

The Representation of Imran Khan as an Opposition Leader in Pakistani Urdu Newspapers

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Abstract

Media, as significant pillars of society, perform an important role in the creation and preservation of discourses that influence our day-to-day lives and form our knowledge of ourselves and the things around us. Media do not only reveal the communal perceptions but influence the construction and adaptation of public perceptions. Hence, the media reflect, clear and confirm the rival social and political discourses, and contribute to the production of meanings or in other words, in fabricating and launching the reality. The purpose of the research was to examine print media discourse in the Pakistani context and to study the role of media representations in creating, emphasizing and circulating particular ideologies. The data was collected from columns of Jang. The outcomes and conclusion add to the literature regarding the role of representation in Pakistani print media. Furthermore, they provide an opportunity to comprehend the policy of the newspaper and the outlook of the columnists through critical discourse analysis of two hundred and fifty-two (252) columns of the most prominent Urdu language newspaper of Pakistan. The study concludes that the discourse of columns in Pakistani Urdu language newspapers, especially, related to the representation of Imran Khan, is ideologically loaded and does not only mirror but circulates the columnists' ideologies particularly and of newspaper's publishers in general.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, construction of reality, representation, ideology, identity, print media, Pakistan

1. Introduction

Representation is currently a much-discussed topic. Ideologies are shaped through representations. Representations do not only create the reality but make it seem 'natural'. In other words, the reality is always 'represented'. All media discourses, how much realistic they may appear to be, are fabricated representations and not merely reproductions, recordings,

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transcriptions or reflections of a pre-existing reality. Through constant re-use, representations become familiar and thus come to appear natural, but these representations entail interpretation. Representation is inevitably selective, backgrounding some things and foregrounding others. Media representation means how various groups, social practices, and issues are shown in media with a specific ideological standpoint. By choosing what information the public should receive, the creators of the media text, control our involvement with reality. Media affect our perceptions, opinions, and biases by supporting or negating them. Media is not only the image creator of different groups and things as Shahzad, Saeed, and Lodhi (2015) affirm, but also determines how society perceives them. So, media representations are never neutral. Due to their influence on the views, attitudes and behaviors of the public in actual contexts, we should not consider media representations harmless. So, studying these media representations is significant to realize and comprehend the ideologies associated with them.

This study is a way to examine media representations and explore their link with ideologies in the Pakistani context. For this purpose, the representation of Imran Khan, the sitting prime minister of Pakistan, as an opposition leader in Pakistani newspapers columns were analyzed critically.

1.1 Purpose Statement

The purpose was to examine print media discourse in the Pakistani context and to explore the role of media representations in fabricating, strengthening or disseminating certain ideologies.

1.2 Research Questions

The study aims to explore the answer to the following two research questions:

1. How Imran Khan is represented as an opposition leader in columns of Pakistani Urdu newspapers?
2. What ideologies are associated with him in the columns of the Pakistani Urdu newspaper?

2. Literature Review

Media is one of the significant pillars of society not only gets an impact of society but also influences society. For example, media's effects on the attitude and outlook of people provide it the power to regulate the opinion and even behavior of the people. Osborne and Jones (2008 cited in Allen, 2014) prove this point by blaming media for physical assaults on Muslims in Britain. There is an essential and basic relationship between media discourse and ideologies. Hussain et al. (2015), even suggest that no neutral discourse exists, rather in terms of representation each and every discourse is biased but this bias is a matter of degree. Media representation constructs, or at least, propagates, definite types of images, notions information and so on. Huong (2012) commenting on the reporting of rape and exploring the role of print media in Vietnam asserts that media creates the external world for women and reiterates the approach of the society by maintaining a traditional image of gender where females are restricted to home and males to the external world. In today's world, most of our information comes through one or the other type of media. Media does not merely perform the role of an informer but has great influential power. Media is a vital source of information for the public (Poole, 2011). The facts and information in media are not offered just randomly. Media producer pre-edit their content to make it consistent with social standards. Additionally, media creators, being conscious of their role as a shaper of public opinion, select as gatekeepers what the viewers should be given (Schramm, 1982 cited in Strausbhaar & LaRose, 2002). On the other hand, the content of media complies with the need of the receiver, advertisers and policy creators (Gandy, 1998). Though receivers of media are always selective in choosing the content of media and subject to their background understand it differently, but largely it is the proprietor's interest that is mirrored by media and culture (Strausbhaar & LaRose, 2002). Bail (2012) proclaims that due to its selection process media is not a 'democratic forum' but is a prism that presents a biased picture of discourse by showing its specific features and making others obscure or unseen. Inclusion and exclusion of media content depend on media frames. In other words, media presents a "packaged world" (Hammond, 2004), and "exposure to media content is seen as the trigger for mental processes and behaviors" (p. 424).

