

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONTROVERSY OF MALALA AS DAUGHTER OF THE NATION IN PRINT MEDIA

**Muhammad Bilal Nawaz**

Assistant Professor, Department of Mass Communication, Lahore College for Women University,  
Lahore  
[bilal.nawaz@lcwu.edu.pk](mailto:bilal.nawaz@lcwu.edu.pk)

**M. Basharat Hameed<sup>1</sup>**

PhD Scholar, Media Studies, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur  
[peace.flame@gmail.com](mailto:peace.flame@gmail.com)

**Zakir Ullah Khan**

Director Research and Development, Daily Minute Mirror  
[zakir.khan@minutemirror.com.pk](mailto:zakir.khan@minutemirror.com.pk)

### ABSTRACT

*The present study looks at the Pakistan's print media coverage of Malala Yousafzai from 2012 till 2017, when she was attacked, ascended to international renown, got the Nobel Peace Prize and became the co-founder of the Malala Fund. The significance of this research is important because this research endeavors to argue the reality of Pakistani Media's coverage and campaign of Mala Yousafzei and how they supported or propagated Malala's image against western assumptions. This study adopts Edward Said's frameworks of Orientation and Occidentation to analyze the discourse of Pakistani print media. In this regard, this study delimits the articles published in Dawn and Daily Times to argue how the print media strengthened Muslims' and Pakistani society's traditional views and flouted stereotypes while portraying Malala as an international campaigner. This study concludes that Malala has been portrayed by the Pakistani Media as a heroine, western agent, victim, simultaneously, and eventually as a 'daughter of the nation'.*

**Keywords:** Critical discourse analysis (CDA), Malala, Orients, Occident, Print media.

### INTRODUCTION

Malala is one of the "most famous teenagers in the world," according to Kyle McKinnon (McKinnon, 2013). Malala Yousafzai was a 14-year-old girl who stood up to the rigid norms of the Taliban when they threatened the women's rights of education. She got shot on her head in return. Malala started to raise voice in favor of women's education rights. In the age of 11 years, she delivered a speech in Peshawar Press Club titled as "how dare the Taliban take away my basic right to an education". Malala has gained attention as one of the world's youngest and prominent activists in less than 10 years. She also participated as a co-author to write a book, which later on became the subject of numerous documentaries and media articles on national level as well as worldwide. She also delivered her opinions at various occasions in United States.

It is a persistent debate that whether Taliban hit Malala or it was Malala or her father who propagated all this matter. These facts are not the only unpleasant discussions about her. Multiple media perspectives about Malala's critics emerge, including one that shows her as a pawn controlled by media and also handled by a number of some official groups and militaries to "further their various agendas" (Mufti, 2014). The critics of Malala accuse her of being an effective spy of the West, an emerging agent of CIA and also a Western pawn with the goal of "demoralizing the tenants of Islam". Her Pakistani fans, on the other hand, associate her with Mother Teresa whose only aim is to speak and act "from a place of purity" (Mufti, 2014).

For years, researchers have examined Middle Eastern stereotypes in the mainstream press, particularly with respect to the women of Middle East. Researchers have been investigating

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<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author

misconceptions and their impact on media stories and public perception, whether it is about fallacies in Islam, the reality behind the labels of Muslims and Arabs or the rising spike in activity among the females of Middle East. After 9/11, a number of scholars began to focus on Islamophobia and started to analyze anti-Muslim and anti-Islamic discourses not only in United States but also in overseas as well (Kamalipour, 1995; Love, 2009; Semaan, 2014). Kamalipour (1995) found Middle East to be among those regions of the world that are usually stereotyped, misperceived and misread. (Kamalipour,1995). In his research, this study inspects the ramifications of depressive media images of the Middle East, along with Western preconceptions about the Middle Easterners

