

PAKISTAN'S IMAGE DILEMMA: QUEST FOR REMEDIAL ACTION

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Abstract

Pakistan has been a frontline participant in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). In performing this role, it has sacrificed immensely in terms of men and material. However, despite its concerted efforts, it has been depicted quite negatively in the global media. As a result, it is perceived as a dangerous country, tarnishing its standing in the comity of nations. There is a popular view in Pakistan that the 'West' is deliberately creating this poor image which in turn is affecting the country's developmental process. Hence, this paper endeavours to analyze the tangible and intangible factors involved in this pursuit. Specifically it highlights factors like: the nation's inability in reaching a consensus regarding its own internal identity, its ideological mooring, the socio-political environment and the war on terrorism.

Introduction

"The two most precious things this side of the grave are our reputation and our life. But it is to be lamented that the most contemptible whisper may deprive us of the one, and the weakest weapon of the other."

Charles Caleb Colton.

For one reason or the other, Pakistan like other countries like Iran, Afghanistan and Somalia etc has a serious image dilemma which needs to be improved. The term “image” became popular in the 1950s which can be defined as, “The opinion or concept of something which is held by the public; or a mental representation of something; a mental picture or impression, an idea, concept.”¹

Thus, image is all about creating perceptions, but what does that mean? The word perception can be defined as the act of comprehending through the sense of the mind, cognition or awareness”; its origin is Latin verb “*percipere*” which means “gathering in”. Therefore, perception can be explained as a process through which humans collect information and a source for how humans understand things.²

However, image is not a phenomenon that can be easily manipulated to hide the facts. It is well understood within the business community that synthetic or false images invariably cause damage sooner or later, which is why Barry Day argues for honesty in his book on marketing.³

Various commentators, businessmen and marketing experts argue that image must reflect the actual characteristics of a nation or the real behaviour of its people.⁴ The image of a nation is usually the result of biases or prejudices held by others. It would neither appear suddenly, nor disappear quickly as it often grows over long period of time.⁵

In this context, it is obvious that Pakistan suffers from a chronic negative image problem and it is getting worse day by

day. The global media, foreign think tanks, international academia, even government representatives are almost unanimous in portraying Pakistan as a 'problematic' nation. In essence we can say that Pakistan has become the target of a global media war,⁶ which it seems to be losing. In global and national media nearly all significant news coverage and analytical comments about Pakistan are negative or hostile.

However, in response to this ruthless assault, Pakistan is not using a single world-scale media weapon to counter the attack.⁷ According to former Information Minister Javed Jabbar, "While not being physically destructive, the media war, in one sense, is worse. It erodes and diminishes the contours of our true identity in the minds of billions of people exposed to overseas media."⁸

Nevertheless, this negativity is a serious obstacle in Pakistan's relations with other countries, specifically with the U.S. While public opinion and international relations are subject to change overnight, the influence that the media demonstrates over policy-makers, academia, and common men alike, remain consistent. Thus, the key to repairing and building Pakistan's international image is media management and utilization of soft power.

Improving Pakistan's Bad Image Using Soft Power

Every Pakistani deems it obligatory to improve the flawed image of its country. But can it be totally improved? Professor William Benoit's "Image Repair Theory" implies that an image might be improved but may not be entirely restored.⁹

Countries also try to repair their image as Saudi Arabia did after the incident of 9/11.¹⁰ Clearly, a favourable Image for Pakistan is the need of the hour, and whatever could be, tarnished images need to be repaired. In this process use of soft power could be most helpful.

“Soft power” is a concept developed by Joseph Nye in his 1990 book to describe “the ability to attract and co-opt rather than coerce and using force or money as a means of persuasion to get the outcomes you want.”¹¹ There are three broad categories of soft power: culture, political values and policies. It is also called the second face of power that indirectly allows you to obtain the outcomes you want.¹²

According to Nye by using soft power, "a country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries – admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness – want to follow it. In this sense, it is also important to set the agenda and attract others in world politics."¹³

Nye asserts that, "“Seduction is always effectual than coercion, and many values like democracy, human rights, and individual opportunities are deeply seductive.”¹⁴ Soft power is hampered when policies, culture, or values repel others instead of attracting them. In addition, soft power extends beyond the operations of government altogether, to the activities of the private sector and to society and culture at large.¹⁵

It's high time for Pakistan to start investing in soft power and start using media as an instrument of promoting its soft image all over the world. Some recommendations to improve Pakistan's image are given separately in this paper. But before proceeding further, it is necessary to understand the global and national entities that create negative perceptions of the country. The following sections will have an insight in to them.