Press as a political medium has a crucial part in the description of reality not only for individuals but for a community also. Although Manchanda (2010) particularly talks about the discourse on 'war on terror', but we can definitely apply her statement to any media discourse in society, "The media both substantively and in representational terms, comprising 'what' is being communicated and 'how' - is intrinsic to our understanding of the discourse" (p. 44). Youngs (2009) concludes the same and further advances the function of media from a means to comprehend reality to the composition of (that) reality. They affirm that despite a gradual reduction in crime, continuous exposure to crime news results in mounting fear of crime. Depending upon the visions of the producers, media exhibit a manufactured form of reality, (Stewart & Kowaltzke, 2008). Media is one of the major tools to shape the socially formed view of reality for individuals (Alitavoli & Kaveh, 2018). It suggests that media discourse, including the discourse of newspapers, has a vital role in disseminating certain ideologies.

Although electronic or social media has gained more popularity, print media is still a significant societal agent and has the power to have an impact on people with its particular discourse(s). The influence of media relies on just how the texts/programs were read and/or watched. This point is reasonable as people express various views and experiences to their 'reading' of a text. According to these surveys, media is the only source of information about Islam for 60% of people and is considered responsible for Islamophobia. Such types of outcomes are more elucidated to find the covert ideologies of newspaper editorials.

That is exactly what Huong (2012) observes that usually the foremost function of media is to disseminate the state policies and it does not report news only, but it 'educates' the people. Media framing causes the presentation of information in a way that communicates a specific ideology. The results of the study show that the English newspapers replicate and support the governing narratives and thoroughly comply with the foreign policy discourse of their countries.

van Dijk (1998) opines that to represent specific rhetorical constructions, incidents, or people, various strategies and linguistic devices like polarized vocabulary, imagery, euphemism hyperbole, and mitigation are also employed. He suggests, that as by using these techniques certain information is made less noticeable than others, their usage is ideological. It implies that some information is emphasized while ignoring the unfavorable.

It is evident that ideologies work through language or discourse in general. Allen (2014) and Moore et al. (2008), postulate that media or media persons do not exist in cultural or political vacuums. They perform within and comprehend the world through prevailing structures or frameworks. Although they influence common discourses, these discourses also constrain them. Ideologies are fabricated and shaped within discourse but also are disseminated and propagated through discourse. Our political inclinations govern our comprehension and knowledge of the world. There are particular philosophies and specific ways of perceiving the world (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2004). The elites regulate the means of production and consequently circulate their ideology through public institutions. Ideologies do not merely present the visions and philosophies of the powerful group but also validate them.

Hall (2000) asserts that instinctively we generally remain passive to newspaper columns, consequently, the presentation of reality in newspapers columns remains unchallenged. But the perception and concepts of society are regularly modified due to several factors like media, as Rehman (2002b) proposes, it is not easy to locate any single or permanent communal perception or worldview in any society including Pakistan. So he suggests, that instead of the society as a whole this word of worldview should be used to denote thoughts and dogmas of various groups of people or segments of society such as traders, peasants, and students.

