

## **A Comparative Analysis of the Coverage of the Arrest of Imran Khan and the May 09 incidents (Pakistan) in Global Media**

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### **Abstract**

*Mr. Imran Khan, former Prime Minister and Chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), was arrested on May 09, 2023, by the “paramilitary troops in riot-control gear” from the Islamabad High Court premises on account of corruption charges. The arrest did not sit well with the PTI supporters who took to the streets in agitation in all major cities of Pakistan. The protest turned into violent clashes between police and the PTI supporters in all four provinces, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Kashmir. Although Mr. Khan was released on May 12 on court orders his arrest and the subsequent incidents categorically disclosed the clash between Mr. Khan and the military establishment of the country. Pakistani and international media covered the issue and reported on its various aspects rigorously. Various narratives surrounding the arrest came out of its international coverage. This study is an attempt to explore and analyze various narratives that appeared in Al Jazeera (English), The Guardian, and daily The New York Times. Banking on the theoretical underpinnings of the Framing Theory we have employed content analysis to achieve this research objective. Our findings show that all three media outlets remained neutral, balanced and factually explicit in their coverage of the arrest of Mr Khan and the related subsequent incidents. The media outlets highlighted political violence, state aggression, political upheaval, the clash between Mr Khan and the military establishment of Pakistan, and the economic repercussions in the aftermath of the arrest and subsequent incidents.*

**Keywords:** Imran Khan, PTI, May 09 Incidents, Media Framing, Content Analysis, International Media

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### **1. Introduction**

Imran Khan became the prime minister of Pakistan after the general elections of 2018. In April 2022, Khan was ousted through a parliamentary no-confidence vote. Since his dismissal, Khan and the members of his party stand accused of more than 130 cases, while Khan himself has around 34 cases against him that range from contempt of court to terrorism. On May 9th 2023, as the head of *Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf* and the former Pakistani Prime Minister were taken into arrest by the National Accountability Bureau (Burney, 2023). The protests were called by some of the party workers in response to the arrest, which quickly turned violent, causing riots across the country and leading to significant damage to government and military buildings. The majority of the protests were directed at the military, and Pakistan rarely sees massive discontent to the extent that

military facilities are vandalised. Protesters repeatedly broke into the Pakistan Army's General Headquarters in Rawalpindi and set fire to the home of the corps commander in Lahore.

Demonstrators made attempts to vandalise the ISI headquarters when there were protests. As a result, the army turned to using weapons to scatter the demonstrators. According to ISPR, Imran Khan's detention was lawful as well as compliant with the law through its media arm. ISPR also denounced the demonstrators, calling it a "black day" and warning that anyone caught breaking the law would face harsh punishment. Fawad Chaudhry responded by saying that the ISPR shouldn't judge the "legality" of Khan's arrest, and PTI denied any participation in the most recent acts of protest-related violence. The law enforcement organisations had to get involved, leading to the arrest of leaders, employees, and supporters of PTI, as well as people regarded in the media and legal community as being on the side of the party. People claimed to be targeted by the government in retaliation. The incident also caused nationwide mobile internet blockage and a crackdown (*The Express Tribune*, 2023 June 1).

As an aftermath of the 9 May incident, to properly examine the complaints filed in connection with the May 9 riots, the Punjab Home Department established 53 Joint Investigation Teams (JITs) made up of police personnel. With the support of the Punjab cabinet subcommittee on law and order, many JITs were created. To assist with the investigation, the prosecution department assigned a prosecutor to each JIT (*Dawn*, 2023 May 28). The riots on May 9 had a profound impact on Pakistan's political climate generally. Thousands of PTI workers and leaders were imprisoned as part of a crackdown, and rights organisations expressed alarm about arbitrary arrests, torture in detention centres, and forced disappearances. In televised news conferences, PTI leaders were made to resign from their posts within the party (Hasnain, 2023). Leaders of the PTI who remained in the party had their businesses shut. Police and military intelligence forces harassed the families of PTI leaders who hid themselves away (*Dawn*, 2023 June 12; Shah, 2023).

Following the riots, following a notification from the interior ministry, led by Rana Sanaullah, access to social media websites including Facebook, Twitter (now X), and YouTube was also restricted. Pakistan Telecom Authority enforced both the blocking of the internet and social media. Khawaja Asif, the defence minister, stated "the script of the May 9 violence was prepared via social media," (Shah, 2023).

Imran Khan was arrested on May 9th, and the Pakistani Supreme Court ruled that this was against the law (*Davies*, 2023). After Khan's legal team argued that his imprisonment was illegal, the judge ordered that he be released right away. Khan was detained at the Islamabad High Court by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), as stated by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, using paramilitary personnel, which was against the law and had a "chilling effect,". The Supreme Court gave Imran Khan the go-ahead to show up before the Islamabad High Court on May 12. Khan was granted two weeks' bail by the Islamabad High Court, preventing a re-arrest on the alleged allegations. Additionally, a court ruling states that he cannot be arrested for any allegations brought against him for a week. The corruption allegations against Mr Khan continue to stand despite these decisions. In his first press conference following his release on May 13th, Khan severely criticised the involvement of the military in politics and proposed that it establish a separate political entity. Khan strongly criticised the way the military treated his party's leaders and workers and drew parallels between the present crackdown and the East Pakistani events that caused the country to become divided, warning that these types of actions could have serious consequences (Baloch & Ellis-Petersen, 2023). On May 15, at GHQ, General Munir presided over a Special Corps Commanders Conference. General Munir reaffirmed his commitment to seeing that those who commit severe crimes against military facilities, troops, or equipment are held accountable through

the conference. He emphasised that cases under the Pakistan Army Act and Official Secret Act would be used to try such people, including Imran Khan.

