunday issues, were examined. This implied that there was no chance of a sampling error. The reason for excluding the Sunday issues was that *The Sunday Times* is very much different from *The Times*. At one time even its management was different from *The Times*. Similarly, *The New York Times* is also different in complexion on Sundays. Obviously, *The Pakistan Times* had to be excluded for Sundays because Sunday issues for the other two papers were not included in the content analysis, thus making the selection of population systematic.

Definitions

The typology referred to in the literature review about the content type of news stories in the papers was based on Hedman (1981). The following definitions are derived or adopted from Hedman (1981):

General background information means information which in one way or another will help the reader to understand the event or the problem in question. Background information is usually written at the newspaper office to explain a release from a news agency or a staff reporter. For example, in the story about the attack of the Mujahidin on Afghan regime forces, the office can add background description — the strength of the Mujahidin, their sources of getting arms and food supplies and the success or failure of such encounters in the past. Background information is found both in separate articles and together with descriptions of single events, countries, or

persons.

Chains of explanations: These can be described in two ways. First, by relating an event to the earlier events. For example, event C occurred because event B had occurred, which, in turn, occurred because event A had occurred, etc. This was considered as a chain of events. Second, an event can be said to be related to thoughts, hopes, knowledge, attitudes, and the like — that is, some form of process in the minds of the individuals. “The capture of Torkham by the Mujahidin may be seen as the first step toward the fall of Kandahar province.”

Chains of explanations can consist of both linking events and processes of mind. The links may be explicitly stated in some cases while in others these may be implied by making interpretations.

Statements about effects may be either about effects in the form of a new event or a change of mind. The sources of statements may be different; and the effect may be explicit or implicit, speculative or non-speculative. The context of the effects — social, economic, political and cultural has also to be kept in mind.

Statements about expectations or the future are sometimes difficult to code if these do not contain words such as “expect,” “will,” etc. These may be implicit in phrases such as “...for fear of further bombings” (explicitly further bombings are expected).

The expectations may be by the source or by persons cited in the story. The expectations may have a direction, positive, negative or neutral. Expectations may refer to the person’s (own or cited) opinion about the future — that is, in what terms he or she expressed the expectations. An expression like “the government saw this as a first step toward peace” is a positive expectation.

Expectations may be expressed by different persons in the story. Every party's expectations were coded only once. However, direction of expectations was not taken into account.

The Coding

The following variables were used for coding the content:

1. the name of the newspaper.
2. the date of issue of the newspaper.
3. the day of issue of the newspaper.
4. the content type of the item (news or feature article).
5. whether accompanied by photograph, map or illustration.
6. prominence of display of the article (whether it was displayed on the front page above fold, front page below fold, inside page above fold, inside page below fold).
- ✓7. source of news (staff report, news agency — international ¹ or domestic, other international media such as newspapers or radio/television reports. ²

¹International news agency such as Associated Press, United Press International, Reuters, Agence France Presse, etc.

²*The Pakistan Times* very often quoted news broadcasts by foreign radio stations, such as *Radio Kabul*, *Radio Moscow*, *Radio Tehran*, *BBC*, *Voice of America*, etc.

8. Size of the item concerning Afghanistan (inclusive of photo(s), ³ map(s) and headline) in square centimeters.
9. content type:
 - background information
 - chains of explanations
 - statements about effects; and
 - statements about expectations
10. whether the item described an event or not. ⁴
11. the headline and message of each item.
12. size of space (in square centimeters) taken up by non-news items; i.e., advertisements and miscellaneous items. ⁵
13. total number of pages in the newspaper. ⁶

³Only photographs relevant to a story were considered part of a news item. If a photograph stood independently, it was ignored.

⁴For example, bombing of a certain area of Kabul regime forces, damage caused by war, migration of refugees to Pakistan, release of a foreign journalist by Afghan regime, reduction of staff by embassies in Kabul.

⁵Identifying advertisements was no problem. Miscellaneous items which were not news items included the following examples:

Editorials, space bearing newspaper title, or title of various sections of the paper, index of inside pages, opinion columns, letters to the editor, articles which were not news features, stock market reports, weather reports and articles or items dealing with entertainment recreation, arts, lifestyles, schedules of radio and television, and book reviews.

⁶Special supplements were considered as miscellaneous if these were part of the regular pages. Otherwise these were excluded from the total size of the newspaper.

Two different coding books were used to code the above mentioned variables. One (Appendix A) to code the total number of pages in each issue of the newspapers and the space taken up by advertisements and miscellaneous non-news items. The newshole was then calculated by subtracting the space consumed by advertisements and other non-news items from the total space available in each issue of the newspaper.

As the print style, column size and page size of the three papers differed from each other, it was decided to calculate the newshole and the size of the items on Afghanistan in terms of space in standardized square centimeters (cm^2). Although it was time consuming yet preferable as compared to measuring in column inches/centimeters as usually done by many researchers. *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London had almost equal words in a given area — 3.4 words per cm^2 while *The Pakistan Times* had 2.5 words per cm^2 . Accordingly, the measurements for *The Pakistan Times* were standardized.

The other coding book (Appendix B) was used to code other variables mentioned above.

