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Pakistan's General Elections of 2018: Representation of Economical Issues and Orientation of Political News Coverage in the Elite Newspapers of Pakistan

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Abstract:-

One cannot deny that in democratic society mass media and political system have strong bond with each other. Consequently, politicians seek media support to advance their political agenda through media particularly election related campaigns. Big media power houses also attempt to develop linkage with political parties for the economical benefits. For example in United States, it is evident that Fox news is popular among Republican Party supporters and consider in sympathising with the party. The orientation of news also has repercussion on the economy and business of the country. The best example of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor related projects which was critiqued by PTI and resultantly angered the Chinese government which stalled the many projects. These political election campaigns heavily cast Pakistan's economics. These political parties' linkages with media houses may have affected news items' representation of the issues from both positive and negative reporting angle for news items according to respective loyalties for political parties. This is highly important as great scholars of agenda setting through McCombs et al. (1997) pointed that media has great power to set the agenda of public and political parties also actively engage the media houses to advance their elections. This study attempts to learn the news representation of issues during General Elections (GE) of 2018 in Pakistan. As mainstream political parties in Pakistan vigorously campaigned for the GE of 2018. This study employed content analysis method to investigate the news issues coverage and representation in 10 mainstream newspapers based on readership size. The findings suggest that news items representation of issues among newspapers is highly polarized on the basis of sympathise of newspapers towards their favourite political parties. Hence, newspapers were making attempts to report news items positively for their preferred political parties and resultantly, making election campaigns agenda of public in favour of their desired political parties.

Keywords: News Representation, Agenda Setting, Political Parties, Elections, Pakistan.

Introduction

The political system of a country is closely intertwined with its mass media system (McCombs et al., 1997). Newspaper being part of mass media structure plays a very important role in determining the political values and norms in any country. These norms may range from freedom of expression to political justice, law, or election values. Newspaper can be an integral aspect in the maintenance of status-quo in the country and will work to create harmony and social integration in the country. The newspaper provides significant platform for political elites dispense or furthering their political election campaigns or agenda to masses. Moreover, newspaper may offer as one of public's participation platform in the political system (Sualman et al., 2017). Defining news framing, Reese (2001) stressed that a frame is a form of symbolic representation of expressed words or pictures to create trends or making visuals in the perception of its receiver/audience. The development of a frame is known as macro constructs (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996) involving how a frame is drawn up. The concept of frame is known to be consisted of very wide constructs (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996), and is subjected to how it is drawn. The frame refers to elements that could have substantial impact on quality of news framing which are linked within or outside the factors of news organisation. The determination of frame is considered as micro construct focusing on the media audience and its influence on them. However, a frame's discernment is in by nature measured as micro construct which can measure media usage and media effects on audience/readers. In the current research, focus is given on news framing manufactured to influence public on general elections of 2018, Pakistan. Thus, framing gives opportunity to learn the role of media in shaping the

The news framing is a complex process of decision making which entails about its significance, besides news story may be observed by editors and reporters on the know criteria based on space, nature of news or various conditions (Blood & Holland, 2004). Thus, political issue framing lens during elections was known to have impact on public opinion formation with regards to contemporary issues (Sualman et al., 2017). Newspaper delivers extensive coverage on election news. Therefore, several queries were raised from Pakistan's General Elections of 2018 reporting as what sort of communication message from the newspaper that can determine the impact on voters' behaviours/voting decisions during general elections? Whether issues raised in news media are 'natural occurrence' or media selected agenda? What is the goal for the representation of specific issues in newspapers during general elections? What is the nature of news orientation?

However, present investigation seeks to examine as how newspapers presented the issues related with government (then Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz-PML -N) and opposition (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, PTI). The present research is built on the ground that there is nexus between issues and newspaper outlets ownership during elections and the news orientation. Therefore, objectives of present research are:

- 1) To seek the occurrence of issues representation with general elections, 2018 in elite newspapers of Pakistan.
- 2) To reveal chief issues presented during general election campaigns of 2018, Pakistan
 - 3) To identify orientation of news issues, whether, it is positive or negative in nature, fair or objective constructed on newspapers' ownership.

Literature Review

Ishaq (2020) discovered few main issues that have great influence on the result of General Elections in Pakistan. In 2018 general elections, both government and opposition parties (i.e., PML-N, PTI and PPP)sympathiser news media outlets provided coverage on development, corruption, economy and personal attacks like calling either agent of India or Jews (Zionist agent). Even though Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) has wide range of code of conduct for political parties and news media coverage during election season. In addition to news media outlets used by political elites in Pakistan to advance election campaigns, Pakistani politicians used social media to advance election campaigns for younger or tech savvy urban population for forming favourable opinion about them (Ida, Saud & Mashud, 2020). However, vast number of political leaders still uses traditional media as issues of access to internet, internet literacy and issue of illiteracy keeping population away from social media usage, particularly older section of population (Ida, Saud & Mashud, 2020). So in this given condition, traditional mass media are very important players to political elites, so they have strong connection with many news media outlets garner favourable opinions towards their election campaigns (Cheema, 2011; Jabbar, 2011). On the one side, the diehard voters either supported their own politicians or if angry with party may opposed bitterly about the former party. On the other side, certain elements were perceived with the intention of ruining politicians' image without examining the reality of that particular accusation. Nevertheless, the personal attacks continued and resultantly, political environment was below the belt attached after general elections of 2018.