Global media has focused on the possible repercussions of Khan's arrest, portraying rising hostilities between Khan and the civil-military leadership as well as the implications for Pakistan's political system and relations with other countries. According to Time, Khan's imprisonment may have caused tension between him and the civilian and military leaders of the nation. The arrest, according to Michael Kugelman, director of the South Asia Institute at the Wilson Centre in Washington, marks a significant uptick in the long-running conflict between Khan and Pakistan's political establishment. According to CNN, paramilitary personnel forcibly entered the grounds of the Islamabad High Court and detained Khan as he was giving his biometric information for a court appearance. The atmosphere was described as chaotic. To capture him, they shattered a window, making a spectacular scene.

Some political analysts, attorneys, and journalists have criticised Khan's detention due to concerns about the way he was apprehended. Lawyers have questioned the arrest's legitimacy because it was carried out by a paramilitary group, even though the Islamabad court has considered the arrest lawful. A mini-intifada, or unplanned, spontaneous uprising against the military regime, was sparked by the action taken against a political leader in Pakistan, according to Indian writer Praveen Swami, who wrote about the incident on his blog. Swami further emphasised that a sizable number of ardent PTI followers, including those with military ties, had voiced their opposition to Khan's detention (Swami, 2023). As a result of the potentially volatile situation, the military made the correct decision to evacuate its guards, preventing the feared violence that may have perhaps produced dissension among its ranks.

This whole situation and the interest of global media in it make it worth studying. Therefore, in this study, we have attempted to explore and analyze the coverage of the arrest of Mr Imran Khan and the subsequent incidents in *Al Jazeera* (English), *The Guardian*, and daily *The New York Times*. Our main research question is; how did the selected global media outlets cover the arrest of Mr. Imran Khan and the subsequent incidents after May 09, 2023? Our main objective is to explore and analyze various narratives about the arrest of Mr Imran Khan and its subsequent incidents that appeared in *Al Jazeera* (English), *The Guardian*, and daily *The New York Times*.

## 2. Literature Review

Pakistan has encountered momentous political events and constitutional dilemmas. Majorly; the regime change operation that took place through the vote of no confidence on April 10, 2022. This Political shift has led to critical polarization, large-scale movements against the government and establishment, and the dissolution of two provincial assemblies to push for early federal elections. The provincial elections are held within ninety days after the dissolution of the assembly. The date was not announced, and Pakistan's Supreme Court ordered it to hold elections as per the constitution (Saleemi, 2023). The implementation of the regime-change plan led to a constitutional crisis, economic variability due to a decline in foreign exchange reserves, soaring inflation and devaluation of national currency. The major concern for policymakers is to secure a \$1.1 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to prevent evasion. Political Instability is posing a hindrance to financial agreements with global lenders (Saleemi, 2023).

Saleemi (2023) applied the behavioural perspective to model yields on investments during the political instability in Pakistan. The researcher focused on micro-blogging opinionated information, particularly tweeting data to understand the pattern of opinionated information in various fields including economics (Guijarro et al., 2019; Oliveira et al., 2017; Saleemi, 2020). Incoming information can wield an authoritative impact on stocks' yield Bartov et al. (2018),

Broadstock and Zhang (2019), (Grob -Klubmann & Hautsch, 2011). Guijarro et al. (2021) Oliveira et al., (2013), and Sprenger et al., (2014) collectively emphasized the valuable content that micro-blogging text provides for sentiment analysis. Understanding market sentiment is crucial for understanding investor behaviour, and the review highlights the consensus among researchers that micro-blogging platforms are valuable channels for spreading stock-related information. The opinionated nature of this content acts as a guide for investors in decision-making processes, potentially leading to significant yields on investments (Bank et al., 2019; Prokofieva, 2015). The extraction of sentiment indicators from micro-blogging comments is shown to offer insights into asset price movements several days in advance (Smailovic et al., 2013).

Imran et al., (2023) in their research paper articulated that political instability has grown to be a serious global issue, particularly in the poorest and most unstable nations in the world. This is a serious issue that is impeding these nations' ability to thrive. Social cohesion and the legitimacy of the government are maintained through stable politics. The stability of the political system has a direct effect on the processes of state-building and nation-building. Maintaining political stability is essential for the smooth operation of the government. Political unrest hinders both foreign diplomacy and international trade because investors are hesitant to take a chance on their money in nations with unreliable governments. Due to a collapse in law enforcement and an increase in criminal activity, the general populace grows more anxious and uneasy when a nation experiences political unrest.

Political instability is becoming a major issue, particularly for developing nations (Ahmadani and Noonari, 2020). A state's capacity to modernize or become modern is directly impacted by the degree of political stability in that state (Tabassam et al., 2016). To guarantee economic development, a fundamental understanding of political stability is required. The connection between political stability and economic growth has been the subject of numerous research (Rani & Batool, 2016). Pakistan must experience political stability for its tax burden to be comparatively low about its GDP. It has been accused of impeding emerging nations' economic growth and, in some cases, even fueling political unrest in those nations (Memon et al., 2011). Because of this, political instability has become a major issue in some countries. It might affect the economy by deterring investment and inciting political unrest. As a result, risks rise, the economy becomes more erratic, and investment levels decline. Studies show that political unrest is linked to higher rates of inflation (Sohail et al., 2022).