Inter-coder Reliability

Before getting started with the coding, an inter-coder reliability test was done to verify the accuracy of the coding ability of the researcher (A). Three persons were selected to carry out the test. All of them were graduate students at Iowa State University. One of them (B), a female, was Pakistani while the other two, one male (C) and the other a female (D) were from India.

The coefficient of reliability was calculated by using the following formula re-

ported by Holsti (1969):

$$Reliability = \frac{2M}{N_1 + N_2}$$

where M is the number of coding decisions on which two coders agree and N_1 and N_2 refer to the total number of coding decisions by the first and second coder respectively.

Table 3.1: Coefficient of intercoder reliability

A	B	C	D
X	.75	.65	.70

The Pakistani being more familiar with the developments taking place in Afghanistan had the highest coefficient of reliability. Probably, she understood the events about Afghanistan better than the other two coders. The other two coders had a coefficient of .65 and .70 respectively. Although India is the immediate neighbor of Pakistan and Indian people, specially the educated class closely watch whatever is happening in Pakistan or in the region, they might lag behind Pakistanis in acquiring knowledge about events in Afghanistan. At least, this test supports this view.

The data were analyzed using SAS program available on the mainframe computer of Iowa State University. Suitable tables based on this statistical analysis were prepared and have been cited in this thesis.

Hypotheses

In view of the literature reviewed the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. *The Pakistan Times* will have wider coverage of the Afghanistan problem in terms of number of articles, and their length in square centimeters, followed by

The Times of London and then by *The New York Times*. In this regard, the coverage in the three papers would be significantly different.

2. *The Pakistan Times* would give more prominence in displaying news about the problem followed by *The Times* of London and *The New York Times* (in the stated order).

✓ 3. The coverage would be different in three papers according to source of stories. *The Pakistan Times* would depend more on international news agencies while *The Times* of London and *The New York Times* would have extensive staff coverage.

4. *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London would provide more background information, explanations and analyses of events instead of traditional treatment in covering the Afghanistan problem. The two papers would be more elaborate in these aspects as compared to *The Pakistan Times* because of being bigger and more resourceful in employing their own correspondents.

5. The items on Afghanistan in the three newspapers would contain more explanations than general background information. The explanations and background information would not necessarily form part of the same item but there would be a strong positive correlation between the two variables.

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The time period for this research was from April 15 to December 31, 1988. For this time period, Table 4.1, Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 show monthwise distribution of the following statistics about the three newspapers' coverage of Afghanistan:

1. Total space (number of pages x printed page's size in square centimeters) available in the paper.
2. Space covered by advertisements and miscellaneous non-news items.
3. Newshole (difference of 1 and 2).
4. Number of items on Afghanistan carried by each paper.
5. Total size of items on Afghanistan in square centimeters, together with percentage of newshole.

The data show that *The New York Times* had the largest total newshole for the period under study followed by *The Times* and *The Pakistan Times* — 7,718,245 square centimeters (cm^2) (21.44 percent), 6,034,816 cm^2 (32.60 percent) and 2,126,969 cm^2 (53.71 percent) respectively.

While *The New York Times* carried 148 items on Afghanistan, *The Times* carried 146 and *The Pakistan Times* 905. The space covered by these items was approximately 39,846; 19,963 and 79,223 cm^2 respectively or .51 percent, .33 percent and 3.72

Table 4.1: Newshole and coverage of items on Afghanistan in *The New York Times*

Month	Total space (cm^2)	Ads. & Misc. (cm^2)	Newshole (cm^2)	No. of items	Size of items (cm^2)	Items as % of newshole
April	2413625	1933954	479671	21	8617	1.79
May	4253560	3348911	904649	28	6512	0.71
June	4302540	3394738	907802	7	1741	0.19
July	3652366	2820240	832126	8	1278	0.15
Aug.	3882780	2970453	912327	20	5651	0.61
Sept.	4337522	3362826	974696	11	2718	0.27
Oct.	4365504	3418829	946675	12	2326	0.24
Nov.	4481038	3597342	883696	28	6194	0.70
Dec.	4296978	3420375	876603	13	4809	0.54
Total	35985913	28267668	7718245	148	39846	0.51

Table 4.2: Newshole and coverage of items on Afghanistan in *The Times* of London

Month	Total space (cm^2)	Ads. & Misc. (cm^2)	Newshole (cm^2)	No. of items	Size of items (cm^2)	Items as % of newshole
April	1165248	779221	386027	22	3846	0.99
May	2166752	1464916	701836	38	5659	0.80
June	2193408	1490439	702979	9	753	0.10
July	2015432	1311247	704185	8	839	0.11
Aug.	1865920	1158923	706997	26	3988	0.56
Sept.	2307648	1577619	730029	7	627	0.08
Oct.	2383808	1682016	701792	6	576	0.08
Nov.	2389624	1706564	683060	13	1401	0.20
Dec.	2018240	1300329	717911	17	2274	0.31
Total	18506080	12469274	6034816	146	19963	0.33

Table 4.3: Newshole and coverage of items on Afghanistan in *The Pakistan Times*

Month	Total space (cm^2)	Ads. & Misc. (cm^2)	Newshole (cm^2)	No. of items	Size of items (cm^2)	Items as % of newshole
April	232927	104193	128734	137	12208	9.48
May	433414	212275	221139	142	13763	6.22
June	504176	245640	258536	120	9261	3.58
July	478079	211829	266250	77	6853	2.57
Aug.	457004	199752	257252	79	6108	2.37
Sept.	445208	223309	221899	88	7819	3.52
Oct.	483481	224709	258772	85	6784	2.62
Nov.	457002	200139	256863	99	9188	3.57
Dec.	468795	211271	257524	78	7239	2.81
Total	3960086	1833117	2126969	905	79223	3.72

percent of their respective newshole. This means that *The Pakistan Times* provided more coverage of Afghanistan in terms of number of news items, space in absolute terms and also as a percentage of newshole. The number of articles in *The New York Times* and *The Times* were almost equal, but *The New York Times* devoted more space to these articles.

