

## **NOTION OF NATIONAL MEDIA ON POLITICAL ISLAM AND MUSLIMS; (20:30 TV NEWS)**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to examine the notion making of national media from political Islam and Muslims in order to create a self-regulatory which may be more appropriate than using the true image of Islam and Muslims in the world. This study investigates the amount of news devoted to Islam, the symbols of Muslims in news related to Islamic countries and Muslims in news section of national media. Considering the nature of the subject, the present research analysis the content of the news broadcasted in each section using the analysis method. The population of the present research includes 312 news programs of channel two of Islamic Republic of Iran which were broadcasted from September 2012 to November 2013. The sample was randomly selected. In other words, 24 news programs were analyzed during one year. The results of news analysis indicated that the news section of 20:30 did not have specific and goal-oriented strategies for correcting the views about Islam and it is trapped by the thoughts of global media. In fact the same two-dimensional image of Muslims in western media is illustrated here. That is radical and extremist Muslims are shown in the news and Muslims are shown as bias ones that cannot control their own destiny. Another important point in this range is lack of national news about the reality and the national news are shown by a lot of consideration.

**Keywords:** notion, political Islam, national media.

### **1. Statement of Problem**

The last days of Bush (Junior) competition with Algor witnessed the top excitement all over the United States. Here, the last program of republicans was broadcasted by the recommendation of Bush the senior. Bush the senior in a short 7 minutes speech recommended his son to follow the new map of Middle East. This sentence seemed short but has such an effect on the chief members of Zionist lobby and IPack that played an important role in the last days of election and changed the attitudes toward the republicans. Conservatives tried for 4 years after the shock of election competitions that Barak Obama is selected and then tried to illustrate a new image of Middle East (Thames, 2010).

The present world where we live in is affected by mental simulating, notion making, and impersonification of audience which results in the bloody events of Middle Ages all over the world. The main focus of all the disasters is the Muslims and Islam (Kabiri yeganeh, 2013).

Understanding the world around us happens through the mass media and gives us a social model "designed" for our experiencing and understanding. In fact, the attitude towards the phenomenon is largely due to the value of its media phenomena. A particular image of Islam is given in the Western media in recent decades to the audience which were combined with issues like terrorism, fundamentalism and violent, and is embedded in the mind of the audiences. September 11 and immediately comparing it to Islamic fundamentalist groups indicates a turning point of the negative aspects of the West to the Islamic world in the Western media.

An adventure that the Western media and television had "reproduction" of they liked and the outcome was the short-term invasion of Afghanistan and then Iraq. Following the events of September 11, we see how often from different ethnic groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan fought together (Karami, 2010). Although in recent years the Islamic countries have tried to establish transnational media to increase the penetration coefficient of Islam and change the one way flow of the news, but it seems that in these media, the news selection process has been based on criteria and paradigms that have been imposed by Western scholars. According to the theory of communication and information, the events have the ability to become news that have one or more newsworthy.

One of the popular categories of criteria for selection of news is having news values such as collisions, reputation, incorporating the frequency and magnitude of size and proximity. This is one of the main functions of notion making by the western media in the mind of Muslims. It is obviously seen in the recent events of the world that western media is going toward one-way news in a coordinated style. The most obvious sample can be seen in the massacre of Muslims in Myanmar. While 3000000 people were killed there but the depth of event was not shown in the media even in the world of Islam.

Other example of these events includes lack of covering the events which happened in Saudi Arabia or Bahrain. The events in Syria became the focus of western media and caused the public thoughts to be focused on them and ignore the most serious events in the world of Islam. Moreover, the events which happened in Islamic countries and become known as Islamic Awakening, it was seen that all of these countries and political and social characters reflected lately. Even it was thought that Islamic countries are not satisfied about this movement. However, while the west and western media do not have a positive look at the world of Islam that the most part of it should be corrected from inside the society (Gheydi, 2013), the western media tries to disguise the values and famous characters of world of Islam to make a western identity as a universal identity.

So, the main questions of the present research are:

What is the notion of national media of political Islam and Muslims and what is the feature of this notion?

Some secondary questions are also given in this research, including:

How much of the news is devoted to the Muslim world?

Which Muslim country is situated mostly in the national media spotlight?

What is the most important factor to be addressed in the news about the Muslim world?

What are the Muslims symbols in the news?

What news values are dominant in the news about Muslims and Islamic countries?  
What are the topics of News about Islam and Muslims countries?

What is the relationship between convergence and divergences of Muslims in the news related to Islamic countries?

Is there any significant relationship between the Islamic countries shown in the news and the amount of news devoted to Islam in national news?

Is there any significant relationship between the Islamic countries shown in the news and the amount of political and martial news?

Is there any significant relationship between the Islamic countries shown in the news and the news related to terrorism and bombing and internal conflictions broadcasted from the media?