Pakistan's Image Abroad: Drawing the Picturesque

Globally, print and electronic mediums are the one which make or break people's perceptions about states and personalities. All conceivable mediums - from books and official/semi official publications to newspapers and magazines to even movies - seem to predominantly reflect a negative image of Pakistan. This section will briefly discuss selected resources with various perceptions they are promoting. Thousands of examples of published material against Pakistan could be found however, because of space constraint, only a few examples are quoted here.

Journals and Books

The well-known expert on Afghanistan Barnett R. Rubin's, writes in the journal of '*Foreign Affairs*' that, "the main centre of terrorism to global reach, is in Pakistan".¹⁶ He also claimed that, "during western military offensives in mid-2006, intelligence reports confirmed that Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) was continuing to actively support Taliban leadership, which is now working out of Quetta".¹⁷ He further

argued that 9/11 did change Pakistan's behaviour but not its interests.¹⁸

Emma Duncan's book, *'Breaking the Curfew: A Political Journey Through Pakistan'* covers the "murkier" side of Pakistani state and society particularly focussing on the shadow of military over national politics, drug trafficking and arms smuggling, violation of civil and human rights and corruption in the state institutions. The book projects Pakistan as a volatile and unruly country where uncertainty reigns.¹⁹

Another book, *'Waiting for Allah: Pakistan's Struggle for Democracy'*, is authored by *Financial Times'* correspondent Christina Lamb. It is written in the backdrop of transition from military rule to the civilian government under Benazir Bhutto. *Waiting for Allah* is replete with the usual stereotyping of Pakistan that invariably predicts a bleak future of the country. The author covered the position of women, economic disparity, political patronage, tribal system, the influence of drug barons, and Pakistan's troubled relations with India and Afghanistan. Lamb has hardly anything positive to say about Pakistan.²⁰

Stephen Philip Cohen is a well known American writer on South Asia. His 2004 book, *'Idea of Pakistan'* is an instant "bible" for Pakistan-bashers. Cohen is not new to lambasting Pakistan. His 2001 book titled, *India: Emerging Power* also contained negative references to Pakistan. *The idea of Pakistan* has several unfair comments about Pakistan. It

particularly predicts a bleak future for Pakistan in Chapter 8 titled 'Pakistan's Futures.'²¹ Some of its content is outrageous, as illustrated below:

“...Pakistan has adapted to changing strategic circumstances by “renting” itself out to powerful states, notably the United States, but also Saudi Arabia and China. Occupying a piece of strategic territory, an inexhaustible resource, strengthens the central government and inhibits the prospect of genuine reform. Thus there is no urgent need to develop domestic capabilities, build human capital, or even look ahead to the day when the resource might be exhausted. The Establishment is prone to much wishful thinking that something or someone will always come to Pakistan’s rescue because of its location; this also tends to dampen public debate over alternative strategies and link Pakistan’s identity to seemingly immutable geography.”²²

Official/Semi-Official Publications

A British officer from the MI6 for the Defence Academy, [a British Ministry of Defence think-tank] wrote a paper alleging that ISI was indirectly supporting extremism in Afghanistan, Iraq and the UK. Following is the verbatim reproduction from the paper: “Indirectly Pakistan (through the ISI) has been supporting terrorism and extremism - whether in London on 7/7 or in Afghanistan or Iraq. [The West has] turned a blind eye towards existing instability and the indirect protection of Al Qaeda and promotion of terrorism (by ISI).”²³

A year-end report of the US Congressional Research Service (CRS) stated Pakistan was the focus of three major US foreign policy concerns: Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD) proliferation, terrorism and democracy. The report under review opined that the US sought to balance an “acute interest in Islamabad’s continued counter-terrorism cooperation, especially regarding Afghan stabilisation and the capture of Al Qaeda leadership, with tandem concerns about the weapons proliferation and the perceived need to encourage development of a more democratic and moderate Pakistani state.”²⁴ The US legislators depend largely on CRS in the process of opinion making. Thus, it has an immense impact on amongst the officials.