The first hypothesis is partially supported because *The Pakistan Times* had the largest coverage, followed by *The New York Times* and *The Times* in terms of the number of articles and the space covered in square centimeters. It had been hypothesized that *The Pakistan Times* would have the largest amount of coverage followed by *The Times* and then *The New York Times*. Table 4.4 shows that the size of items on Afghanistan in three papers was significantly different, because the probability was .0001 in the case of each pair of newspapers. Table 4.4 is based on separate t-tests done for two newspapers at a time. The significance level was determined at .05.

Table 4.4: T-test for size of items on Afghanistan

Paper	n	Mean of item size (cm^2)	Prob.
<i>N.Y. Times</i>	148	269.229	0.0001
<i>Times</i>	146	136.732	
<i>Times</i>	146	136.732	0.0001
<i>Pak. Times</i>	905	87.539	
<i>N.Y. Times</i>	148	269.229	0.0001
<i>Pak. Times</i>	905	87.539	

In providing prominence in display of items, *The Pakistan Times* took the lead by displaying 15.7 percent of the items on the front page above the fold, followed by *The New York Times* and *The Times* which provided such display to the extent of 11.5 percent and 1.4 percent stories respectively (Table 4.5).

The Pakistan Times carried 11.7 percent of the items on the front page below the fold, *The New York Times* 1.4 percent and *The Times* only .7 percent. On inside pages above the fold, *The New York Times* carried 64.2 percent, *The Times* 63 percent and *The Pakistan Times* 55 percent of the items. The three papers displayed 23 percent, 35 percent and 17 percent respectively of the items on the inside pages below the fold.

The second hypothesis is, thus, partially supported because it was hypothesized that *The Pakistan Times* would give more prominent coverage in terms of display, followed by *The Times* and *The New York Times*. Although *The Pakistan Times* had provided prominence in display as hypothesized, *The Times* did not.

Table 4.5: Display of news

Prominence	<i>N.Y. Times</i>		<i>Times</i>		<i>Pak. Times</i>		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Front page above fold	17	11.5	2	1.4	142	15.7	161	13.43
Front page below fold	2	1.4	1	0.7	106	11.7	109	9.10
Inside page above fold	95	64.2	92	63.0	502	55.5	689	57.46
Inside page below fold	34	23.0	51	34.9	155	17.1	240	20.01
Total	148	100.0	146	100.0	905	100.0	1199	100.00

Regarding source of news, Table 4.6 shows that *The New York Times*, *The Times* and *The Pakistan Times* respectively obtained 73.6 percent, 71.9 percent and 12.3 percent of their stories from their own correspondents and 13.5 percent, 10.3 percent and 19 percent came from international news agencies. While *The Pakistan Times* obtained 62.5 percent items from domestic news agencies, *The New York Times* and *The Times* used this source only to the extent of 9.5 and 10.2 percent. In Pakistan, the domestic news agencies get most of their foreign news from international news agencies. However, during coding only stories explicitly attributed to international sources were coded as such.

It was hypothesized that *The Pakistan Times* would depend more on international news agencies while *The New York Times* and *The Times* would have extensive staff coverage. Both *The New York Times* and *The Times* obtained more than 70 percent of their stories from staff correspondents. This is in line with the third

Table 4.6: Source of news

Source	<i>N.Y. Times</i>		<i>Times</i>		<i>Pak. Times</i>		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Own staff	109	73.6	105	71.9	111	12.3	325	27.11
International news agencies	20	13.5	15	10.3	172	19.0	207	17.26
Domestic news agencies	14	9.5	15	10.2	566	62.6	595	49.63
Other foreign sources	0	0.0	3	2.1	33	3.6	36	3.00
None	5	3.4	8	5.5	23	2.5	36	3.00
Total	148	100.0	146	100.0	905	100.0	1199	100.00

hypothesis. But, *The Pakistan Times* obtained only 19 percent of stories from international news agencies as compared to 62.6 percent from domestic news agencies. The results, thus, partially support the third hypothesis.

Did the coverage in terms of source of news have any significant relationship with three papers? A chi-square test was done to examine this aspect (Table 4.7). Since the frequency of items secured from "other sources" was less than 5 in the case of *The New York Times* and *The Times* of London, this category was ignored for this test. Table 4.7 shows a significant relationship between the use of source by three papers because the probability (.000) was less than the predetermined value of .05. In order to make a statistically meaningful judgment, another chi-square test (Table 4.8) was done by combining two sources; i.e., the international and domestic news agencies and ignoring 'other foreign sources' as well as the 'none' category because of low number of frequencies in these categories.