However, the nation's public debt has slowed the rate of economic expansion and the growth cycle. One of the main causes of political instability is price hikes. Any country that experiences inflation will see an increase in the price of commodities produced; in Pakistan, this effect is particularly pronounced in the export industry (Salahuddin & Awan, 2017). This has led to changes in the tax structure. Pakistan is experiencing political instability due to several factors that include the concentration of power, the inclination for family leadership, the totalitarian administrations and the assertive style of leadership. However, holding free and fair elections, inviting political parties to work together for the nation's development, respecting and implementing the constitution are all important ways to lessen political instability in Pakistan (Ismail & Rashid, 2014). Political instability has led to a rise in political polarization inside political parties (Taha, 2012).

Political stability is a necessary condition for the commencement of the nation-building process, which is vital to a nation's survival and development. Nation-building serves two functions: first, it aids in a country's identity development, which promotes social integration; second, it aids in a state's administrative infrastructure development. Political stability has an impact on the social, economic, and political domains. Pakistan is an example of severe political instability; it is a nation

endowed with an abundance of natural resources, rich terrain, bright people, a vital strategic location, and the capacity to build nuclear weapons (Jiskani et al., 2020). The cohesion and equal pursuit of national goals that define societies in industrialized states are absent from Pakistani society. The main cause is the strong leadership that has moulded society's characteristics. The organization of authority is driven by ideology rather than communities, sects, or ethnic groups. The elective leadership of a country reflects the views held by the general populace (Bowlsby et al., 2020).

People who have made educational investments are more likely to work toward improving their country and society. Political instability ultimately has the negative effect of splitting society along many lines when many segments of society are unhappy with government activities and a climate of distrust permeates society as a whole. The uneven effects of rapid social and economic participation and the deep-rooted involvement of the military and civil bureaucracy are the primary causes of the problem of political instability in the context of Pakistan's identity and legitimacy challenges (Bano et al., 2019). Pakistan has already suffered great losses as a result of political turmoil, including the split of its East Wing, and internal conflicts persist (Rauf et al., 2016).

Every federating unit is feeling the effects of political instability, but Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are particularly hard hit. The volatility creates difficulties for policymaking, integrating into global politics and the economy, and getting support from other countries in the national security, societal cohesion, and economic spheres. An unsteady political climate prevents the development of coherent counterterrorism tactics and policies (Hakro & Ghumro, 2007).

The reviewed literature suggests that the political situation in a country is directly related to the country's economy and stability and the media play an important role in this situation. This study is an attempt to explore and analyze how did the selected media outlets cover the issue of the arrest of Mr. Imran Khan and what kind of narratives the media outlets raised about the issue.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

#### **3.1. Framing Theory**

Introduced by Erving Goffman (1974) framing theory concentrates on the presentation of topics or occurrences, emphasizing the organization of experience of individual actors rather than the organization of society. Our worldview, shaped by our experiences, stories, and myths, is the basis for our worldview, and any frame must align with this perspective for resonance (Goffman 1974; Lakoff, 2004). Though the concept of framing has been repeatedly used by many researchers they have used it in accordance to their understanding or the way it suits their frame of work. Chong and Druckman's "Framing Theory" explores framing effects, where small changes in an issue's presentation can lead to significant opinion shifts (Chong & Druckman, 2007). According to Iyengar (1996), the influence of culture or ideological background on the attribution of responsibility cannot be denied when analyzing framing (Raza et al., 2023).

The effect of frames can be measured by framing the same issue in multiple ways and gathering people's opinions on it. Entman provides an ordered explanation of the functions of frames by classifying and categorizing the literature on the idea to clarify framing. Frames are capable of problem definition, cause and effect diagnosis, moral judgment, and remedy suggestion. In 2004, he highlighted the wickedness of the Taliban administration and the necessity of war by using 9/11 as an example (Entman, 1993 & 2004).

Gitlin argues that media frames, often silent and unsung, shape the world for journalists reporting it and for the media consumers relying on their reports. Journalists may not always be aware of the frequency and context of using certain words or phrases, leading to the use of frames without cognitive intention (Gitlin, 1980; as cited in Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). Matthes' study on

media framing from 1990-2005 reveals researchers use both issue-specific or generic frames, with issue-specific frames unique to specific events and generic frames spanning multiple issues (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

Keeping in view the relevance and suitability we have banked on the theoretical underpinnings of the framing theory to explore and analyze the 'frames' employed by the selected media outlets to highlight various aspects of the arrest of Mr. Imran Khan and the subsequent incidents.

#### **4. Research Methodology**

##### **4.1.Data Collection**

Keeping in view the objectives of the study we have selected three world-famous and influential media outlets; *Al Jazeera* (English), *The Guardian*, and daily *The New York Times*. To analyze their coverage of the issue under study we have purposively selected initially published two news items from all the media outlets. Data has been selected and downloaded from the media outlets' websites. So, a total of six news items have been analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to address the research question under study.

##### **4.2.Data Analysis**

We have employed qualitative and quantitative content analysis as a research methodology to achieve the research objective in this study.

##### **4.3.Content Analysis**

There are numerous meanings of content analysis. Walizer and Wienir (1978) characterize it as any methodical strategy concocted to inspect the substance of recorded data; Krippendorff (2004) characterizes it as an examination procedure for making replicable and substantial references from information to their specific circumstance. Kerlinger's (2000) definition is genuinely regular: A content examination is a technique for considering and breaking down correspondence in an orderly, objective, and quantitative way to quantify factors. Kerlinger's definition includes three concepts that require elaboration.