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Alsultany (2012) explores representation in the context of Arabs and Muslims, arguing that the both terms share a societal recognition. She discusses those fragmented chronicle and refers to the most important key contributing aspect: The classification and construction of the Arabs by the U.S government. In her narrative, she says that the opinion and media about Arabs and Muslims have been jumbled throughout history, especially since 9/11, eventuating into "construct of an evil other" (Alsultany, 2012). One of the challenges, according to Campbell et al. (2014), is that those who get the chance to tell the story to the world (particularly the media) do it from their own viewpoints and angles (Alsultany (2012). They argue that when different films and media show depicting minorities like Arabs appear on mainstream T.V, they often use the same perspective that, for decades, as an audience "we have been primed with" (Alsultany, 2012). Bullock and Jafri (2000) contributed towards the subject of Middle Easterner's media distortion by stating that the media is paying attention particularly on "veil" in both its denotative and connotative sagacity. Whereas the media does not dive into depth to find why women wear the hijab, they present it in such a way that creates a bad impression of women with hijab.

In Canadian media, for example, Muslim women are portrayed in a hateful manner, and these pictures reinforce that the Muslim women have been misrepresented negatively in "the popular media" (Bullock & Jafri, 2000). Both Jafri and Bullock (2000) claimed that Muslim women have been exhibited as a faraway strangers rather than Canadians by the Canadian Media. Despite the fact that the media is meant to be "unbiased and democratic, hence, the Muslim women are presented as Orientals or aliens. Bullock and Jafri (2000) revealed about the Canadian publications that it depicts the Muslim women of Canada to be the outsiders who wear hijab and are the supporters of the fundamentalists (Bullock & Jafri, 2000). According to their research, it is stated that Westerners possess a cultural preoccupation on the clothing of the Muslim women as a sign of subjugation. Their research asserted that these women are dedicated to transform current media depictions, but it is essential for the media to react favorably to these efforts.

Campbell et al. (2014) adds, our views are communicated by social discourse and we tend to communicate about and express our thoughts through socialization and institution (home, education, profession, etc). Our thoughts and discourse are connected to delineation observed in the present environment fully saturated by media, necessitating an examination of how prevailing cultural beliefs and ideas impact our perception all the way through social contexts with preponderant influence. It is explored by them that how the media is used to mould society's perspectives and, in some cases, the production of expert narratives that influence how society interacts with others and embraces these viewpoints. Whereas it is acknowledged by them that the media possess the capacity to influence behaviors and attitudes, it does not have the capability to entirely handle or account for our views, actions or choices. Media only influences how media text have been connected with and perceived by us (Campbell et al., 2014).

Finally, they address hierarchy in terms of gender, ethnicity, status and sexuality and portray the examples of how strong beliefs about individuals as well as collective experiences and viewpoints are established through different media platforms. They argue about how such delineation plays a major function in socio-reflective practices and why people and groups are subjected to preconceptions. As the authors suggested that these assumptions are frequently employed to enhance understanding regarding group interaction, these are also utilized to reestablish hegemonic control and prevailing beliefs (Campbell et al., 2014).

## **Theoretical Framework**

In this study the researcher will attempt to examine the media narratives through the angle of discourse analysis, by using Said's (1978) Orientalism as a framework for study. The discourse analysis would let the researcher to analyze the coverage of media in the newspapers and news networks to see if the discourse of media maintains or shatters stereotypes about Muslims and Pakistani culture, as stated in Said's key work regarding Orientalism (1978).

### **Occidentalism, Post Colonialism and Orientalism**

The seminal work Orientalism by Edward Said (1978) ignited debate concerning the term orientalism, which relates to Western perceptions toward the society of Middle East. Said (1978) stated that the West considers these cultures to be "rigid," "uncivilized," and much inferior to the Western cultures that are regarded to be superior. Said (1978) further implies that Orientalism is related to "knowledge of the other," who makes it, and provides the reason for why it is disseminated in the Western culture (Said, 1978). He claims that knowledge generation is the finest, biased and prejudiced, and that the resulting understanding is what influences the Western viewpoint. When the framework of Orientalism is used, those who belong to or live in the Eastern society are viewed as inferior by the Western people (Said, 1978).