Table 4.7: Chi-square^a test for source of news — I

	<i>N. Y. Times</i>	<i>Times</i>	<i>Pak. Times</i>	Total (Freq.)
Own staff				
Freq.	109	105	111	325
Col.%	73.65	73.43	12.73	
Row%	33.54	32.31	34.15	
International agencies				
Freq.	20	15	172	207
Col.%	13.51	10.49	19.72	
Row%	9.66	7.25	83.09	
Domestic agencies				
Freq.	14	15	566	595
Col.%	9.46	10.49	64.91	
Row%	2.35	2.52	95.13	
None				
Freq.	5	8	23	36
Col.%	3.38	5.59	2.64	
Row%	13.89	22.22	63.89	
Total (Freq.)	148	143	872	1163

^aChi-square 428.627 Probability 0.000.

Table 4.8: Chi-square^a test for source of news — II

	<i>N. Y. Times</i>	<i>Times</i>	<i>Pak. Times</i>	Total (Freq.)
Own staff				
Freq.	109	105	111	325
Col.%	76.22	77.78	13.07	
Row%	33.54	32.31	34.15	
News agencies ^b				
Freq.	34	30	738	802
Col.%	23.78	22.22	86.93	
Row%	4.24	3.74	92.02	
Total (Freq.)	143	135	849	1127

^aChi-square 416.834 Probability 0.000.

^bDomestic and international combined.

Since the probability (.000) was less than the predetermined value of .05, the variables were related in a significant way. However, the question still remains, how? A look at the data given in Table 4.8 clearly shows that *The Pakistan Times* used more stories from news agencies while the other two papers contained more staff reports.

If we look into the working of Pakistani news agencies they have very few correspondents abroad. They get most of their international news through international agencies. The question arises why *The Pakistan Times* obtained 62 percent of its stories on Afghanistan from domestic news agencies?

During content analysis, this researcher felt that while *The New York Times* and *The Times* stories on Afghanistan mostly originated in Afghanistan or Pakistan (because their sources were Mujahidin or Mujahidin-related people), *The Pakistan*

Times stories on Afghanistan included numerous items which were nothing but statements by the president, prime minister, foreign minister, and other ministers, high ranking officials or political figures of Pakistan. Since *The Pakistan Times* accords a lot of space to official sources as well as covers sources of all sorts on important national and international issues such as Afghanistan, naturally this factor increased its coverage on Afghanistan not only in terms of space and also raised the level of prominence of stories on Afghanistan, it also resulted in more stories from the domestic agencies. Another reason for *The Pakistan Times* dependence on domestic agencies was the origin of stories within Pakistan because the Mujahidin had close contact with Afghan refugees living in Pakistan who were excellent sources of information about the war in Afghanistan.

Table 4.6 also shows that *The Pakistan Times* and *The Times* respectively secured 3.6 percent and 2.1 percent of their news from foreign media while *The New York Times* used no such source. No source of news was revealed in 3.4 percent stories in *The New York Times*, 5.5 percent in *The Times* and 2.5 percent in *The Pakistan Times*. In a few cases of this nature, it was observed that a particular story, though an independent item, did not cite any source. It was presumed in many such cases that the same staff correspondent had written the uncited item; it was, thus, coded as a staff correspondent story.

Although it was a coder's decision, only such stories which had some obvious appearance of having been written by the same correspondent, were considered to be so. For example, if the dateline was the same or the two events or stories were closely related to each other.

Table 4.9: Items with photographs

Photo	<i>N. Y. Times</i>		<i>Times</i>		<i>Pak. Times</i>		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	33	22.3	28	19.2	6	0.7	67	5.59
No	115	77.7	118	80.8	899	99.3	1132	94.41
Total	148	100.0	146	100.0	905	100.0	1199	100.00

On the whole, 27.11 percent of the stories in the three papers were contributed by staff sources, 17.26 percent by international news agencies, 49.63 percent by domestic agencies, 3 percent by foreign media and 3 percent were uncited dispatches. These figures do not represent the true picture in aggregate terms, because *The Pakistan Times* obtained a large portion of news from domestic agencies while the other two papers depended more on staff sources.

The stories about Afghanistan had little photographic coverage. However, it may be mentioned that photographs not accompanied by a news story were not included in the data because photographs are hard to code.

Table 4.9 shows that *The New York Times* stories were accompanied by photographs in 22.3 percent cases while *The Times* and *The Pakistan Times* stories had photographs in 19.2 percent and .7 percent of the cases.

A chi-square test based on the frequencies contained in Table 4.9 revealed a chi-square value of 171.043 and probability of .000 (against the predetermined probability of .05). This means there was a highly significant relationship between the three papers and their use of photographs in the coverage of Afghanistan. But, how? An examination of the data given in Table 4.9 makes it clear that photographic coverage in *The Pakistan Times* was rather scarce.

Table 4.10: Items describing events

Event	<i>N. Y. Times</i>		<i>Times</i>		<i>Pak. Times</i>		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	68	45.9	96	65.8	534	59.0	698	58.22
No	80	54.1	50	34.2	371	41.0	501	41.78
Total	148	100.0	146	100.0	905	100.0	1199	100.0

Analysis was also carried out regarding item type. The items were classified into two categories: one that described an event and the other that did not.

The New York Times carried 45.9 percent articles which described an event, *The Times* 65.8 percent and *The Pakistan Times* 59 percent (Table 4.10).