Newspapers provide cautiously selected information to the readers in a particular style. A particular event in the newspapers can be described differently to publicize diverse ideologies in society. Newspapers by inventing new terms and varying the meanings of older notions have the power to produce common sense. As these ideologies are always concealed,

so, people are deceived that they are employing their own choice, instead of the directives of others.

Columnists though seemingly just articulate their opinion on various issues but in fact, they present specific information in such a way to appear normal or a truth. The fact remains that the discourse of newspapers including columns is a matter of selection and choice not only of themes and issues but of language also. It is what Kress (1989) long ago maintained that language used in the press media is definitely a matter of choice and not of chance. What is presented in media is just as essential as what is not demonstrated because by regulating the formation of knowledge certain realities are made restricted. Representation involves selection. "Which is not selected becomes invisible or negated" (Hooks, 1992 cited in Azimova & Johnston, 2012, p. 339). Likewise, the significance of an issue in media depends on the time and space given to it. Newspapers usually provide less space to differing opinions and more space to views and news that come in accordance with their own ideas (Stewart & Kowaltzke, 2008).

Due to our restricted experience of the world, media representations serve as a means of making sense of this world, but this representation is certainly associated with power. The representation either challenges or more often reinforces the existed power relations in society (Azimova & Johnston, 2012). Besides, the media's power to create, regulate and circulate reality links it with the construction of identity. As identity is constructed socially thus media, being the only contact with reality for some people, performs a vital role to create and propagate the identities of others. Brooks and Hébert (2006) validate the role of media in constructing and shaping identities and assert that what is regarded significant depends on the content presented and disseminated in media. Media do not present accurate or true pictures always, rather it usually delivers a biased representation. These partial representations result in the formation of certain stereotypes among the audience and govern or regulate their attitude and behavior with various groups. Media create, modify and regulate reality, and evidently affect the people. Its extent or degree varies as the media dependency hypothesis (Ball-

Rokeach and De Fleur, 1974) suggests that the scope of media role in the production of reality is determined by the range of a person's direct experience of the world and the extent of his/her contact with media.

Media representations of a distinct event or entity, though constructed socially, may differ in accuracy, as investigated by Young and Dugas (2012) in their comparison of the reporting of climate change in Canadian newspapers. They examined two French and six English language newspapers of Canada from 2007 to 2008 and explored an obvious difference in their treatment of climate change. According to their findings, English newspapers provide diverse and classified reporting while French papers present thematically extended but limited in frequency. They associate this variation with different ecological and media cultures in French and English-speaking Canada.

As stated formerly that media presentations are directly linked with identity and variation in representations of the same entity help to create, support, and emphasize different identities. Nasara explores that the British colonial authorities regarded and so treated the Bedouin as a separate group while Palestinian newspapers presented them as a dynamic contributor in the Palestinian body politics which entails that they were not considered or treated as a separate group.

Media is regarded as a means of evaluating how individual experiences combine with public discourse. When a personal thing gets coverage in media, it becomes a part of social discourse and somehow affects society. Huong (2012) explored the representation of rape in newspapers in Vietnam and the perception of the victims about this representation. She documented the reaction of families to this reporting of the incident and analyzed the influence of media representation to form a public opinion towards it. She further marked the variation in the representation of the same event in different newspapers and changes in media trends. She calls media a 'civil society actor' and affirms its power as a tool for victims to acquire justice for themselves. She analyzed the representation of four cases of rape in four different newspapers. Moreover, the interviews of the news reporters, along with the interviews, life histories and participant observation of the victims

were included in the study. She blames Vietnam media for being gendered as it presents victims as responsible and at least as helpless.