Feature Films and Documentaries

Syriana: This 2005 feature film on terrorism is centred on a young Pakistani oil worker in UAE, which promotes the stereotype that even common Pakistanis are easily susceptible to become suicide bombers.²⁵

Reinventing the Taliban: This 2003 documentary by Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, and Ed Robbins focuses on the rise of fundamentalists in Pakistan. The government functionaries and supporters in Khyber Pakhtun Khawa (KPK) are shown banning musical performances, painting over cinema murals; public burning of video cassettes and CDs and calling for an end to co-education. The documentary shows injustice and inequity, especially towards women and tries to explain why the Taliban’s ideology is being given new life in Pakistan. The

documentary also shows secular Pakistanis but they do not seem to be participating in improving the future of Pakistan.²⁶

Reports of Civil Society Organizations

In Amnesty International's (AI) Annual Reports for last 16 years, Pakistan features in all of them as a country with poor human rights record. In its December 2006 publication, AI reported a number of cases of the disappearance of people who were suspected of having links with Al Qaida, it alleged the involvement of security agencies, and the misstatement by officials in the highest court of the land.²⁷ In support of its arguments, the report quoted from the President Musharaf's autobiography *In the Line of Fire* that Pakistan had handed over, rather hurriedly, a large number of suspects to the US who was subsequently mistreated in Guantanamo and other prisons.²⁸

The Brussels-based *International Crisis Group (ICG)* frequently issues reports on Pakistan. The mere titles of these reports reflect the kind of perception they create about the country. For example, the December 2006 report titled, "Pakistan's Tribal Areas: Appeasing the Militants". Another 2011 report on Islamic parties in Pakistan states that, "The Islamic parties might work within the current political order, but eventually their aim is to replace it with one which is based on narrow, discriminatory interpretations of Islam. They have also taken oblique positions on militant jihad: on the one hand, they persist on their distinction from militant outfits by virtue of working peacefully and within the

democratic system; while at the same time, they admit to sharing the ideological goal of enforcing Sharia (Islamic law), while maintaining sizeable maddrasa and mosque networks that are breeding grounds for many extremist groups.”²⁹

Despite Pakistan's sacrifices and aid in GWOT, Stimson Centre's exclusively published report on 2008 Mumbai attacks concludes that, the Mumbai crisis remains unfinished. The Indian grievances still remain unresolved, ignited by terror attacks in late-November 2008 that were demonstrably launched from Pakistan. While on the other hand, Pakistani policies remain dangerously subject to miscalculation. Furthermore, attacks in India by extremists trained, equipped, and based in Pakistan can be expected, making the chance of another crisis most likely.³⁰

The material cited above gives a fairly good idea of the intensity of negative vibes created by foreign media regarding Pakistan. However, now the extent to which the local authors and intellectuals are creating this image will be analyzed.

National Character and Self Image

Talking about local authors, intellectuals – academia, researchers and journalists – are one of the worst critics of the government policies and socio-economic and political conditions of the country. They have more credibility than the government spokespersons and their hand outs. Some of the most often quoted writers/commentators are discussed below.

Ayaz Amir, a famous writer of Pakistan, wrote about Pakistanis “We lack spirit, conditioned more by history than

climate to bow meekly before authority. The people of Thailand have more spirit than us, the people of South Korea a greater sense of right and wrong, even the Nepalese people more mettle than we dare think of.”³¹

Ahmad Rashid in his latest book, "Pakistan on the Brink: the Future of America, Pakistan and Afghanistan" asserts that the Haqqani network enjoys ISI support. Moreover, he is of the views that, Afghan Taliban have safe havens in Pakistan. Attacks led from these sanctuaries are in fact instigated by the Pakistani Intelligence agency- ISI. In addition, ISI provides them money, ammunition and training.³²

The Washington, D.C./Boston-based Husain Haqqani's book, "*Pakistan: between Mosque and Military*", essentially endorsed the widely held view in the West that the alliance of Islamists and the military officers have shaped Pakistan the way it is today. And the country's future and thus the outcome of the global war on terror will depend on this "unholy" alliance.³³ The book became instantly popular with scholars interested in South Asia and is repeatedly quoted in context with the role of religion and armed forces in Pakistani politics.