This shows that *The New York Times* articles were either more of an analytical type or feature stories. *The Times* had the highest percentage of such articles followed by *The Pakistan Times*, though *The Pakistan Times* carried 536 articles of this nature while *The Times* had only 97. The reason for this pattern has already been touched upon in the preceding paragraphs in the context of *The Pakistan Times* coverage being more inclined to publicizing statements of Pakistani officials or politicians.

A chi-square test showed there was significant relationship between three newspapers and the coverage of event-oriented or non-event-oriented items on Afghanistan. The test showed a chi-square value of 12.802 and probability at .002 against the predetermined value of .05.

This study aims, on the one hand, to find out the extent of coverage provided to Afghanistan by *The New York Times*, *The Times* and *The Pakistan Times* and on the other to look into the question as to what extent the readers get information which may be termed as explanatory or predictive. For the latter purpose the analysis

was done keeping in view the typology described in Hedman (1981). The analysis, to find out explanatory or predictive nature of stories, was limited to articles which described an event.

As indicated earlier, two out of the three papers, *The Times* and *The Pakistan Times* mostly carried event-oriented articles (Table 4.10). Description of events being in the nature of spot information carries the latest or fresh news. Feature stories or analytical stories may refer to old stories; especially in war, small events do not get reported immediately.

As the data show (Table 4.10), *The Times* had the largest percentage of event-oriented items. This may explain the fact that this paper endeavored to carry the latest information about the happenings in Afghanistan. *The Pakistan Times* lagged behind in this regard probably because of its simultaneous coverage of non-event-oriented news about Afghanistan originating within Pakistan.

The New York Times, *The Times* and *The Pakistan Times* carried articles to the extent of 32.35 percent, 54.17 percent and 74.95 percent respectively which had no general background information (Table 4.11). But, general background information was present in 67.65 percent, 45.83 percent and 45.83 percent of the articles in *The New York Times*, *The Times* and *The Pakistan Times* respectively. This means that the fourth hypothesis is supported because it stated that *The New York Times* and *The Times* would have more background information than *The Pakistan Times*.

With regard to explanations, Table 4.12 shows that *The New York Times*, *The Times* and *The Pakistan Times* carried no explanations to the extent of 27.94 percent, 52.08 percent and 59.51 percent. However, 72.06 percent, 47.92 percent and 40.49 percent of the items in *The New York Times*, *The Times* and *The Pakistan Times*

Table 4.11: No. of articles containing general background information

No. of background informations	<i>N.Y. Times</i>	<i>Times</i>	<i>Pak. Times</i>	Total
1	20	28	111	159
2	12	9	18	39
3	14	7	4	25
	46 (67.65%)	44 (45.83%)	133 (25.05%)	223 (32.08%)
0	22 (32.35%)	52 (54.17%)	398 (74.95%)	472 (67.92%)
n=	68	96	531	695

respectively contained, at least, one explanation. Again, this supports the fourth hypothesis.

Regarding statements about effects, Table 4.13 reveals that 82.35 percent, 84.38 percent and 89.83 percent articles in *The New York Times*, *The Times* and *The Pakistan Times* respectively did not have any statements about effects. At least one statement about effects was present in 17.65 percent, 15.62 percent and 10.17 percent of the items respectively in the three papers. These figures again support the fourth hypothesis, though the difference in percentages is not much.

Regarding statements about future expectations carried in articles on Afghanistan, Table 4.14 shows that *The New York Times*, *The Times* and *The Pakistan Times* did not contain any statements about expectations in 69.12 percent, 73.96 percent, 88.32 percent articles respectively. But, there was, at least, one statement about expectations present in 30.88 percent, 26.04 percent and 11.68 percent items in the three papers respectively. The fourth hypothesis is, therefore, supported in

Table 4.12: No. of articles containing explanations

No. of explanations	<i>N.Y. Times</i>	<i>Times</i>	<i>Pak. Times</i>	Total
1	17	16	114	147
2	11	6	52	69
3	21	24	49	94
	49	46	215	310
	(72.04%)	(47.92%)	(40.49%)	(44.60%)
0	19	50	316	385
	(27.94%)	(52.08%)	(59.51%)	(55.40%)
n=	68	96	531	695

Table 4.13: No. of articles containing statements about effects

No. of effects	<i>N.Y. Times</i>	<i>Times</i>	<i>Pak. Times</i>	Total
1	8	13	43	64
2	4	2	8	14
3	0	0	3	3
	12	15	54	81
	(17.65%)	(15.62%)	(10.17%)	(11.65%)
0	56	81	477	614
	(82.35%)	(84.38%)	(89.83%)	(88.35%)
n=	68	96	531	695

Table 4.14: No. of articles containing statements about expectations

No. of expectations	<i>N.Y. Times</i>	<i>Times</i>	<i>Pak. Times</i>	Total
1	11	17	44	72
2	9	4	13	26
3	1	4	5	10
	21 (30.88%)	25 (26.04%)	62 (11.68%)	108 (15.54%)
0	47 (69.12%)	71 (73.96%)	469 (88.32%)	587 (84.46%)
n=	68	96	531	695

this regard as well.

From the above results, it can be derived that articles in *The New York Times* and *The Times* contained more background information, explanations, statements about effects and expectations than *The Pakistan Times*.