Said's (1978) research, according to Shohat (2013), possessed the ability to change the concept of other from objectivity to subjectivity (Shohat, 2013). The research of Shohat (2013) expands on Said's (1997) research work with reference to usage of power-knowledge connection, including Cultural relativism in Said's (1997) work. In his research regarding Orientalism, Said (1997) examined the media's representations of the Muslim people governing Islam, arguing that journalists may be concealing the socio - political and economic reality of the Middle Eastern world, resulting in Orientalists' racial prejudices (Shohat, 2013).

According to Loomba (2005), people accept and replicate repressive regimes by agreeing to specific views of what is appropriate and what is abnormal (Loomba, 2005). Kerboua (2016) asserts on the notion of Orientalism which has been extensively addressed in the disciplines of social sciences and humanities, and it supports to understand a particular structure of Arab Muslim's region (Kerboua, 2016). Kerboua (2016) further says that Orientalism has transformed to pass on the new constructs of the Orient term, which possess undergone paradigm adjustments to become "neo-Orientalism."

### **Malala: Daughter of The Nation**

The researcher examined that how Malala Yousafzai was covered in Pakistani print media. There was a social divide in Pakistani discourse between her haters and admirers. The depiction of Malala as a Western spy, on the other hand, was prosaic, as neither newspaper concentrated upon that issue.

In this part, Middle Eastern Coverage will be analyzed. Occidentalism will be used by the researcher just like a framework to analyze Pakistani print media and to know how the west is being conceived and presented by non-Western. For this purpose, there have been included 32 articles taken from two major Pakistani newspapers published in English Language. Among them 17 articles is from the *Daily Times* whereas 15 articles have been taken from the Dawn.

Malala was represented by Dawn as a survivor, a victim and the nation's daughter, while on times, an attention seeker and an agent from the West. As Malala is represented as a survivor, a leading activist, and considered as a puppet of Western press, the researcher observed that the discourse of Pakistani media somehow deviates from the Western paradigm. The focus of a Western perspective would be upon Malala as Western agent, with hardly any consideration to what Malala has overcome and achieved.

Buruma and Margalit (2005) defined Occidentalism as the means by which the non-Westerners can become able to understand and interpret the West (Buruma and Margalit, 2005). On the other hand, Occidentalism was founded on Said's (1978) Orientalism studies regarding the Western behavior that the West carries toward the Middle East societies and Northern Africa region). Since Said's (1997) work motivates researchers to investigate texts and evaluate not just what is stated, but also what is not revealed by the media, it can be used to the evaluation of Pakistani media coverage. (Said, 1997; Friedman, 2008).

Although the media coverage concentrates on Malala as a victim of terrorism, but the most of it emphasizes upon Malala as the pride of nation. Significantly, there is not any indication of her as a Western spy or of her adversaries accusing her of attempting to westernize the country. According to an article in *Daily Times* entitled as "View: Class resumed" Malala's influence in Malala's classroom is very strong and her seat is not vacant rather school bag of Malala signifies Malala's presence (View,

2012, para. 1). A positive message by Chief Minister of Punjab Muhammad Shahbaz was published in another editorial in the Daily Times in which he declared Malala to be the daughter of the whole nation. It was she whose determination and courage made the Pakistanis a proud nation. Further of Malala said that Malala became the voice of those girls who had difficulty in getting education. The C.M said that all the daughters of Pakistan are like, "Malala Yousafzai who are courageous and determined, and are the asset of the nation." (Punjab CM, 2013)

Students in Swat liked Malala's speech presented at the UN General Assembly claiming that her speech has inspired all of them and strengthened all of their determination to secure education, according to Yusufzai (2013) from the Dawn (Yusufzai, 2013). The writer mentioned in an article from Dawn entitled as "Political parties, civil society shower praise on Malala" that not only the organizations from civil society but also the political parties have praised Malala a lot on securing the Noble Peace Prize due to raising her voice in favour of the girls' education.