To begin with, a satisfactory investigation is efficient. Test determination should follow the appropriate methodology, and everything should have an equivalent possibility of being remembered for the analysis. There should be consistency in the coding and examination systems and in the time, coders are presented with the material. Systematic evaluation means that only one set of evaluations is used for guidelines. There should be no biased opinion in the content analysis because it should be objective and if someone else is using the same way and material of research, the results should be the same. Content analysis is quantitative because the reason behind that is, measurement permits researchers to sum up results and report them briefly.

Describing the communication content, exploring and testing the message characteristics, and comparing the media content with the real world are some of the very significant uses of content analysis. In this research, the content analysis has been used for these three explicit purposes i.e. to explore, describe, analyze, and compare the media content related to the arrest of Mr. Imran Khan and the subsequent incidents.

#### **5. Findings and Analysis**

##### **5.1.Analysis of *Al Jazeera*;**

The first news item from the sample of *Al Jazeera* was published May 10, 2023, under the headline; "Imran Khan arrest: Army called in as Pakistan protests continue". The headline of this news item by *Al Jazeera* contains 10 words. The headline carries a negative connotation. It mentions the arrest of Imran Khan, the involvement of the army, and ongoing protests in Pakistan. The use of words like "arrest," "protests," and "Army called in" tends to suggest a situation of unrest and instability, which typically carries a negative tone in news reporting.

While analyzing the paragraph quantitatively, the first paragraph of this news story contains 74 words out of which 8 words hold negative connotations like “deadly unrest”, “attacks”, “violence”, and “storm” for the ongoing happenings. 1 positive adjective “popular political leader” is used while describing Imran Khan and that too is written along its source “according to polls”. Out of 74 words, 8 words are seen to be against the current on-goings and only 1 is seen to be positive that described Imran Khan. Qualitatively, this paragraph is seen to be describing the whole incident using negative words evident in the paragraph above. This portrays that this paragraph of the editorial emphasizes the negative actions taken throughout the protests which is evident through the usage of overt words like “deadly unrest”, “attacks”, “violence”, “storm”, “ransack” etc., and claims that the protestors are at fault and responsible for promoting violence.

The word count of the next paragraph is 112 words out of which 11 words and phrases used hold negative connotation that contribute to being against the on-goings and Imran Khan. Negative phrases like "will be met with severe retaliation", stern action, "civil war", and organized attacks, are used to describe the outcomes of the protests labelling it as a "black chapter". The minimal presence of words in favour shows that this paragraph is speaking against the actions. Qualitatively, the paragraph states that the outcomes of the ongoing protests are seen to be unfavourable and had mentioned a warning beforehand. Usage of phrases like "will be met with severe retaliation", stern action, "civil war", “organized attacks,” and “black chapter” depicts that the paragraph talks against Imran Khan and Alley and is disseminating the Army’s warning and word.

The next paragraph contains 114 words out of which 12 words and phrases are seen to be in negative connotation and against Imran Khan. While only 2 words are positive and in favour. The presence of words like “held”, “raged”, “The former international cricket star is now being held in a police guesthouse in Islamabad,” “Indicted” “guilty” “illegally selling state gifts” etc., makes this paragraph speak against Imran Khan and his tenure. Qualitatively, the paragraph states that “Imran Khan has been given under the custody of NAB”, and soon after it states that “The former international cricket star is now being held in a police guesthouse in Islamabad.” This sentence from the paragraph speaks against Imran Khan and takes up a taunting tone. The paragraph ends with “Imran Khan found guilty of illegally selling state gifts and has been barred from elections”, which speaks against the actions of Imran Khan making this paragraph of the editorial speak against him based on these phrases highlighted.

The word count of the next paragraph is 68 words out of which 7 words are seen to be speaking against the government of Imran Khan. Words like “accused” “country's peace at stake” “torching” “violence” were used against in this particular context. No single word in this paragraph is seen to be in favour of Imran Khan. While analyzing qualitatively, the paragraph is seen to be reporting against Imran Khan by mentioning the terms that have been mentioned above, claiming that Imran Khan and his protestors are responsible for the violence and damages that are being carried out, fulfilling the claim that this part of the editorial does not speak in favour.

The next paragraph contains 210 words out of which most words are in favor since it displays the claims made by the PTI party members. The paragraph ended with a sentence “More than 145 policemen have been injured in clashes with protesters, said the police in a statement” which can be coded as a negative connotation to the whole paragraph of the editorial. Qualitatively, this paragraph has taken the views of the party members, which convey defensive claims. This can be analyzed as the newspaper covering all the aspects and being neutral and covering all the sides. Upon conclusion of this paragraph, it ended with an allegation on the protestors mentioning “More

than 145 policemen have been injured in clashes with protesters, said the police in a statement” which spoke against the incident that is being talked about marking it as unfavourable.