However, there is another angle to the aspect of richness of information in the three newspapers. Table 4.15 (based on Table 4.11, Table 4.12, Table 4.13 and Table 4.14) reveals that *The Pakistan Times* provided more of all types of content than the other two papers. Therefore, a reader of three papers would have obviously gained more information about Afghanistan from *The Pakistan Times*. This is also true if the total number of articles in the three papers is compared. There were 148, 146 and 905 articles on Afghanistan in *The New York Times*, *The Times* of London and *The Pakistan Times* respectively.

The first part of the fifth hypothesis stated that items on Afghanistan in the three papers would contain more explanations than general background information.

Table 4.15: Comparison of number of articles containing background information, explanations, statements about effects and expectations

	<i>N. Y. Times</i>	<i>Times</i>	<i>Pak. Times</i>
Background information	46	44	133
Explanations	49	46	215
Effects	12	15	54
Expectations	21	25	62
Total	128	130	464

Table 4.11 and Table 4.12 support this hypothesis because articles in the three papers contained explanations to the tune of 44.60 percent as compared to background information which was 32.08 percent.

The second part of this hypothesis stated that although explanations and background information would not form part of the same item, there would be a strong positive correlation between the two variables. The analysis showed a Pearson correlation coefficient of .47976 for these two variables, showing the existence of a moderate correlation in the positive direction. Consequently, the fifth hypothesis is supported by results, except that instead of a strong positive correlation, only a moderate correlation in the positive direction was found to exist between the two variables.

As to the typology formulated by Hedman (1981), Table 4.16 shows how the event-oriented items in the three papers fell into different categories. On the whole, the tendency was to cover news in the form of reports. Only *The New York Times* had a slightly different approach, carrying 41.18 percent explanatory items as compared to 29.41 percent 'reports.' In contrast *The Pakistan Times* carried 67.04 percent 'reports' compared to 25.99 percent 'explanations.'

Table 4.16: Event-oriented articles in different categories^a

Articles		Giving explanations		Total	
		Yes	No		
<i>N. Y. Times</i>	Giving predictions	Yes	COMMENTS 18 26.47%	PREDICTIONS 2 2.94%	20 29.41%
		No	EXPLANATIONS 28 41.18%	REPORTS 20 29.41%	48 70.59%
	Total	46 67.65%	22 32.35%	68 100.00%	
	Giving predictions	Yes	COMMENTS 17 17.71%	PREDICTIONS 1 1.04%	18 18.75%
		No	EXPLANATIONS 25 26.04%	REPORTS 53 55.21%	78 81.25%
		Total	42 43.75%	54 56.25%	96 100.00%
<i>Pak. Times</i>	Giving predictions	Yes	COMMENTS 23 4.33%	PREDICTIONS 14 2.64%	37 6.97%
		No	EXPLANATIONS 138 25.99%	REPORTS 356 67.04%	494 93.03%
	Total	161 30.32%	370 69.68%	531 100.00%	

^aThe first figure in each cell denotes frequency and the second percentage.

CHAPTER 5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The content analysis of three papers — *The New York Times*, *The Times* of London and *The Pakistan Times*, for the period April 15–December 31, 1988 did not fully support the five hypotheses formulated for this study.

As hypothesized, *The Pakistan Times* provided more coverage to Afghanistan not only in terms of number of news items but also in terms of space covered by these items as percentage of newshole. But, contrary to this researcher's expectations, *The Times* did not provide more space to Afghanistan than *The New York Times*.

It may be pointed out that the hypotheses did not deal with the substance of the coverage; i.e., what was covered and how? The direction of the stories was also not a subject of hypotheses. As a matter of fact, no news categories or themes were evolved for this study. Besides the amount of coverage, prominence in display, source of news and photographic coverage was taken into account.

Two hypotheses related to the extent of explanatory or predictive elements present in the stories about Afghanistan. Keeping in view the typology formulated by Hedman (1981), the items were analyzed to ascertain the amount of (i) background information, (ii) explanations, (iii) statements about effects, and (iv) statements about expectations about the future. This part of the analysis was limited to items which

covered an event. The analysis was based on definitions spelled out earlier in this thesis. These definitions may not be fool proof but the reliability of the researcher was high.

The factor of proximity was visible in the display of items. *The Pakistan Times* gave the best prominence, i.e., on the front pages, followed by *The New York Times* and *The Times*.

The New York Times's display shows that in spite of being far away from the war theater, in comparison to *The Times*, the front page coverage of the former was more than that of the latter. However, most items were on inside pages.

Although not a subject of hypotheses being tested, photographic coverage was found to be low in all three papers. In spite of being closer to the scene, *The Pakistan Times* lagged behind the other two papers in photographic coverage.

While *The New York Times* and *The Times* depended more on staff reports, *The Pakistan Times* largely depended on domestic and international news agencies instead of sending its own correspondents to the neighboring Afghanistan.

To compare the richness of information an analysis of the extent of background information, explanations, statements about effects and expectations in the three papers was done. Hypotheses formulated in this regard were not fully supported but the results indicate some interesting aspects about the coverage of international events by papers in the developed and developing world.

A large percentage of articles in all three papers described events, indicating a general trend toward coverage of events only. Moreover, it appears that the papers tend to carry more reports than explanatory or predictive items. Among the three papers, *The Pakistan Times* carried a greater percentage of reports than explanatory

or predictive items.