Likewise, Yousaf (2013) of Dawn mentioned that her haters even agreed she was completely immersed in an uncontrollable tsunami of human emotions, notwithstanding how irritated Malala's native Country people were for Malala's spectacular climb to popularity. Yousaf (2013) went on to say that a few of her haters referred to Malala as "Cinderella and Snow White". The positive news about the imprisonment of the ten individuals guilty for Malala's murder attempt was covered in some different articles in the Daily Times. The article mentioned the gunshot, but also highlighted how Malala's murder attempt was a warm-up move for the other 130 school children, who were killed in Peshawar in December, 2014. That is the reason why apprehending and prosecuting the criminals of these horrible crimes against Pakistani children are so crucial (Some justice, 2015). Malala's heroism is discussed further in this article, with the author saying that Malala did not just survive the attack on her life, rather her return proved her to be a sign of resistance and an icon that was valued all over the world.

A writer from the Daily Times praised Malala's achievements and released a comment to refer back to the truth that Pakistan pursued to memorializing the day of Malala even if in quietness (due to Taliban's fear) with the purpose that whole world ought to come to realize that Malala's struggle has not been wasted rather the whole world is ready to embrace her "cause and spirit" (In solidarity, 2012). Furthermore, Usman Javaid states in "Malala and Nirbhaya: What Pakistan Can Learn from India" that it is a matter of luck for Pakistan that its lady who holds the flag of girls' education in the whole world has survived. Not only that rather she has resurrected as a harder lady to fight back against the hurdles and obstacles in her way regarding the equal opportunities of girls' education (Malala, 2013). The report of Daily Times on Malala is against Malala throughout the narrative. Hence, they started to avoid blaming the Taliban, meanwhile media does not hold on to Malala responsible for supporting and standing up with them.

Till moment, the discourse of Dawn as well as the Daily Times has been overwhelmingly positive in its portrayal of Malala, the victim of terrorist attack who is striving for educational rights of girls. While there is a particular remark of Malala being a Western spy, it is promptly disregarded and receives minimal media attention. Malala's suffering at stakes of the Taliban is denounced, and the coverage of media makes it clear that the people those who attempted to kill her were wrong, even if it isn't always said explicitly. The whole debate was in favour of Malala and centered on what she did for Pakistan was right.

The interpretation of Malala as a Western spy receives very little attention in Pakistani media. Instead, the media focuses on the significance of girl's education in Pakistan and supports Malala's campaigning activities. As a result, this discourse differs from that of Occidental discourse as it portrays Malala as a driving force for bringing good change in Pakistani society, rather than a Western spy whose job is humiliating Islam. While Malala had received prizes in her home country Pakistan prior to being shot, the media analyzed in this fragment focused towards awards and honors received by Malala for Malala's activism initiatives after she was attacked. This very instantly implies that Malala's murder attempt was attributed to her rapid notoriety in Pakistani society.

Three articles in the Daily Times and Dawn concentrated upon Malala's return to school in state of England, pledging to maintain Malala's struggle to ensure that children all over the world have the equal right to secure education all the way through Malala Fund. Malala Fund organization started using money she received from several humanitarian awards. Malala's statement regarding the abduction of Nigerian school students by Boko Haram was also published in both papers. The readers are introduced to Malala's image as a global advocate for females. Malala's visit to the former President

of America Barack Obama is discussed in the five articles, one of which is published in the Daily Times. Barack Obama stated about Malala that she, with her untiring and resolute struggle for girls' lawful right to get education, "inspired people around the world" (Obama greets, 2014).