The next paragraph contains 117 words out of which 10 were notably against and 4 were speaking in favor of Imran Khan. Words and phrases that were speaking against like “removed” “removal” “Such scenes were never seen by the people of Pakistan,” “unforgivable” “violence” and the ones in favour “Khan, a cricket hero-turned-politician” “not slowed his campaign” “attack on his convoy” “wounded”. While qualitatively analyzing the paragraph, it starts with a sympathetic and favourable tone towards Imran Khan by mentioning him as “Khan, a cricket hero-turned-politician” “wounded” “not slowed his campaign” “attack on his convoy” but later takes an unfavourable turn by mentioning Shehbaz Sharif’s comment on the on-goings and using the word “unforgivable.” This paragraph is being neutral in terms of reporting the favourable and unfavourable side of the story.

The paragraph has a word count of 284 words out of which 17 words and phrases are exclusively against Imran Khan “arrested” “corruption” “unrest” “violence” “under-arrest” etc. and hold a negative meaning while no words are in favor of him. Qualitatively, this paragraph contains views of the opposition leaders like Nawaz Sharif, which clearly states the claims as unfavourable for Imran Khan. Alongside it also states lawyers’ point of view on Imran Khan’s arrest by supporting it with logic. The terms used against Imran Khan, as mentioned above, fulfil the claim that this paragraph has a reporting language which is against Imran Khan.

This was a news piece by *Al Jazeera* which had a word count of 1064 words with the headline “Imran Khan arrest: Army called in as Pakistan protests continue”. The headline displays a negative connotation. It mentions the arrest of Imran Khan, the involvement of the army, and ongoing protests in Pakistan. The use of words like “arrest,” “protests,” and “Army called in” suggests a situation of unrest and instability, which typically carries a negative tone in news reporting. The rest of the editorial has 72 words which are against and 18 in favour which sums up that this particular editorial is speaking against Imran Khan and contains facts that are not favoring him. On the other hand, it also had a neutral tone of reporting at some points since it covered wider perspectives including opposition leaders as well as PTI party members, lawyers against and in favour of him, labelling him as a national hero at some places while in other places the alleged him responsible for the on-going riots in the country. *Al Jazeera* typically covers news stories comprehensively, providing content analysis in multiple perspectives.

The next news item selected from *AL Jazeera* was published May 12, 2023, under the headline; “Pakistan ex-PM Imran Khan granted bail after ‘invalid’ arrest”. The headline contains 10 words. The tone leans towards a factual and objective display of the events related to Imran Khan’s arrest and bail. The use of the term “invalid” suggests a legal flaw in the arrest, focusing on the court’s decision. The headline seems neutral since it highlights the legal aspect of the situation, indicating that the arrest was legally challenged leading to bail being granted to Khan.

The word count of the first paragraph is 103 words out of which words in favour are 5 words including “granted bail” “granted” “not to arrest him in the case” “could not be arrested” while the ones which had negative connotations were 4 words “former” “deadly clashes” “illegal” “violent riots”. An equal number of favourable and unfavourable words makes it neutral in tone. Imran Khan’s name is mentioned multiple times throughout the paragraph, creating a high focus on his actions, legal situation and presence in court. The use of direct quotes from his lawyers adds depth and authenticity to the information provided. While analyzing it qualitatively, the tone of this paragraph is factual and neutral. It is informative, focusing on presenting the events surrounding Imran Khan’s bail and the court rulings without injecting individual opinions or emotional bias.



Clear positive or negative language is absent, maintaining an objective stance while straightforwardly conveying the happenings.

The next paragraph contains a word count of 154 words out of which 8 words and phrases are overtly seen to carry a negative connotation like “entangled” “defiant” “accusation” “explosive claims” “shaky incumbent” etc. while containing 4 words and phrases that are in favour “wildly popular” “fired tear gas on protestors” “backtracked” “unlawful arrest”. While analyzing this paragraph qualitatively, the tone of this paragraph contains more negative but also positive connotations and is seen to deliver multiple perspectives. Imran Khan is depicted as “entangled” in a series of legal issues, which carries a negative connotation. The description of Khan launching a “defiant” campaign against the military and accusing the “incumbent coalition government” and top generals portrays conflict and distrust relating to Khan. The atmosphere of tension is conveyed through the mention of protests, tear gas fired at protesters, and the contradicting actions between different courts regarding Khan's arrest which speaks in favour of Khan. While speaking in favour, the paragraph briefly mentions Khan's popularity, pointing towards a positive sentiment of him among the public. Overall, as there are some elements mentioning Khan's popularity, most of the paragraph focuses on legal issues, conflicts, accusations, violent incidents, and tensions, resulting in an overall negative or tense reporting tone.

The word count of the next paragraph is 113 words. It contains the viewpoint of Imran Khan on the on-goings containing words full of “accusations and blame,” which makes this passage's tone negative. Imran Khan is seen “blaming” the army's commander for the situation in the country. Accusations convey a negative or conflicting tone. The paragraph portrays a “conflict” between Khan and the army chief, indicating a fear from the army chief that Khan might remove him from his position, if in power. This suggests “tensions and power struggles” between both. The paragraph does not describe Khan in a negative light. Blaming a top military official, claiming a lack of democracy within the army and arguing at power struggles contribute to an overall negative reporting tone.

The word count of the next paragraph is 104 words out of which 11 words and phrases like “chaos” “unrest” “setting fire to buildings and blocking roads” “injured” “arrested” etc., are seen to hold a negative connotation and speaking against Imran Khan while no evident word spoke in favour. While analyzing the tone of the paragraph, it begins by highlighting the chaos triggered by Imran Khan's arrest, including words like “violence” “buildings set on fire” “blocked roads” and “casualties.” Mention of such events along mentioning deaths, injuries to police officers and the number of arrests emphasizes the negative impact of the chaos which carried a negative connotation contributing to a negative tone as well. Referring to Al Qadir trust case relates to the Legal controversies of Khan which again carried a negative implication. Overall, the paragraph emphasized chaos, casualties, injuries, and arrests contribute to a negative reporting tone.