In terms of percentages, *The New York Times* carried more articles having background information, explanations, statements about effects and expectations than *The Times*, followed by *The Pakistan Times*. However, a reader having access to all the three newspapers, would get more information about Afghanistan from *The Pakistan Times* because of more coverage of Afghanistan as well as because this paper had more of all elements, i.e., background information, explanations and statements about effects and expectations.

Generally, the three papers contained more explanations than general background information. The analysis showed a moderate correlation between them in the positive direction.

Conclusions

This study did not look into the statistical relationship of variables such as distance, U.S. or British foreign policy toward Afghanistan or Pakistan, freedom of the press, etc., with the coverage of Afghanistan by the three newspapers. However, speculations in this regard may shed light on some aspects of the differences in three newspapers' coverage of Afghanistan, and may help in arriving at some conclusions.

Since Pakistan is a next door neighbor of Afghanistan and has been deeply concerned with happenings in that country, it was quite natural as well as in line with the well known news value of proximity to the place of occurrence that *The Pakistan Times* accorded the largest amount of space and prominence to items on Afghanistan. *The Times* was the least enthusiastic about display probably because it covers the international news of a lesser significance on inside pages under the heading

'overseas news.' It appears that only very important events during the period of study were splashed on the front pages by *The Times*.

Although the distance from the scene was too great for *The New York Times* in contrast to *The Times*, it tried to cover more important news on the front pages. However, most items were on inside pages. More prominent display by *The New York Times* may be the result of U.S. official policy's influence which was directed against the Soviet Union and in favor of Pakistan and the Afghan Mujahidin.

Results about source of news appear to be distorted in the case of *The Pakistan Times* because it was beyond the scope of this study to distinguish between items originating within and outside Pakistan. *The Pakistan Times* coverage was so extensive that this coverage had no comparison with *The New York Times* and *The Times*. However, it may be pointed out that neither was it the aim of the study to compare which items were covered in the three papers and which were not, nor to make comparisons regarding how these were covered in individual papers? The study focused on aggregate coverage, irrespective of origin of stories.

Because of working in a different system, *The Pakistan Times* was bound to cover reactions of Pakistani officials and people from other walks of life. This would have obviously increased its use of domestic news agencies' reports; besides, of course, it would enlarge the size of net coverage of Afghanistan.

The New York Times and *The Times* depended more on staff reports because the two papers had their own correspondents in the area besides Pakistani stringers who are less expensive for foreign media and also have the advantage of knowing the language and social and cultural situation of the area. These two papers could afford to post their own correspondents in the region because they have large circulations.

Being a small paper, *The Pakistan Times* seldom covers through its own staff abroad. Whatever staff reports it carried must have been filed from within Pakistan.

The Pakistan Times large dependence on domestic and international news agencies may be linked to its meager resources. Had it depended more on staff coverage, it would have also affected the amount of pictorial news in this paper. Taking more news from domestic agencies probably resulted in scarce photographic items. It may be argued that domestic agencies could provide an equal or greater amount of photographs than foreign correspondents do for their own papers. Probably, the Pakistani domestic agencies are as handicapped as the papers themselves. The size of the paper and its priorities for carrying photographs of events within Pakistan may be another factor in this regard.

Hedman (1981) observed that "there are many examples in which the length of the article bears no relation to its richness of information." A correlation might be found if a newspaper is taken as a whole but not if articles of different types are studied separately, he said. To compare the richness of information an analysis of the extent of background information, explanations, statements about effects and expectations in the three papers was done. Hypotheses formulated in this regard were not fully supported but the results indicate significant clues about how a newspaper belonging to a developing country covered certain events in contrast to two papers of the developed world in the coverage of foreign news about the happenings in Afghanistan.

The results show that all the papers carried about or more than 50 percent items which described an event (*The New York Times* 46 percent, *The Times* 66 percent and *The Pakistan Times* 59 percent). Similarly, articles in *The New York Times* and

The Times did not contain a lesser degree of background information, explanations, statements about effects and expectations than *The Pakistan Times*, as is generally thought about the coverage of foreign countries by the western press.

This may mean that elite papers such as *The New York Times* and *The Times* not only provide adequate space to important events in the world, they also enable their readers to follow the course of events.

It may be true that the average reader of an average newspaper feels the absence of enough background information or explanations of events because the papers often lack these elements but this study shows that in spite of a general trend to report events, the elite papers do not lack the content of explanations and general background information. It is another question what constitutes an adequate amount of these elements.

The Pakistan Times, published from a country that was most affected by happenings in Afghanistan, did not provide a greater percentage of background information and explanations than *The New York Times* and *The Times*. Not only were the majority of *The Pakistan Times* items on Afghanistan event-oriented, they even surpassed *The New York Times* in comparative terms. It may be speculated that in view of extensive coverage of Afghanistan every day, *The Pakistan Times* did not consider it expedient to give additional information besides reporting a particular story.