### **Theoretical and Practical Research**

In this study, to explain the notion of national media, political Islam and Muslims and highlighting the notion of theory are the basis.

According to this theory, the mentality of the characters, places, objects and events is called notion making and idea; it has nothing to do with mirroring reality (Said, 1979). Today, the mass media transmit a subjective and unreal world and the new role of news (Molana, 1997, p.47).

Persian Gulf War was the triumph of image over reality and logic; in this war, new technologies made it possible to provide specific words and images communicating at the right time for hundreds of millions of people worldwide. These pictures are so captivated the audience as if people had witnessed the battle. However, studies of most countries show that this was not a war that we have seen but it was the notion of the order scheduled to give a sense of victory (ibid. 13).

In the issues we have faced with these questions: What is changing? What role do the media play in the changes?

Notion of media is what we understand as the influence of media on audience attitudes and perceived quality of events.

"Macomb" and "Shaw" stated that in the process of highlighting, it is tried to mention specific issues that magnified and highlighted the country's macroeconomic policies. Particularly in the media war to obtain good results, often military, economic and cultural practice are used by the attacker to highlight and exaggerate disorders and problems in target countries to the provide discontent of political dimension.

For example, less News, messaging, reporting, and analysis are broadcast in America's foreign radio where one or more economic, social and administrative failure of Iran is not highlighted (Eliasi, 2008, 17).

Overall, none of the previous empirical research considered the notion of national media and the national media notion of Muslims in particular. However, few studies have addressed the issue which we examine these two separately here.

Research by Abdullah Bicheranloo as Muslim representation in Hollywood the abstract of which is as follows:

In recent years media image of Muslims in the West and in particular in Hollywood have become more prominent as unpleasant, unfair, fraudulent exaggerated, with flaws and

highlighted stereotypes and for most of the audience, especially the western audience, the image has been threatening extremist, realistic and chaotic. The present study tries to answer the question that how Islam and Muslims are shown in Hollywood films. In order to answer this question five films made in Hollywood in 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s were analyzed. This study describes the issue of media reflection and orientalism as a framework and illustrates the notions of Hollywood in focusing on Muslims.

Karim believes that the adjective of Islamic is used by the reporters to describe the secret terrorist activities and is not used to refer to the same actions by the Jewish or Christians which is quite strange (Karim, 2003, p.81).

Kebani (1986) in his research on notion of Muslims in nineteenth century stated that: “two cases are most significant from among the European narratives from strangers. First, it is believed that east is a place for lost and joy and second, it is the kingdom of cruelty and harshness.

In the article titled as “islam and western media” written by Basil Ackel, it is stated that “in west, islam is like an extremist religion, terrorist and conservative. In most cases, the reports and interpretations about Islam are wrong and the reasons for the hate of west” (Iran Newspaper, 2006, p. 14).

### **Research Methodology**

Considering the nature of the research topic, the methodology used in this research has been qualitative and quantitative analysis at the same time.

The population of the present study includes 312 news series of 20:30 broadcast sine September 2010 to November 2013. From channel two. In content analysis, selecting the sample based on random categorization has been the most fitted method. In other words, two programs have been selected randomly in a month and finally a total sample of 24 programs was studied. In this research, the condition of 18 Islamic countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and ... were studied from among 53 countries.

In this study the news of the Islamic countries and Muslims were chosen based on place, topic, the key words, Islamic countries mentioned in the news, news main topic, news content, news value, symbolic images and news identity were studied.

Measurement scale for the present study has been reverse questionnaire in which against other researches, all the data is available and only needs to be analyzed while in content analysis the data should be true form the beginning and the researcher has to provide a questionnaire and analyze its data (Sarookhai, 1994, p. 308).

### **Validity and Reliability**

In order to determine the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, it should be coded and then corrected and modified by the experts. Finally the questionnaire was confirmed by the researcher and the Cronbach alpha was 83 percent which indicated the acceptability.

### **Findings**

In this section, the interpretations of the results was done based on coding the variables based on data description and indicated the relationship among the variables which were at the confidence level of 99 percent based on K-2 (Chi-square) test.

**There is a significant and meaningful relationship between the Islamic countries on national media spotlight and the amount of news devoted to Islam broadcast in the national media.**

Considering the chi-square of 0.000 significance level and 99 percent confidence and amount of 52.5 there is a significant and meaningful relationship between the Islamic countries on national media spotlight and the amount devoted to Islam broadcast in the national media. Based on the chi-square coefficient the relationship is positive and moderate that is most of news broadcast form national media devotes to the Islamic countries.