When Malala met Veena Malik (Pakistani actress) during the premiere of "He Named Me Malala" was also highlighted by the Daily Times (Celebrity News, 2015). The Daily Times reported Malala's encounters with foreign leaders, as well as her receiving of the Liberty award 2014 in Philadelphia. Malala's appearance in Time magazine's list of top hundred most powerful people, Malala's victory of Nobel Peace Prize and Malala's fight for the legitimate right of children to get education while in the age of only 17 years have been also discussed in two separate articles of Daily Times. The stories go on to say that Pakistani people are pleased and proud of her victory, and that Malala has become a model of courage, strength, and perseverance who has enhanced Pakistan's reputation all across the globe (Politicians hail, 2014).

The writer of the Daily Times confronts that "the polemics against Malala," which "are grounded in patriarchal norms with the xenophobia of a world out there to destroy Islam and Pakistan" (N.A., 2014). This particular statement reflects the narrative of media of Malala's achievements. Those who criticize and blame Malala for being a Western spy or someone attempting to undermine Islam will find this statement to be the most vehement. This comment and feeling echoes the general storyline prevalent in Western media and put on a level of annoyance not seen elsewhere. Here we find an acknowledgement of what the Western press media has been condemning, but it is just a part of Pakistani society rather than the Pakistani society as a whole. This part has slipped behind the others and denies recognizing Pakistan's future.

We can see widespread public support and acceptance for Malala as a speaker and an activist with effective rebuttals to Occidental discourses in Pakistan in the above-mentioned discussion. In the case of Malala Yousafzai, we observe an effort to denigrate Occidentalism rather than the absence of Occidentalism. Although Pakistani discourse recognized the presence of the Western narrative, it makes a concerted effort to rebut it by its media coverage. Between the two medias (Pakistan and West), there is a divide. The difference, on the other hand, is not due to clashing Oriental and Western narratives but due to the Western media's concentration on this Oriental storyline. The Media of Pakistan has endeavored to deliver balanced and well-rounded media coverage.

The media discourse evolves once the reader encounters Malala an activist and a spokesperson, portraying Malala as a representative of children's rights to education. Malala is depicted as the hope for children's schooling particularly in Pakistan throughout the evaluation of the selected articles from the two renowned media platforms: Dawn and Daily Times. Both these papers focus on the importance of investing in education and Pakistanis' wish to be regarded for something apart from terrorism. Though fans of Malala shared their thoughts regarding other campaigners for being honored, they are all indeed proud of Malala's achievements.

Hussain (2013) writes in *The Dawn*, that certain questions were raised against the integrity, aims, intentions and humanitarian approach of Malala which really obscured her as "a symbol of education and civilization". It is stated by him that the indispensable reality is that Malala got attacked because she was used to believe that all young students including her have the right to attend school, and another fact is that highly-educated people in all over the Pakistan and west supported Malala and criticized the perpetrators who were against the children schooling and civilization. Hussain further writes about discourse regarding Malala that it does not merely reflect contemporary civilization but it also signifies the permanence of civilized heritage of the world. He mentions that Malala's struggle is not for a single creed or caste. Her struggle is free from race and religion. She is the voice of all the suppressed ones who are struggling to gain identity and equality, freedom and wisdom. "She represents those who triggered human creativity and innovation" (Hussain, 2013).

According to Hussain (2013), the orthodox approach is what led the people to feel that Malala is a Western spy. Her criticisms are discussed more frequently in *The Dawn's* Islam. Hussain extends on that saying that there are so many enemies of Malala in Pakistan due to the growth in her fame and fan following, but Malala is also that future of Pakistan that is ready to fulfill the lost dreams and is aspiring regain the position of emerging Pakistan "before extremism and intolerance took over,".

Islam (2013) asserts Malala continues to stand up for the sake of nation of literate children, liberated women, and respectable citizens, which can still arise if meaningful struggles are made to

overcome terrorist activities and put activists to knee, and that Malala's actual strength can sock terror into the minds of those people who stay at home and who would instead hold the entire nation into the depths of illiteracy and ignorance and that literacy is much needed not only as a fundamental right of the human beings but also that it is the literate people who are a constant threat to all those evil forces who are creating hindrance in the ways of getting education and are roaming "freely across Pakistan" (Islam, 2012).