The Boston-based Hassan Abbas's book, "*Pakistan's Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army, and America's War on Terror*", discusses the jihadist organizations, army's alleged support to them and the resulting tensions with Pakistan's neighbours. The book obliquely suggests international interference in Pakistan by detailing a role for the international community that is led by the US.³⁴

Retired senior officials, both civilian and military, are also not too far behind in this race of self-criticism. If they make any contribution to the media, they are likely to be critical of the government. This group of critics cover a broad spectrum, from people such as Lt. General (Retired) Hamid Gul to former Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmed Khan. They enjoy additional credibility with the foreign critics, with regards of being well informed from the inner working of the system.

The Diaspora's Views

Pakistani Diaspora is rather large, some 5-6 million all over the world. About two million of them are in the West. The Diaspora could be a major source of strength for Pakistan but they are generally disillusioned with the conditions of governance in Pakistan.³⁵ Therefore, for the most part, they have become a liability as far as the image issue is concerned. Adil Najam's report on philanthropy in Pakistani-American community concluded that about half of the Pakistani-Americans believed that their charitable contributions may not be put to good use in Pakistan.³⁶

The review of prevailing perceptions in the international media, academia, and think-tank community creates the image of Pakistan as a "backward" nation, a violator of human and civil rights, a major "source of extremism" in the world, "a violent, unstable and unpredictable" country, a "serial proliferators of WMD technologies" and a "suspect partner" in the War on Terror. However, all these perceptions may not be

true. The perceptions and realities are categorized and discussed in the proceeding section.

Drawing Cleavage between Misperceptions and Bitter Realities

Pakistan's international image suffers from a number of perceptions: Most of them are based in historic events or prejudices. They could be broadly classified in the below described categories:

- **Backward Society and Bad Governance:** Pakistan is an under-developed and backward society which suffers from failing economy, widespread poverty, low social indicators, and abysmally low rates of literacy, lack of law and order, and pervasive corruption.

This hub of issues is common to the developing world. However, few countries have broken the vicious cycle associated with the issues in this category. Pakistan may not seem very promising when viewed abstractly. However it can be argued that, considerable progress keeping in view where we were half a century ago and the geo-strategic environment we are condemned to live in. These aspects are conveniently ignored by international observers. One can always quote India as an example, which is afflicted with similar ills. But India receives a more sympathetic press on accounts of it being a democracy and secular state.

- **Extremist Ideologies:** Pakistani population espouses extremist ideologies and state organs if not actively

supporting such ideologies, do nothing to control them. Pakistan is thus a suspect partner in the global war on terrorism and a very unsafe country to visit.

Extremism is not a phenomenon that originated in Pakistan. It was exported to this country during the Afghan jihad against the Soviet occupation. Pakistan is not a culprit, it is a victim. We may not have done well to handle the situation but some of the constraints for not doing well were generated extraneously. The world walking away from Afghanistan and economic sanctions against Pakistan were to a large extent responsible for a situation which became untenable over a period of time. As a result, the news of violence from Pakistan keeps the world media well occupied.

- **Nuclear Proliferation:** Pakistan has proliferated nuclear technology to rouge states jeopardising international security. It can not be trusted with WMDs.

Pakistan's nuclear programme is an exercise in survival. However, globally the proliferation network already existed since 1950s and joining of A.Q. Khan to this network was natural to achieve national interests. No doubt that outward proliferation activity was unfortunate and embarrassing for Pakistan but once the activity was exposed, Islamabad took all necessary measures to plug any regulatory and administrative loopholes that could cause the repeat of any such

activity. Nuclear programmes of most countries were developed through carefully orchestrated proliferation. This not only includes Indian and Israeli programmes but also British and French programmes at an early stage. Pakistan, by no means, is without a company either in inward or outward proliferation.

- **Bad Neighbour:** There is a perception that Pakistan is in perpetual conflict with its neighbours. It supports militancy in Indian Held Kashmir (IHK) and Taliban resistance in Afghanistan as policy instruments. It is obviously an unfair perception. It is India which has declined to implement the UN resolutions. It is India which bifurcated Pakistan. India is a much bigger country and had been unfriendly towards Pakistan from the beginning, including refusing to part with Pakistan's share in post-British distribution of assets and imposing trade restrictions against Pakistan. Similarly, Afghanistan had been unfriendly towards Pakistan from the beginning including opposing Pakistan's membership of the United Nations and claim on Pakistani territory. Even in current phase of badmouthing Pakistan, the critic tend to forget that not only the Pakistan's role in keeping Afghan economy viable but also practically sheltering a fourth of Afghan population on its territory, thus substantially reducing Kabul's burden. Pakistan may be guilty of mishandling

its neighbours but the positive aspects by far outweigh this “guilt”.