**There is a significant and meaningful relationship between the Islamic countries on national media spotlight and the amount of news devoted to martial and security broadcast in the national media**

Considering the chi-square of 0.000 significance level and 99 percent confidence and amount of 45.6 there is a significant and meaningful relationship between the Islamic countries on national media spotlight and the amount of news devoted to martial and security broadcast in the national media. Based on the chi-square coefficient the relationship is positive and moderate that is most of news broadcast form national media devotes to the martial and security news.

**There is a significant and meaningful relationship between the Islamic countries on national media spotlight and the amount of news devoted to bombing and terrorism broadcast in the national media**

Considering the chi-square of 0.000 significance level and 99 percent confidence and amount of 12.7 there is a significant and meaningful relationship between the Islamic countries on national media spotlight and the amount of news devoted to bombing and terrorism broadcast in the national media. Based on the chi-square coefficient the relationship is positive and weak that is most of news broadcast devotes to bombing and terrorism and internal conflicts.

## **Results and Conclusion**

Jean Budiar, French scholar and the most important theorist of postmodern culture, considers the world as the world of simulacrum and simulation. Television is now one of the most widespread fun and information obtaining for millions of people all over the world. He believes that in postmodern world, people deal with image and interpretation changes and the role of media here is pivotal. He thinks that in this condition, the image is more real than the reality. The word of Islam in world media has been mostly accompanied by adjectives such as radical, extreme, fundamental which illustrate an unpleasant image of Islam. In a century that media had spread his dominance over the world, their wonderful role is undeniable in the social, cultural and political changes. These technologies are like tools which have high ability of forming and leading the thoughts of people through their fabricated image of reality. As Judith Lazar believes: “ media plays the dominant role in the culture of the society and this game is shown as the reflection of culture and at the same time takes part in culture making (Elahi, 2003, p.39). the main problem considered in this research is the amount of ability of national media here so that it studied the performance of 20:30 news program as the case study. What is illustrated in this news program as the image of Islam has the following features.

More than half of the foreign news broadcast in this news program is related to Islamic countries. In fact considering the events of Islamic countries is the priority of the news program. The subject of most of news related to Islamic country has been about marital, security and political issues and economic, cultural and social news have been less taken into account. In fact, goalkeeping the news is so that the conflicts of Islamic countries are considered more. This causes that the image of Islamic countries associates with cruelty, horror, conflicts and underdevelopment. Form among 53 Islamic countries, 18 of them have been considered in this program which most of them are the countries with political challenges such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria. This is while the developed Islamic countries are less shown in the media and reflecting challenging countries in the media has caused that the Muslims and Islamic countries became associated with the same image in the thoughts of people all over the world. More than 36.6 percent of the news is related to terrorism, bombing, conflicts, political and internal problems or agreement with the west and Zionism. More than three fifth of the news (70.4 percent) of the news about Islamic countries is related to violence and planning for attacking each other. Only 29.5 percent of the news is about friendship and negotiation of Islamic countries together. This contrast by itself depicts an ugly image of Islamic world and removes the chance for the Islamic countries to become near and makes the gap wider. Most of the news broadcast about Islamic countries (63.6%) have the news value of conflict and informed about physical conflicts. In the pictures broadcast from the 20:30 news program, most symbols of guns, covered faces, security places, under controlled and poverty are illustrated. Most of the Islamic groups shown in this news program are extremists while there are Muslim scholars, writers, economic activist and cultural researchers who are not considered in the news. One of the most common media activities is to illustrate a positive or negative image in the mind of audience. The first step for

creating a positive image is logical attempt in illustrating the decisions and behavior of people in public mind. Public mind has the same image of the world of Islam. Therefore, this condition should be a lesson for the Islamic media to show a logical image of Islamic world. The current condition is not proper.

As Elvin Toffler, American Theorists states about the media role in mental war: the future media define the battle of future in which media is more dangerous than weapons (Shekarkhah, 2005, p. 85). So the international regions of the Middle East have to change the interpretation of world about Islam and illustrate a logical image of Islamic world to empower the people who have the least role in leading their own life.

In fact, the results of news analysis indicated that the news section of 20:30 did not have specific and goal-oriented strategies for correcting the views about Islam and it is trapped by the thoughts of global media. In fact the same two-dimensional image of Muslims in western media is illustrated here. That is radical and extremist Muslims are shown in the news and Muslims are shown as bias ones that cannot control their own destiny. Another important point in this range is lack of national news about the reality and the national news are shown by a lot of consideration.

### **Suggestions**

- Production is prior to broadcast. In production the message is encoded and broadcast can be successful.
- All the components of Islam should be reflected in the news and Islam comprehensiveness should be shown in the media and news should not be devoted to conflicting parts of Islamic world but the beauties should also be illustrated.
- The image of a Muslim in the picture of television illustrated as extremist, violence, cruelty and concretion should be change logically.
- The Islamic countries need convergence to be developed, so it is necessary to reduce the amount of news devoted to people and Islamic governments as divergent and discrete.

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