It was mentioned in the last chapter that *The Pakistan Times* carried more reports than explanatory or predictive items because it was probably covering reactions of Pakistanis about the situation or developments related to the Afghanistan problem. About 67 percent of the items covered by *The Pakistan Times* were merely

reports as compared to 20 percent and 53 percent in the case of *The New York Times* and *The Times* respectively. However, this may be a strong basis to counter the argument that the western media reporting lacks explanations or analyses of events. The trend elsewhere seems to be the same — looking for and covering the hard news or in other words to focus on catastrophes, disasters and calamities or in a war like situation to report major turning points on the battle field.

Looking from another angle, a different picture is portrayed. Although in terms of percentages, *The Pakistan Times* articles were not richer in information than those in *The New York Times* and *The Times*, in absolute terms a reader of the three papers would find more of all elements of information in *The Pakistan Times* than the other two papers.

A question may arise as to the precise criteria for evaluating the coverage of a particular newspaper. A newspaper covering almost all aspects of Afghanistan is bound to carry more items in the nature of reports. For example, *The Pakistan Times* would have carried all official announcements and statements about violation of Pakistan airspace by Afghan planes together with any reactions which would not have been necessarily covered by the other two papers.

Evidently, *The Pakistan Times* might have covered Mujahidin attacks on a particular area in the control of Afghan or Soviet forces, right from their initial stages to the eventual conclusion; but *The New York Times* and *The Times* would have probably focused on only one aspect — the end result or may be also the start of the offensive.

It is difficult to lay down any criteria as to what constitutes the proper or adequate coverage of an event or a series of events. The newspapers tend to focus on the

same aspect of the event — does it contain hard news of interest to their readers.

It would be absurd to expect the same amount of coverage of Afghanistan in *The New York Times* and *The Times* in comparison with *The Pakistan Times*. But, it is obvious from this study that the trend of newspapers in picking and choosing news, is the same everywhere. The news is largely event-oriented and lacks background information and explanations about the events.

However, since the three papers generally lacked these elements it may be inferred that the western papers like *The New York Times* and *The Times* gradually gain necessary knowledge about a conflict and get at par with a paper of the region of conflict.

Suggestions for Future Research

It was not within the scope of this study to distinguish between items originating within and outside Pakistan. *The Pakistan Times*, would have naturally carried more news originating within Pakistan. It would be proper to make comparison of selected items simultaneously for all the three papers. Or, to find out what items were covered by which paper. However, in order to achieve uniform results, analysis of a sample consisting of items covering the same event should be made. In this case, a longer period would have to be covered, especially for papers such as *The New York Times* and *The Times*.

Since *The Pakistan Times* covered events in Afghanistan in an extensive manner as compared to the other two papers, the aggregate results were affected by not knowing the dateline or the origin of the stories. Stories with a specific dateline should be included in the analysis. This would also need a longer period of study.

It would be worthwhile to study the editorial contents of different newspapers to see the differences in the direction of opinions expressed by different newspapers. Such content could be analyzed keeping in view differing foreign policy perceptions of the newspapers' country of origin.

Research may be directed toward assessing the trend of increase or decrease in the extent of explanatory and predictive content in the news items with the passage of time in the western newspapers.

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APPENDIX A. CODING BOOK I

		Col.
1.	Item no.	1-4
	Blank	5
2.	Newspaper ID no.	6
	1 = <i>The New York Times</i>	
	2 = <i>The Times</i> (London)	
	3 = <i>The Pakistan Times</i>	
	Blank	7
3.	Month of issue	8-9
	Blank	10
4.	Date of issue	11-12
	Blank	13

5.	Day of issue		14
	1 = Monday		
	2 = Tuesday		
	3 = Wednesday		
	4 = Thursday		
	5 = Friday		
	6 = Saturday		
	7 = Sunday not coded		
		Blank	15
6.	Content type		16
	1 = News		
	2 = Feature		
		Blank	17
7.	Accompanied by photograph or illustration		18
	1 = Yes		
	2 = No		
		Blank	19
8.	Prominence of item		20
	1 = very high (front pages, above fold)		
	2 = high (front pages, below fold)		
	3 = medium (inside pages, above fold)		
	4 = low (inside pages, below fold)		
		Blank	21

9.	Source	22
	1 = paper's own staff	
	2 = international news agency	
	3 = domestic news agency	
	4 = other foreign media	
	5 = none	
	Blank	23
10.	Content type	
	Background information	24
	1 = 1 information	
	2 = 2 informations	
	3 = 3 informations	
	Blank	25
	Chains of explanations	26
	1 = 1 explanation	
	2 = 2 explanations	
	3 = 3 explanations	
	Blank	27
	Number of effects	28
	1 = 1 effect	
	2 = 2 effects	
	3 = 3 effects	
	Blank	29

Number of expectations		30
1 = 1 expectation		
2 = 2 expectations		
3 = 3 expectations		
	Blank	31
11. Size of item on Afghanistan		32-35
	Blank	36
12. Does the item describe an event		37
1 = Yes		
2 = No		
	Blank	38
13. Headline or message of the item		39-

APPENDIX B. CODING BOOK II

		Col.
1.	Newspaper ID no.	1
	1 = <i>The New York Times</i>	
	2 = <i>The Times</i> (London)	
	3 = <i>The Pakistan Times</i>	
	Blank	2
2.	Month of issue	3-4
	Blank	5
3.	Date of issue	6-7
	Blank	8
4.	No. of pages	9-11
	Blank	12
5.	Size of space covered by advertisements and miscellaneous non-news items	13-