The role of media to show a biased depiction and propagate negativity about a certain group is a well-explored topic. Poole (2002), Moore et al. (2008), Sajid (2012), Afsar and Mahmood (2017) and many others have examined the representation of Islam in western media. Similarly, Poole (2011) studied the representation of British Muslims in the British press over a period of 15 years. Her purpose was to identify the impact of various critical events like 9/11, Iraq war 2003, London 7/7 on print media reporting and recognize any possible pattern in it. According to the study, British Muslims were presented with limited themes and narrow frameworks. The dominant categories of reporting were politics, criminality, education, relationships, and fundamentalism. The significant themes within these categories were Muslims as a threat to security, cultural differences between Islam and the British community, the tension in interpersonal relations, and visibility in the public sphere. She suggests that even before 9/11 there was negativity for Muslims in the British press but after it, there is an evolution of certain frameworks like security risk and cultural differences. She proclaims that there has always been a negative representation of minorities and immigrants in UK press throughout history but now the focus is shifted from race to islamophobia. Poole declares that to escape from the charge of discrimination, newspapers resolutely individualize the British Muslims involved in terrorist activities but present them as brainwashed and by citing their upbringing and birth elsewhere, associate with outsider fanatics and thus put the responsibility on Islamic ideology. Poole regards this repeated negative reporting as a source of producing an environment of fright and distrust which helps to control people, including immigration. To summarize our discussion, we can suggest that the discourse of newspaper columns as a representation of reality is significant to examine the ideologies prevalent in society.

3. Methodology

Newspaper column though seemingly is a subjective text that articulates the opinion of the columnist but performing the role of watchdog of the society, columnists generally, surely not always, voice or pretend to voice as the spokesperson of the public. Additionally, being part of society themselves, to some extent they mirror the society or a portion of society. Along with it, their influence on public opinion is a well-established fact. Thus, representation of a particular person, event or thing in columns of Pakistani newspapers surely unveils the attitude of society or its certain sections.

As the purpose of the research was to examine media representation and its link with ideologies in the Pakistani context, the newspaper columns were believed to be the right means to explore this phenomenon. Therefore, the data for this study was collected from columns of Pakistani newspaper of Urdu language, i.e Daily *Jang*. They were analyzed critically to investigate, how Imran Khan is represented as an opposition leader in the discourse of newspaper columns and to explore the ideologies embedded in this representation. The newspaper was selected for its highest distribution, good repute among readers and the popularity of the columnists of the newspapers.

The sample of the study was all issues of *Jang* of two months dated from 1st March 2017 to 30th April 2017. *Jang* publishes fourteen (14) columns per issue on average. Hence, merely the 1st four columns were chosen from each issue of *Jang* and twelve more columns were selected randomly. In total, two hundred and fifty-two (252) columns of *Jang* were selected as the sample of the study to examine the representation of Imran Khan as an opposition leader and the associated ideologies embedded in this representation.

Depending on the nature of the research, qualitative data was collected. To unveil and identify hidden ideologies in the discourse of newspaper columns, the CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) was thought to be the most appropriate tool for analysis. Critical discourse analysis is a method used in many fields of studies, though each discipline has its own approach to CDA. Besides, the type of approach depends on the nature of the text also. The study employs Fairclough's framework (2003).

Fairclough's (2003) critical model discusses various issues linked to social research like domination of capitalist societies, globalization, mixing of societal boundaries, ideologies, hegemony, the legitimation of social actions, and universalization. The framework focuses on syntactic and semantic analysis and employs various micro and macro analytical categories. The text and discourse analysis, social analysis, genre and action, styles, discourses and representations and identities are some Macro categories. Along with them, some micro strategies such as difference, dialogicality, exclusion, inclusion, meaning relation, metaphor, presupposition, and styles etc. are also included in it.