- **Army Rule:** “The state in Pakistan is subservient to the military which either rules directly or controls the civilian dispensation indirectly.”

Army's rule is an unpleasant reality but the alternatives had not been better. Also, each of the military governments in Pakistan sooner or latter found a niche that made the democratic west as their staunch supporter. It is only an evolutionary process through which the army could return to its own professional domain.

- **Human Rights:** “Human rights mean very little to Pakistani state and society. The weaker sections of the society, particularly women, are treated horribly.”

The human rights situation in Pakistan is a result of a complex historic process. The situation today, however, is much improved than at any time in our history. Pakistan receives a lot of flake on this account but several positive things are ignored by the critics as they would not fit into their stereotyping of Muslim societies. The violation of rights of even one person is one too many but recognising and appreciating positives would facilitate more positives.

Although in recent years, particularly since the incident of 9/11, Pakistan has attracted a disproportionate attention of the international media and think-tanks,³⁷

seasoned readers know that the negativity about Pakistan had initiated a long time ago. When it comes to the image of Pakistan, most of these perceptions have *some* reality behind them but perceptions are invariably stronger than reality. Also, there are some contradictions between reality and perception. The realistic view of Pakistan is that it is a tremendously valuable ally in global war on terrorism, a progressive state, a liberalized economy, a forward looking nation and a bridge between the Islamic world and the west. The perception that prevails is that Pakistan is a suspect partner in the GWOT, a backward nation, the heart of extremism, and essentially violent, unstable, and unpredictable. This view is shaped by the hostile media and inevitably limits and influences policy-makers internationally in dealing with Pakistan. If the media mirrors reality, then Pakistan is stuck in a hall of mirrors.

Reasons of Pakistan's Bad Image

There may be many other reasons for Pakistan's bad image however, following factors inspire or fuel the media world war on Pakistan:

- The ugly and unpleasant reality of certain aspects of our own condition for which we alone are responsible. Thus, overseas media serve as mirrors of what actually exists.

- The sheer ignorance and bias of many personnel in overseas media outlines the superficiality and skin-thin approach with which they portray our complexities.
- There are inherent prejudices overseas against a country like Pakistan that calls itself an "Islamic republic" and yet fails to pursue "ijtihad" and reforms, when other states are becoming increasingly secular.
- Barring a few exceptions, most overseas media, especially western media despite being "independent" serve as instruments to further the objectives, interests and values of the states, the societies and the corporate sectors in which the media are based. Sometimes, these determinants are entirely opposite to the interests and values espoused by Pakistan.
- Historically, and continuously to this date, we have failed to invest the diverse, the professional and the financial resources required to project a credible, positive portrait of ourselves in overseas countries and in world media in particular.

In his article, published in 1999, Professor Adil Najam very appropriately summarised the Pakistan's image problem. He said, "The international media seems anti-Pakistani not simply because it is controlled by some phantom "Zionist Lobby" or because it is pro-India, but because we have never given it much reason to be pro-Pakistani.

Over the last so many years--but particularly in the last four or five--Pakistan has consistently scarred its own

international image through acts that can only be defined as self-mutilation. Today, in the eyes of the international media--even those we count as our friends--we appear untrustworthy and disfigured. What we have done to our international image through our own actions is worse than what all the Indian propaganda could ever have done in a hundred years. As far as our international image is concerned, we have indeed been our own worst enemy.”³⁸

Does Image Matter?

Having ascertained that Pakistan has a less than favourable image in the West, it needs to be determined whether it matters or not? The reasons why a positive image is deemed so desirable are in many ways self-evident; however, for the sake of completeness they should be re-examined.

One element of national power is political influence, the strength of which is based on a combination of tangible and intangible factors. Within the intangible category sits the perception, or image, of a state as seen by other states. Pakistan aspires to be one of the lead members of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, to join economic cooperative groupings such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association of Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) and has recently been allowed to rejoin the Commonwealth. Acceptance into, and effectiveness within, such organisations depends on a mix of hard facts and perceptions.