The word count of the next paragraph is 112 words out of which 5 words are in against while 5 words or phrases are speaking in favour of Imran Khan. Negative connotations like “corruption” “launder” “causing a loss” etc., give the paragraph a negative tone. Chief Justice's statement about the arrest being “invalid” and the need to “backtrack” the process, is more “neutral” from a legal point of view since it contains a procedural issue and not a subjective approach. The paragraph includes negative elements such as “allegations of corruption,” “financial losses,” “illegal arrest,” and “security measures,” which contribute to a more negative tone in the reporting. The paragraph does not carry clear positive or negative remarks towards Imran Khan. The presence of neutral elements, like the legal ruling relating to arrest, balances the tone but does not completely shift it towards a more positive perspective.

The word count of the next paragraph is 128 words. Following are the words and phrases considered as codes that show the editorial has a negative tone towards the PTI and Imran Khan; “ban on the public protests” highlights a situation of restriction and political tension, carrying a negative tone. The quote from Khan's Lawyer about the government's actions not being cooperative adds to the favourable tone, suggesting dissatisfaction and a lack of cooperation of the political parties for PTI. The passage included Khan's Lawyer's perspective and opposition leader Sanaullah's, making it cover multiple perspectives but slightly negative. The passage includes negative elements such as a ban on gatherings, arrests, dissatisfaction expressed by Khan's lawyer, and refusal to back down by the Interior Minister. There is a lack of clear neutral elements leading to a negative and tense reporting tone. • The tone of this concluding paragraph is informative yet critical. This part of the editorial portrays a historical perspective while highlighting the challenging nature of the political confrontation with the military's influence and how it rare it is in Pakistan and explicitly states factual information.

### **Analysis on daily *The Guardian*;**

The first news item from the sample of daily *The Guardian* was published May 10, 2023, under the headline; “Former PM Imran Khan appears before judge amid uproar in Pakistan”. The reporting tone in the headline is neutral and objective. The language conveys information about Khan's legal proceedings, highlighting his appearance before a judge despite the situation of uproar in Pakistan. The use of terms like "appears before a judge" maintains an objective tone, presenting the information without explicit favouritism or criticism towards Imran Khan.

The tone of the introductory passage by *The Guardian* is neutral yet slightly unfavourable, providing factual information about Khan's recent arrest and appearance in court. The use of phrases such as "former prime minister Imran Khan has been presented before a judge" and "indicted on Wednesday by the Islamabad high court in a separate corruption case" while referring to Khan, mention of corruption cases conveys a slightly negative tone yet factual reporting style without expressing positive or negative bias and absence of evaluative language. The passage focuses on the events surrounding Khan's arrest gives information objectively and maintains a neutral reporting tone. Overall, the passage appears to refrain from talking bias, in favour of or against Khan, presenting the facts regarding the situation.

In the next passage, the language used to describe the actions of Khan, his arrest and its aftermath is factual focusing on the events without explicitly conveying a positive or negative bias. The language is straightforward, stating that Khan "has been presented before a judge at a police station in Islamabad" after his arrest. The use of passive voice in "has been presented" adds a sense of objectivity. The mention of the Tosha Khana case and the election commission's conclusion about "corrupt practices" is reported factually. The language is clear when discussing the consequences of the Tosha Khana case, mentioning that if found guilty, Khan is "likely to be disqualified from politics." This is presented as a legal outcome rather than an editorial opinion. On the other hand, it mentions incidents of violence, and clashes after Khan's arrest, factually presenting these events but also directly labelling the protestors as “violent” or “aggressive”. Even though the paragraph presents a neutral and factual tone providing details about Imran Khan's legal situation and its aftermath, it also describes the overall actions of the protestors as “violent”.

The tone of the next passage is neutral and objective providing details about Khan's arrest and its circumstances. The language used maintains objectivity and does not overtly express a positive or negative stance. The mention of Khan's lawyer raising concerns about the right to a fair trial and the lack of access to the NAB's inquiry report is reported objectively. The statements from protestors reflect their determination to support Khan without explicitly taking a stance. The

language used to describe the events such as protesters throwing stones, setting a motorcycle alight, and the police responding with teargas suggests protestors and police clash, this presents sympathy towards the protestors yet maintains an objective tone.

The allegations that members of PTI were being prevented from meeting Khan and a crackdown on the party are framed using terms like "crackdown" and "intimidation," contributing to a sense of oppression towards the party members showcasing the government and police department as oppressive. The illegal arrests of members also contribute to the same tone. Overall, the language used in this passage creates a narrative that throws a critical light on the arrest and the government's aggressiveness towards PTI.

The reporting tone in the last passage tends to be factual, presenting information about the ongoing protests. The closure of schools and universities, along with the shutdown of mobile internet and social media platforms, is reported objectively as part of the measures taken in response to the protests. The statement from the (ISPR) is presented without taking a stance on its credibility, and the use of terms like "alleging" and "conspiracy" maintains a neutral tone, allowing readers to form their interpretations. Ahsan Iqbal is seen to be using a language that blames PTI for making the country turn into a war zone, which tilts towards unfavourable language for Khan and his supporters.