4. Analysis and Findings

Imran Khan was represented ten (10) times in *Jang*. The analysis demonstrates that out of ten, in nine columns, he received negative representation. The themes that came out of this representation include; his post-election (2013) sit-ins, his alleged contacts with the establishment, the censure of arranging the final match of PSL in Pakistan, his inappropriate remarks about the foreign players and his standpoint on the Panama issue. He was labeled as an egoist, having a narrow approach, lawbreaker, opportunist, a puppet of the establishment, proud, and selfish,

The one column, which offers a positive image of Imran Khan, represents him as a person who could have spent a more better and comfortable life. The columnist counts the other great options available to him in life to meet his expenses and then proclaims that he chose politics, not for popularity or material gain as he already had them, but to bring betterment to his country and its people. He had an opportunity to be a cricket analyst, or the chancellor of Bradford University, and could have spent a luxurious life in England. Besides, in Pakistan, he had options to chair the PCB or to work as the head coach of the Pakistan cricket team or a social worker. If he had chosen any one of these, no one would have had a problem with him. He was regarded as a national hero who had all the respect and love of the whole nation (Mazhar Barlas, March 03). But risking his respect and fame,

in the larger interest of the nation, instead of selecting any of these professions, he chose the third path.

“Rather he selected the third path. He chose the path of progress for the nation. In order to save people from corrupt politicians, he preferred to enter into politics” (Mazhar Barlas, March 03). (See Appendix C26)

The given lines indicate his love for the country and its people. It reflects his preferences, that for him his country and his people are more important than the benefits and comforts of his own life. It means that he took part in politics only for his people, not for material gains. In other words, his decision to participate in politics is equated with his selflessness and sincerity for the country. Moreover, he is compared with allegedly corrupt leaders to highlight his honesty. According to the columnist, he is different from the other allegedly corrupt politicians and has no self-interest, rather he sacrificed his comforts and took part in politics only in the larger interests of the people. It implies that as he forfeited the options for a comfortable life and participated in politics to save his people from the corrupt leaders, so, the people should recognize his devotion and should support and vote for him. It is assumed that under his leadership, the nation will prosper and progress.

The rest of the nine columns, present him negatively. Referring to his sit-ins, he is depicted as a wrongdoer and lawbreaker who created disorder and anarchy in the country.

“To challenge the decisions of the parliament elected by millions of people, few thousands of people gathered, not only to oppose the decisions of the parliament openly by blocking the roads, grounds, and ways to public offices but on certain occasions do not avoid to break the law. Politics of Imran Khan, Altaf Hussain, and Dr. Tahir ul Qadri is an example for us” (Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, March 06). (See Appendix C27)

His comparison with two such leaders i.e. Altaf Hussain, and Tahir ul Qadri, who live abroad and have British nationalities challenges his belonging to Pakistan and its people and portrays him as an outgroup. After the 2013

election, by not admitting the results of the election, he demanded recounting of the votes and after receiving the denial he gave sit-in in front of parliament house. The columnist represents him as an outlaw and his sit-in as a challenge to the parliament and disregard of the choice of million people. Discomfort caused to the masses like blockage of roads during the sit-in is highlighted to describe his indifference and coarseness.

Nevertheless, his unlawful attitude was ignored by the people in power because, according to the other columnist, the establishment was on his back. The columnist goes to the extent to claim that in 2013, the army rigged the election in his favor and even his sit-in was a plan of the establishment (Najam Sethi, March 12).

“However, during the election when agenda was not completed then that time establishment, by making him a revolutionary leader, sent him to Islamabad for sit-ins. To turn over the government of Nawaz Sharif, Islamabad was attacked earlier in 2014 and then in 2016. However, the people made his efforts failed” (Najam Sethi, March 12). (See Appendix C28)

The statement presents Imran Khan as a puppet who is under the control of the establishment and neither has free will nor talent and vision. Although apparently, the statement discusses Imran Khan but in the background, the establishment is criticized for indulging in political activities. Involvement of establishment in politics is offered as a ‘fact’ and the columnist proclaims that due to the worsening relationship between Nawaz Sharif and the establishment, the armed forces did conspiracies against the sitting prime minister. To launch Imran Khan as a contestant to Sharif was one of them but as they could not beat Nawaz in the election. So, they attempted illegal ways to fulfill their agenda. In other words, there was actually, no rigging in the election results and the sit-ins were just a method of producing chaos and confiscating Nawaz Sharif but despite the joint efforts of his enemies, the public supported Nawaz Sharif and not only made him win in the

election but rejected and failed Imran Khan and his efforts. It implies that unlike Imran Nawaz Sharif is a choice of the people.