Trade likewise would benefit from a significantly enhanced national image.³⁹ Speaking about ways to improve Pakistan's exports to his country, the Japanese Ambassador explained that Pakistan suffered from a surfeit of negative images including nuclear tests, military coups, sectarian violence and terrorism. He suggested that Pakistan would benefit from introducing a more balanced image to the Japanese people.⁴⁰

Similarly, attracting much needed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is an extremely competitive business in the globalised market place. Although hard economic realities prevail, negative perceptions and poor image put off prospective investors even before the formal analysis stage. In the US/UK survey only eleven per cent of business executives were aware Pakistan is encouraging economic growth and the majority were also unaware of the democracy building.

Few business leaders are prepared to invest in Pakistan due to an image of corruption.⁴¹ Shortly, in a globalised world where politics, economics and trade all lead to multiple choices and constant competition, there can be little doubt image matters. Furthermore, image for better or worse, can have a significant impact on national morale and confidence.

Looking at the globe: How other states are dealing with the image dilemma? It might be of value to see what importance other countries place on image and to examine a few snapshots of how they tackle the challenge of projecting a positive image abroad. The US faced with severe negative

opinions abroad, appointed Karen Hughes as the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy.

She was tasked with improving the US image and providing a better dialogues with other nations, in particular the Muslim world.⁴² This started with a high profile tour of Muslim states in mid-2005. This approach is based on an analysis which suggests the tarnish of its international image is ascribed to “ineffective foreign publicity” and “inadequate communication”; albeit the US has spared no effort to include its image in almost all of its diplomatic activities. The problem, as seen by the People’s Daily in China, does not lie with ineffective US public diplomacy but rather with an irrational foreign policy.⁴³

UK has at its disposal the instrument of the British Council, founded in 1934, to make the life and thought of the British people more widely known abroad and to strengthen common cultural traditions in the Commonwealth.⁴⁴ It now promotes the UK’s image in 110 countries worldwide.⁴⁵ About India, an ex-Minister of Information for Pakistan commented that India’s external communication frontiers dominate due a number of factors including; the sheer size of the country, the popularity of Bollywood, a mix of history and image, having a larger Diaspora and due to higher investment in media.⁴⁶

Japan, in the aftermath of the atrocities committed by its military in World War Two, had an acute image problem both regionally and globally. Through a long term strategy of introducing democracy, a market economy and constitutional

limitations on the use of military power, Japan is now the world's second economic power and has developed a different and more positive image. There is perhaps still some distance to travel in terms of transforming in its image with its closer neighbours but arguably it has played its cards well in the West.⁴⁷

Thus, even from this brief look at a few countries, it is apparent that nations have historically and continually placed great importance on public diplomacy and image. They seek to improve international understanding of their culture, language, art and sport. Inevitably such public relations activities widen and deepen understandings about a particular nation; the aspiration is that knowledge will create a better image which can be sustained over the long term.

The Way Forward

The main recommendations are based on the assessment the solution to Pakistan's image problem can only be found in a long term, sustained approach based on a clearly defined outcome. In order to dismantle the old negative image and foster a new positive image of Pakistan following steps are recommended:

- Conduct a strategic analysis of the problem, involving all the key stakeholders, senior editors and external consultants.
- Focus on the weak areas in administration and policies and try to improve those weaknesses; in other words, bring your own house in order.

- Pakistan needs to respond to the almost universally negative media coverage by branding⁴⁸ its image with the following four objectives in mind:
 - Balance the negative media image.
 - Create a new and positive image.
 - Consistently generate ‘good’ news at home to overcome the effects of any ‘bad’ news.
 - Promote the achievements of Pakistanis
- Develop key messages for media campaigns and promote them while applying the basic lesson of advertising.⁴⁹
- Build capacity for public diplomacy within all relevant Ministries which includes media training for all senior government officials, military and civilian.
- The government may seek professional help from a few reputable public relations firms abroad that could keep a close watch on the important electronic and print media sources and respond to any negative comment in real time. The response should be delivered promptly, consistently, widely, and at least as forcefully as the attack.
- Use “indirect approach” of cultural visits and displays, sporting events and sports stars, influential people in worldwide Diaspora and educational visits. In other words work on the many positives of Pakistan.