The second news item from the sample of daily *The Guardian* was published May 11, 2023, under the headline; "Pakistan supreme court rules arrest of Imran Khan was illegal". The headline leans towards a positive stance on the arrest of Imran Khan. The language used indicates a factual presentation of the Supreme Court's ruling, focusing on the illegality of Imran Khan's arrest. The term "illegal" carries a positive connotation for Khan and questions the rule of law.

The reporting tone of the introductory passage is slightly negative and critical, highlighting issues related to Khan's arrest and framing the court's response in favour of Khan.

The reporting tone in this passage highlights a positive development for Khan and (PTI). The use of terms like "significant triumph" suggests a positive view of the outcome focusing on the release of Khan from custody. The passage determines the court's decision to allow Khan to stay in a police guesthouse with protection and the government's condemnation of this decision, labelling Khan's release as a victory in the current political conflict. The language used to describe the government's response particularly the Interior Minister's statement about re-arresting Khan adds a layer of tension and future conflict. In conclusion, the reporting tone is generally positive towards Imran Khan, portraying his release as a victory for PTI.

The reporting tone in the next passage is neutral providing facts about Khan's relationship with the military along with accusations and denials. The military's denial of these accusations is presented as straightforward. The passage then shifts to a more positive tone when discussing Khan's popularity which has ascended since his removal from power. The use of the term "celebrations on the streets by his supporters" suggests a positive response to the court declaring his arrest illegal. Overall, while there is a nuanced portrayal of Khan's relationship with the military, the tone leans towards the positive when highlighting his popularity and the positive reactions from his supporters.

The reporting tone in the next passage is mainly negative in describing the reaction of the protestors as "violent". Describing the actions as a "crackdown" and highlighting the detention of party members. The passage outlines incidents that contribute to the negative yet sympathetic tone, such as the "arrests being carried out despite protective bail: the "filing of cases against PTI leaders for alleged attacks", "the deployment of the army in response to violence", and the casualties and injuries during clashes between protesters and police, this portrays the injustice being done with

the party members and protestors despite them having a right to protest. The mention of seven people being killed in Peshawar, the ransacking of government offices, and attacks on the prime minister's residence adds to the overall negative portrayal of the protestors. Overall, the tone of the passage is critical of the actions taken against PTI and presents an unfavourable image of the situation, contributing to a negative overall impression.

The reporting tone in the last paragraph is more in favour of Prime Minister Sharif's approach to addressing the unrest in Pakistan. The use of phrases such as "strongly worded address," "issued a warning to the rioters," and "dealt with iron hands" conveys a tone of authority towards the opposing party. He labels the on-goings as "terrorist activities" which contribute highly unfavourable towards PTI and its supporters. The focus on safeguarding the nation and its ideology as something "more precious than their lives" strengthens the assertive tone. On the other hand, the mention of the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, calling for "all parties to refrain from violence" introduces a more neutral and diplomatic tone.

#### **6. Analysis of daily *The New York Times*;**

First news item from the sample of daily *The New York Times* was published May 10, 2023, under the headline; "Pakistan's Ousted Leader Is Arrested on Corruption Charges". The reporting tone is slightly negative yet factual, presenting information about the arrest of Pakistan's ousted leader. The use of the term "corruption charges" indicates that the arrest is based on allegations of corruption but the headline doesn't "explicitly" favour or oppose Khan, maintaining an objective and informative tone. Readers are provided with details about the arrest without any obvious bias. The introductory paragraph includes 87 words. The use of terms like "former cricket star" and "ousted prime minister" provides neutral information about Khan's past and political history. The tone in this passage is neither positive nor negative rather it chooses to report in neutral more factual information. The mention of Imran Khan openly challenging the military suggests a tense political atmosphere, but the tone remains informative rather than negative. Phrases like "major escalation," "the prospect of mass unrest," and "uncharted political territory" convey the seriousness of the situation without taking a stance. The passage appears to maintain a neutral and informative tone, presenting facts about Imran Khan's arrest and its outcomes without expressing a clear positive or negative incline.

The word count of the next passage is 174 words. The tone of the passage is neutral and factual, providing information about events leading to the arrest and their aftermath. Imran Khan is referred to as a "popular cricket star" or "famous political leader" simply due to his renowned background and popularity. The passage focuses on putting facts surrounding Khan's arrest, the accusations and the protests. The victories of PTI in local elections is also neutrally described as factual information. Some elements could be interpreted as positive, such as Khan's ability to "outmaneuver Pakistan's typical playbook for sidelining leaders who fall out of favour with the military". However, this is balanced by the mention of drama surrounding him. Negatively, the passage reports the victories are framed as a "repudiation" or denial by the military, introducing a critical tone towards the military's role in elections. Overall, the passage provides a balanced and objective account of the events surrounding Imran Khan, putting both positive and negative elements without taking a subjective stance in favour or against him.

The tone of the next passage is critical of the authorities and reflects a negative treatment of journalists and media outlets associated with Mr Khan. The banning of live broadcasts of his speeches, and the forced shutdown of a mainstream channel after airing an interview contribute to a tone that suggests suppression of freedom of speech and can be labelled as "sympathetic" towards Imran Khan and his supporters. The term "flipping the script" for Khan is used to indicate a

challenging and unfavourable turn of events for him. The denial of these accusations by military officials is presented in a manner that raises sceptical views about its neutrality.

The overall tone of this passage is negative yet objective, reporting outcomes of arrest, and emphasizing concerns about the increased unrest and clashes between Khan's supporters and law enforcement following his arrest. The passage also suggests a heightened sense of tension in the political landscape of Pakistan.