The columnists depicted Imran Khan's sit-ins negatively and relate them as a way to; disregard the choice of millions, challenge the parliament, create problems for the public (Abdul Qadir Khan, March 06), and terminate the rule of Nawaz (Najam Sethi, March 12). The columnist even go to the extent to proclaim that his both sit-ins were not to bring any betterment to the public but were a shortcut for himself to find an opportunity to reach power.

“But ‘Dharnaey Mosalsl Khan Sahib’ brought the government to the position that he might make the government agree on conducting the free and fair election but he went only for resignation” (D.Mujahid Mansori, March 28). (See Appendix C29)

Imran Khan is labeled as ‘Dharnaey mosalsal *Khan Sahib*’, a derogatory term to humiliate and satirize him that his politics comprises of protests and causing agitation in the country. By admitting indirectly that his sit-ins brought the government under pressure, the columnist depicts his influence and political power in the background. On the other hand, in the foreground, he is criticized by the columnist for not utilizing his power for the benefit of the country and for not using this pressure to make the government bring electoral reforms to ensure fair and free election next time. He is condemned for spoiling this opportunity and charged with availing the chance for himself by demanding the resignation of the sitting prime minister. It implies that he is selfish, self-centered, and has a limited approach.

Another theme related to his representation was his criticism of the plan of arranging the final match of the PSL in Lahore. He is presented negatively as a person who has a narrow approach and lacks the ability to reflect in a broad perspective.

“Alas, when the whole nation was united, he did not hesitate to express his different opinion that was not only a reflection of his political immaturity but of his wrong approach too” (Hafeez Ullah Niazi, March 08). (See Appendix C30)

The above statement indirectly presents him as an out-group. The columnist asserts that each and every Pakistani wanted to have PSL final in Pakistan and the whole nation was on one page in this matter. According to the columnist, Imran Khan was the only person who was against this idea and went in opposition to the desire of the whole nation. It reflected either his ignorance or indifference. He is compared with 'tooti', a musical instrument that makes low sound different from the orchestra. Having an independent and distinctive opinion is generally reflected as a positive feature of the personality, but here the columnist presents his difference of opinion as his stupidity and ignorance. It highlights his failure as a political leader, in recognizing the spirit and wishes of the nation and his negativity also that caused his efforts to damage national unity and spoil a historical event. As the nation, the columnist proclaims, does not value him nor his opinion was worth noting, so no one took him and his opinion seriously (Hafeez Ullah Niazi: March 08). One of the columnists represents his criticism of the plan of conducting PSL in Pakistan even as infidelity to the work that brought fame, fortune, and respect to him to the extent that he decided to participate in politics on their basis (Sleem Safi, March 11).

“Cricket became the source of his entry into politics, so, (I) thought that perhaps he would be sincere with this only thing but here again, his pride made him go in the wrong direction” (Saleem Safi, March 11). (See Appendix C31)

The above lines represent a negative image of Imran Khan. He is portrayed as proud, self-centered, and perfidious. It suggests that he was expected to be sincere at least with cricket but his opposition to the idea of conducting the final in Pakistan reflected his disloyalty to the profession and proved that he have no interest even in the progress of cricket. Imran Khan is represented as proud and according to the columnist, his resistance to the idea was just for the sake of opposition without understanding that the final match in the country will revive the cricket in Pakistan and thus would be beneficial for the profession of cricket. In other words, his criticism is equated with his indifference to the wishes of the nation and lack of interest in the progress

of cricket. It suggests that the people who support and intend to vote for him must understand that he is not loyal to the nation and thus cannot bring betterment in Pakistan and the political system of the country.