- While projecting position on political issues such as democracy, human rights, nuclear weapon and Kashmir is a challenging task, promoting Pakistan's culture is a much easier and least controversial job. It is, however, equally necessary.
- The cultural presence could be increased through: promoting Pakistani music; organizing exhibitions of Pakistani paintings sculpture and handicraft; and translation of Pakistani literature in foreign languages.
- Continue to increase freedom of press and TV and to improve access for foreign journalists. The aim is to build trust.
- Consistent improvement in socio-economic indicators through economic policies that would create a balance between development and welfare.
- Restore/improve law and order situation through adhering to the principles of rule of law.
- Educate the people through mass media in tolerance to other ideologies, religions and cultures. Its practical manifestation would be extended over a broad spectrum from denouncing all kind of violence against 'the others'.
- Project Pakistan as a moderate state and victim of extremist and terrorist ideologies as a consequence of Russia Afghanistan war and GWOT. Also promote the Pakistan's sincerity in participation in GWOT and the

sacrifices it made in terms of casualties suffered by its troops.

- Engage and mobilise Pakistani Diaspora.
- Develop long term global public diplomacy network, build trust and avoid short term expediencies.
- Develop an institutionalised system to pre-brief all young Pakistanis before they embark on overseas educational courses of one year or longer.⁵⁰

In a nutshell, although there is no “silver bullet” available to fix ‘Pakistan’s image dilemma’ there is a clearly identified way forward. The essence of success is to set and maintain a consistent long term course towards the new image of Pakistan; building on the many positives with which the nation has been blessed.

Conclusion

To conclude the issue, it must be based on real events and harness the power of the key stakeholders within the nation. The most significant conclusion is that there is no quick fix or silver bullet for Pakistan’s image problems. Not only do perceptions take a long time to be altered but the evidence indicates these perceptions are based, for the most part, on ground realities in Pakistan. Changing the root causes will take time, patience and bold government policies.

There is also a dire need to harness all the resources to formulate a media policy which would not only project Pakistan’s perspective internationally but could also bring about national integration and counter hostile propaganda.

The government will have to make the media responsible and accountable, while allowing freedom. There is, however, a need to strike a balance between freedom of media and public interest within the purview of our national ideology and strategy.

End Notes

¹ The Concise Oxford Dictionary and Chamber's Dictionary.

² Horton, James L. <http://www.online-pr.com/Holding/Truth,FactsandPerceptions.pdf> (25 April 2012)..

³ Day, Barry, It Depends on How You Look at It, 15 -18.

⁴ Including; Hussain, Touqir, "Our Image Abroad", Dawn,13 September 2005, 7.

⁵ Kunczik, Michael, Images of Nations and International Public Relations,(Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996), p.12.

⁶ Javed Jabbar, Immoderate Enlightenment and other excesses, (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 2005), p.51.

⁷ Ibid. p.51.

⁸ Ibid. p.51.

⁹ Benoit, William L., "Another Visit to the Theory of Image Restoration Strategies", (University Park, Communication Quarterly, Volume 48Issue 1, 2000) p 40.

¹⁰ After 9/11 when American and western media started blaming AlQaida for the incident, Saudi Arabia placed a series of advertisements attempting to distance itself from the 9/11 tragedy because many of the terrorists were from Saudi Arabia, including Osama bin Laden.

¹¹ Nye, Joseph. Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power(New York: Basic Books, 1990).

¹² Lord, Carnes, "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power,"in Waller, ed., Strategic Influence: Public Diplomacy, Counterpropaganda and Political Warfare (IWP Press, 2008.) p 59.

¹³ Nye, Joseph. Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics (New York: Public Affairs, 2004) p x.

¹⁴ Ibid. p 2.

¹⁵ Lord, Carnes, op, cit. p 60.

¹⁶ Barnett R. Rubin, "Saving Afghanistan," *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 86, No. 1, (January/February 2007): p. 57

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 59.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* p.71-73.

¹⁹ Please see Emma Duncan, *Breaking the Curfew: A Political Journey Through Pakistan*, (London, Arrow Books, 1989)

²⁰ Please see Christina Lamb, *Waiting for Allah: Pakistan's Struggle for Democracy*, (Calcutta, Viking Penguin India, 1991)

²¹ Please see Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, (Washington, D.C., Brookings Institution Press, 2004)

²² *Ibid.* p. 270.