The second news item from the sample of daily *The New York Times* was published May 11, 2023, under the headline; "Protesters in Pakistan Turn Against Military". The headline suggests a shift of sentiments in protesters, signalling a change in their stance toward the military. The tone is descriptive and focuses on the observed change in the protester's attitudes. While the headline doesn't convey a favourable or unfavourable tone, it highlights notable ongoing in the situation of Pakistan. The language used is neutral and concise, including information about the evolving dynamics.

The wordcount of the first paragraph is 56 words out of which are some negative connotations like "withered under attacks" "pushing through gates" "angry mob" "afame" used for the supporters of Imran Khan labelling them as volatile and violent towards the country which portrays them as negative. The tone of this passage is notably negative suggesting a challenging relationship between the military and Imran Khan. The use of phrases such as "a mass of protesters pushing through the gates of the national army headquarters," "an angry mob setting a senior military official's residence aflame," and "demonstrators looting a school run by a paramilitary force" presents a chaotic picture of unrest and hostility caused by the protestors. The choice of words contributes to a negative portrayal of the situation. While the passage does not explicitly seem biased, the emphasis on the aggressive actions suggests a critical stance toward Khan and his supporters resulting in unrest contributing to an overall negative tone.

The tone of the passage is analytical, focusing on the violent protests in Pakistan as an outcome of the arrest of Khan. The tone of the next passage is informative, providing an analysis of the history in which politicians refrained from openly criticizing the military. The language used, such as "complained," "almost always in code," and "speaking vaguely of 'the establishment' or 'the sacred cow,'" determines the cautious and indirect manner in which individuals addressed the powerful military. The passage then introduces Imran Khan as a unique figure who ended this approach and is seen to be speaking bluntly against the military. He is described in the passage as a "former global cricket star turned populist politician," and as someone who did not hesitate to call out the military, this tone of reporting tends to showcase his capacity and favours his stance. Khan's accusing the military of conspiring against him contributes to the negative tone as it indicates an end to the once-cooperative relationship between Khan and the military. Overall, the passage provides a balanced portrayal, presenting both positive aspects of Khan's political promises and negative aspects related to military interference.

The tone of this passage is mainly negative as it emphasizes the increase of protests labelling them as violent but at the same time, it mentions the government's ability to control the situation and damage to the military's reputation. The use of phrases like "charged in a different case for unlawfully selling state gifts" and "Mr. Khan denied the charges" contributes to a negative tone highlighting the legal challenges and allegations against him.

### **Conclusion**

Keeping in view the findings of the detailed content analysis it can be concluded that *Al Jazeera's* coverage of the events surrounding Mr. Imran Khan's arrest delivered an objective, factual and informative reporting tone. The language used is impartial, delivering details of the political

happenings without overtly favouring or opposing Khan. The articles provide a comprehensive analysis of the relationship dynamics between Mr. Khan and the military highlighting complications due to his removal from power. Al Jazeera has included insights from experts that aided in understanding the situation. The coverage also mentions Khan's accusations, his arrest, and the legal proceedings, presenting a wider perspective. At some point it raised points that appeared to be favouring Khan but soon after that it balanced it out by quoting opponents' perspectives, contributing to balanced journalism and objectivity. *Al Jazeera* adopted an unbiased reporting tone, delivering a thorough overview of the political turmoil involving Mr Imran Khan. Along the same lines, *The Guardian's* reporting on Mr Imran Khan's arrest appears to adopt a balanced tone, avoiding explicit favouritism for or against him. The articles provide a comprehensive overview of Mr Khan's arrest, his relationship with the military and accusations against them and the legal challenges he is facing. While mentioning criticism about Mr. Khan's statements, the newspaper avoided taking an overt stance on the validity of the allegations against him. *The Guardian* also suggested that Mr. Khan's popularity, evident from protests following his arrest, poses a threat to the current government, leading to calls for early elections in Pakistan. The mention of various perspectives like Mr. Khan's denial and counter-accusations, contributes to a sense of journalistic impartiality. The tone is informative, presenting facts and statements without clearly expressing support or criticism. Overall, *The Guardian* aimed for an objective portrayal of the political strain surrounding Mr Imran Khan, offering readers a comprehensive understanding of the events without explicitly favouring one side.

Similarly, *The New York Times'* reporting on Mr. Imran Khan's arrest provides a detailed account of the political turmoil in Pakistan. The tone of these articles appears to be neutral, presenting a balanced perspective on the events without openly favouring or opposing Mr Khan. The language used is objective and factual describing Khan's arrest, legal challenges, and the political background. The *NYT* presented the relationship between Mr. Khan and the military by highlighting tensions that have increased since his removal from power. These articles did not aim at passing judgments but rather reported facts, allowing readers to form their own opinions based on the presented information. While the articles mention Mr. Khan's accusations and his protests, they also include insights from experts and analysts, contributing to a balanced view of the situation. Overall, the *NYT* adopted a balanced reporting tone, providing an informative overview of the events related to Mr. Imran Khan.

In a nutshell, we can claim that all three media outlets remained neutral, balanced and factually explicit in their coverage of the arrest of Mr. Khan and the related subsequent incidents. The media outlets highlighted political violence, state aggression, political upheaval, the clash between Mr Khan and the military establishment of Pakistan, and the economic repercussions in the aftermath of the arrest and subsequent incidents.

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