Yusuf (2014) of the Dawn mentions that "We are reminded that Pakistan is a nation of Benazirs and Malalas" due to the noteworthy efforts of Malala and some other female activists (Yusuf, 2014). Malala's murder attempt, recuperation, and the sentimental behavior of those who stay at home and who "vow to carry on Malala's mission" and keep on praying for Malala's health are covered in three further Dawn articles. Malala is also praised by Cyril Almeida of The Dawn (2014) who says that "you can't help her but what you can do is to smile when you see her and hear her. Almeida (2014) says, "She is it, not just understand it as the physical manifestation of a concept. And what a brilliant concept it is" (Almeida, 2013).

Lastly, in another article in Dawn newspaper, Haider (2014) highlights Malala's mother, who recently got enrolled herself in a school and is finally became capable of speaking, reading, and writing English language a bit. All credit goes to her daughter's support and efforts. This post is an excellent example of Malala, the representative of children education. Malala's status as a model and an important figure in the field of education does not only reflect in her political activities around the world, but also in her personal life.

The discussion regarding Malala's attempts to promote the educational ideology continues to be favorable in the selected discourse. The positive coverage of Malala on the behalf of Pakistani media's reflects what has been observed in Western coverage — appreciation for Malala and criticism towards the Taliban and their followers. The media in the West not succeeded to distinguish between the nation of Pakistan and Taliban. In terms coverage of Pakistani media, however, the Taliban and their followers are separated from Malala and her sympathizers, as well as valid detractors of Malala. In an effort to depict Pakistani nation in a more respectable manner, Pakistani discourse portrays Malala as a representative of children education (Kalhor, 2013).

## CONCLUSION

As the lens for analysis, Orientalism fits Malala's representation in the Western media. However, when it comes to Malala's image in Pakistani media, implementation of Occidentalism is less relevant. Since Occidentalism (how non-Westerners interpret and portray the West) almost always brought up in discussions regarding Western nations, it may not have seemed that Pakistani media had been trying to attack or adversely portray Western culture in an attempt to undermine the West and their appreciation for Malala, as much as it was attempting to respond to how the West perceived Pakistan.

While the Daily Times' media coverage was mainly anti-Malala, in Dawn the media coverage appeared to be unbiased in depicting Malala. That's where Occidentalism should be included in the discussion regarding Orientalism. The existence of an Orientalist report in the Daily Times strengthens Western reputation of Malala as a sufferer and a hero who speaks up to her assailant. They do not, condemn Islam or lay blame at the Taliban for being terrorists, as the Western media does. They tend to play double sides, refusing to say anything that would alienate Malala supporters or critics.

In the case of Malala Yousafzai's representation in the Dawn, neither Occidentalism nor Orientalism is present. Rather, the narrative strives to present a diverse spectrum of Pakistani viewpoints along with the Western perspectives. A metanarrative presents alternate Occidentalism as well as Orientalist perspectives throughout the media coverage. They discuss both narratives in their article, but don't take a position on either side by the end. Furthermore, the coverage appears to be critical of the West's Orientalist paradigm. While the Western narrative focuses on Malala the daughter of nation, the report reveals that she's been pointed out in Western media, despite the fact that others in Pakistan and the Middle East and Northern Africa region have done or are attempting to do the same thing.

The Daily Times and The Dawn's praised Malala as the daughter of Pakistan and some part of the coverage recognized Malala as a hero for her achievements and subsequent awards. Even though the stories about Malala Yousafzai in Pakistani media coverage used a different perspective, the

narratives aimed to counter the adverse impression of the Muslims held by the Western nations by depicting Malala as the "daughter of the nation."

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