²³ *Newsnight*, BBC, (September 28, 2006) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/newsnight/5388426.stm> (April 15 2012)

²⁴ Congressional Research Service, *US-Pakistan Relations*, (Washington: CRS, Library of Congress, December 2006).

²⁵ Warner Brothers: *Syriana*, 2005.

²⁶ NYT Television Production: *Reinventing the Taliban*, (2003)

²⁷ See Amnesty International: *Pakistan: Working to stop human rights violations in the "war on terror"*, (London: AI International Secretariat, December 2006)

²⁸ *Ibid.* p 2.

²⁹ ICG, *Islamic Parties in Pakistan*, Asia Report N°216, (12 October 2011), <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/south-asia/pakistan/216-islamic-parties-in-pakistan.aspx> (01 May 2012).

³⁰ Nayak, Polly & Krepon, Michael, "The Unfinished Crisis: US Crisis Management After the 2008 Mumbai Attacks", (Stimson Center, Washington, 2012).

³¹ Ayaz Amir, "A new year wish," *Daily Dawn* (Islamabad), December 29, 2006. p.7.

³² Ahmed Rashid, "Pakistan on the Brink: The Future of America, Pakistan, and Afghanistan", Viking Adult, 2012.

³³ For details see Husain Haqqani, Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military, (Washington, D.C., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005)

³⁴ For details see Hassan Abbas, Pakistan's Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army, and America's War on Terror, (New York, M.E. Shape, 2005)

³⁵ Hussain, Touqir., Op cit.

³⁶ Adil Najam, Philanthropy by Pakistanis in America, (Global Equity Project, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.) Unpublished.

³⁷ Hussain, Touqir, op cit.

³⁸ Adil Najam, "Kargil and the Myth of Losing the Media War" (August 2, 1999)

http://www.chowk.com/show_article.cgi?aid=00000618&channel=civic%20center&start=0&end=9&chapter=1&page=1 (12007)

³⁹ Letter from Asem Khursid, Faislabad Chamber of Commerce to Senator Mushaid Hussain, Chairman of International Affairs Punjab. August 2005.

⁴⁰<http://www.pk.embjapan.go.jp/ECONOMICS/Economic%20Asistance/Newsletters/Newsletter%20Nov%202004/no5%20page%202.htm> [28 february 2012].

⁴¹ US/UK Survey p.66.

⁴² Satloff, Robert, Weekly Standard, March 28, 2005.

⁴³ english.people.com.cn/200411/02/eng20041102_162430.html

⁴⁴ Kunczik, Michael, op cit, , 63.

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ See, FAO report, "Rapid Growth of Selected Asian Economies: Lessons and Implications for Agriculture and Food security", (Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, 2006). <http://www.fao.org/docrep/009/ago87e/ago87e00.htm>, [7 May 2012].

⁴⁷ Kunczik, Michael, op cit, 143.

⁴⁸ A brand is best described as a customer's idea about a product, the "brand state" comprises the outside world's ideas about a particular country. The "badly" branded state have a difficult time in attracting economic and political attention.

⁴⁹ A crucial part of every public relations effort, especially those concerning the media, is developing key messages. These key messages are often part of a re-branding process which employs a basic lesson of advertising that people do not get it until you repeat it (several times).

⁵⁰ Khursid Asem, letter to Senator Mushahid Hussain, August 2005.

2.3 Image of Pakistan and the obstacles in tourism. Pakistan's image generally has been of an extremist state that is unsafe for tourist activities due to a lot of historical events in the past. Even though Pakistan has been on the frontline in the war. 26. Pakistan's image dilemma: quest for remedial action. (2012). ISSRA Papers. Retrieved from. https://ndu.edu.pk/issra/issra_pub/articles/issra-paper/ISSRA_Papers_Vol4_Issue1_2012/02-Pakistan's-Image-Dilemma-Shabbir.pdf. 27. World Travel and Tourism Council, (2018). Travel and tourism economic. A remedial action is a change made to a nonconforming product or service to address the deficiency. This also can refer to restoration of a landscape from industrial activity. Rework and repair are generally the remedial actions taken on products, while services usually require additional services to be performed to ensure satisfaction. In some settings, corrective action is used as an encompassing term that includes remedial actions, corrective actions and preventive actions.