According to one of the columnists, Imran Khan's criticism on arranging the match in Lahore was so imprudent and unthoughtful that everyone sensible and wise person disapproved his opinion (Najam Sethi, March 12). He is criticized further by the columnist for not expressing any regret or offering an apology after the successful completion of the event. It implies that he is not merely egoist and proud but lacks the sense and insight to understand the situation and predict the consequences also. Moreover, it was suggested that one who did not censure the attitude of Imran Khan, must lack wisdom and logic. His criticism of the plan of conducting the match in Pakistan was represented as his hostility towards the nation and to the game of cricket because it was interpreted as his anti-cricket approach and a plan to deprive the people of their amusement. The columnist proclaims that his failure to rely on the security arrangements and realize the desires of the nation was not his real fault. But the actual mistake of Imran Khan, according to the columnist was not expressing apologies. It suggests that he believes himself too prudent to blunder.

The negative representation of Imran Khan was centered on his inappropriate remarks about the foreign players who came to play the final match of PSL in Pakistan. It was suggested that his egocentric and self-centered nature caused him to utter those unsuitable comments. His negative remarks about foreign cricketers, the columnist asserts, did not damage the repute of the players but carried harm to him only. His remarks were represented as immoral rather a sin by the columnist and he was condemned that instead of being embarrassed and remorseful, he started giving excuses to prove himself right (Hafeez Ullah Niazi, March 08). It was emphasized that admitting one's fault is a characteristic of nobleness and not showing remorse or apology by Imran Khan proved his nastiness.

His representation comprises of the issue of the Panama verdict and his demand for the resignation of Nawaz Sharif, the then prime minister who was going through a court trial on corruption charges. His demand for

resignation is interpreted and depicted by the columnists as his scheme to reach power.

“As per expectations, Imran Khan wants to gain all advantages. Since long he has been in politics, and it has been two decades, it is the central point of his planning. Certainly, it is a long period, and our political memory is so weak that information does not remain there more than a few seconds” (Talat Husain, March 29) (See Appendix C32)

The statement presents him as a fortune hunter who took this Panama issue as an opportunity for himself to reach the government by removing Mr. Sharif. His twenty years long struggle in politics is foregrounded to highlight his failure to attain power. It suggests his inability and incapability. Moreover, the columnist asserts that he has always been waiting for a chance or availed himself of all the available shortcuts to succeed in politics. In the foreground, the columnist relates himself with the nation and laments for the weak memory as a nation, but in the background, the columnist reminds the reader to keep his opportunist nature in mind. It implies that his stance on the Panama issue and his demand for the resignation of the then prime minister was not his combat against corruption but his effort to avail this opportunity for himself.

Further, it was anticipated by the columnist that if Mr. Sharif proved innocent in the Panama trial, the political career of Imran Khan will end ultimately (Ammar Masood, March 25). Imran Khan had succeeded in one province and was the runner-up in another province but still, his political career is defined as '*dobti siyasat ki nayya*' (the drowning boat of politics) and it was proposed that vindication of Mr. Sharif will be a great loss for Imran Khan and will end the political career of Imran Khan. The same point was emphasized by another columnist that the future politics of Imran Khan rest greatly on the verdict of the Panama trial (Tariq Butt, March 31).

“Now there is left only one solution to every problem. Just eliminate corruption and then all problems will end and everywhere would be piousness and prosperity in abundance. But how one can believe in it? Your trust in corruption, capitalistic looting, and feudal exploitation is beyond any doubt, but its financier establishment is your empire and you make people wander under the darkness of load shedding in search of an introvert, truthful and honest man. The public is not so naïve to lose in your riddles” (Imtiaz Aalam, April 30). (See Appendix C33)

The columnist employs a satirical tone to counter Imran Khan’s narrative against corruption and proposes that eradication of corruption will not solve all the other problems of the society. On corruption charges against Mr. Sharif, Imran Khan’s denunciation of corruption as the major problem or prime evil that disintegrates the society might affect the public opinion and the legal judgment at the same time, that corruption is a serious crime and the guilty should be penalized. By connecting corruption with other social problems and emphasizing that the elimination of corruption will not change the circumstances and social conditions, the statement actually, minimizes the magnitude of the crime. When the existence or nonexistence of corruption does not have much impact and does not cause a great difference in society, then there is no need to give it much importance. It implies that if the charges against Mr. Sharif were true, still then not considerable damage has done to the country. So there is no need to create a fuss over this petty issue. The columnist asks a rhetorical question, ‘*is pr yaqeen kren tu kysy?*’ (How one can believe in this narrative?), and actually, discard off the narrative of Imran Khan by representing it as incredible. It suggests that the public is not imprudent like Imran Khan to believe in this narrative. The establishment was on his side and wanted to remove Mr. Sharif is presented as a fact. The columnist further asserts that the people are not so naïve to accept the narrative of Imran Khan. It is assumed that the masses were still with Mr. Sharif because, for them, the provision of electricity is more essential than the issue of corruption. These lines can be interpreted as a sort of warning that following Imran Khan and turning against Mr. Sharif, will curb the progress and growth in Pakistan. Moreover, the people will again have to bear the problem of load shedding. It proposes that only Mr. Sharif can provide the basic provisions or services to people.

The statement suggests that if someone considers the narrative of Imran Khan as true, he is naïve and destined to be strayed away. It implies that a sensible and wise person cannot accept Imran Khan's narrative. It also suggests that truthfulness and honesty are not essential for a political leader rather the provision of basic necessities of life should be the criterion for the selection of a leader.

To cut short, In *Jang*, the representation of Imran Khan is predominantly negative. He is described as a politician who is supported by the establishment, and though being in politics for decades, he still remains in pursuit of opportunities to get power. His sit-ins were labeled as illegal and he as selfish and self-centered. Furthermore, the Panama case was defined as an opportunity for Imran Khan to confiscate Mr. Sharif and reach power. It was predicted that the verdict of the Panama case would define his future politics. His inept remarks about the foreign players were provided as evidence to emphasize that he is an egoist and self-centered man. His narrative against corruption was dismissed off as unbelievable and insignificant and the readers were made to believe that only a naïve person can accept it, otherwise, it is not worth believing.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, I will say that representation of Imran Khan was subjective in *Jang* depending on the political inclinations of the columnists. In only one column, he was represented positively while in rest of the nine columns his representation was negative. The columnists who were in his favor, ascribed positive qualities to him and represented him as the better choice in the general election. Similarly, the negative representations were also influenced by political agenda and were proposed to damage his repute as a politician. His criticism of the plan of arranging the PSL match in Lahore was construed as his disloyalty not only to his profession but to the country also. His narrative on the Panama issue was identified as his strategy to find a shortcut for him. In this way, not only his demand for the resignation of the then prime minister was made unlawful and immoral but diminishes the offense of Mr. Sharif. Thus, to conclude, I will say that representation of

Imran Khan mirrors and publicizes the ideologies of the columnists particularly and of the newspaper's publishers in general. It is worth mentioning that the newspaper belongs to the group that is generally considered as pro-PML-N that was in government at that time. So, it can be assumed that the representation of Imran Khan as the opposition leader in the leading newspaper of the country was biased and expressed the ideologies of the government.

The findings of this research do not only answer the research questions of the study that how Imran Khan was represented in Pakistani Urdu newspaper and how his representation was ideologically loaded but also add to the existing knowledge of the role and impact of media in fabricating and circulating ideologies. By employing semantic analysis of Fairclough model (2003) of text analysis at sentence and discourse analysis, the study confirms that by presenting certain discourse (s) as fact or reality, ideologically embedded media representations create the identity of somebody or something in a certain way and work in favor of the powerful elites.

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