Saeed, Bilal & Raza (2020) conducted a content analysis among mainstream and selected newspapers on political allegations during general elections of 2013. The study presented issues of national importance and particularly political fraud in elections. In another study Ishaq (2020) pointed that Urdu language newspapers were more political bias during lections as compared to other major English newspapers. While the types of news presented were largely texts rather than news with photos. Personality and religious sensitive issues or character assassination of political opponents were at peak as English daily, *The Nation* (considered pro PML-N news outlets) wrote "Without the shred of evidence, that the PMLN government to please western power had deliberately weakened the pledge on the finality of prophet hood in exchange of hiding his corruption" (as cited in Ishaq, 2020). As news outlet further stated that Imran Khan, the (present Prime Minister of Pakistan) PTI actively fanning the flames (as cited in Ishaq, 2020). The objective of this news reporting/opinion writing was an attempt to counter attack Imran Khan of PTI as PTI's three main election campaign allegations against the PMLN government were,' puppet of western government', 'sensitive issues related with religion and 'corruption 'dismissed it without evidence. Little John and Foss (2008) explained that the pioneer scholar of agenda setting Shah, McCom, theory presented in their own words; "The ability to effect cognitive change among individuals, to structure their thinking—has been labelled the Agenda setting function of mass Communication. Briefly, the mass media not is successful in telling us what to think about they are sunning successful in telling what to think about (293).

Wogu (2008) narrated about the community fellows that "audience not only learn about public issues through the media, they also learn how much importance to attach

to an issue or topic from the emphasis the mass media place upon it" (139). The current empirical investigation was embarked on three major premises: 1) news media is vital for the development of the public agenda 2) media is important but is inadequate in setting the public agenda 3) media is neither vital nor sufficient when setting the public agenda. The research found that in the process of agenda setting, there are several vital factors that impact an election campaign. Amongst the factors were heightened voters' interests in election, contenders 'public images and polices, media law and future empirical on how media developed public agenda during election campaign (McCombs, et al. 1981).

McCombs (2005) stated that agenda setting and public agenda are interrelated to each other during election. The study also indicated that issues and news orientation have a positive correlation between them. As most common tendency in privately owned newspapers to present news that would be serve 'personal interest 'of their owners. It is evident that during elections, news media outlets have their own vested personal agenda to form positive opinions for their favourite political leaders to gain voters' desired views for that agenda. Both media and political parties do it by exploiting strategic media campaigns that will recommend the particular political contenders standing for elections to their readers.

Method

The most relevant method for present study was content analysis; hence this method was selected for this present research. The qualitative analysis approach was exercised, focusing on sentence analysis, interviews, notes, transcripts and related documents analyses. Content analysis deals with an opportunity to researchers for observing a set of items such as news types in the newspapers and communication of elements that represents the sample of current investigation. Thus, data collected are quantitative as well as qualitative in nature. Neuendorf & Kumar (2015) stated that content analysis is a useful technique employed to study communication message in very objective and systematic quantitative manner.

According to Neuendorf & Kumar (2015), content analysis understands the meaning of a message which can be scrutinised by the native speaker. The three conditions are perquisite in the exercise of content analysis 1) objective, this requisite requires documentation of relevant prudent categories, which can be verified by other researchers through employing similar measurements and will arrive at similar conclusion 2) under this systematic criteria or any research method must be an organised method of data collection and 3) the last quantitative method suggests to usage of numbers to the corresponding items which in turn help the coding process. The major goal of content analysis is to determine the accurate meaning of the message.

Content Analysis is a suitable method for mass media researchers as it offers to investigate phenomena in prudent way of studying media content. The content analysis is also a very effective method to research the opinions, attitudes, behaviours and social values. Content analysis gives leverage to the scholars in order to compare or contrast communication messages of multiple medium as in this present research. The current investigation also aims to enquire at the differences in news representation in multiple newspapers and the several illustrations approved by newspapers in reporting of election issues.

Content Analysis is employed to unearth the motives of journalists in the message, identification of the message effect and examine the audience behaviour (Neuendorf

& Kumar, 2015). Content analysis is best known method in measuring and revealing the audience or readers' behaviours by discerning the messages and interpreting the meanings (Benoit, 2011). A descriptive analysis was employed in present research to identify the objectivity of the message representation and news orientation of the sampled newspapers. The descriptive analysis inspects multiple facets of the message elements chiefly its meanings and other persuading communications influence at work, for example propaganda, trends and social change (Benoit, 2011).

Ten major Pakistani newspapers in English, Urdu and regional Sindhi languages were taken as sample for this study; Dawn (English), Express Tribune (English), The News International (English), The nation (English), Daily Jang (Urdu), Roznama Dunya (Urdu), Nawaiwaqt (Urdu), Daily Express (Urdu), Daily Kawish (Sindhi) and Sindh Express (Sindhi). A content analysis is aimed on types of news during general election campaigns of Pakistan, 2018. In present research investigation, the contents of newspaper were observed as a source of news in the traditional media. The agenda in the new or alternative media and mainstream media were compared and contrasted for the coverage of the general elections, 2018. All sampled newspapers selected representation related issues to the elections were summarily coded for the duration of June 1st – August 20th 2018. This sampled period is between from the inception of caretaker government and inauguration of Prime Minister Imran Khan Government 18th August, 2018. Data Collected were run through the SPSS program and were analysed using descriptive statistics to observe frequency of the categories for news representation. The qualitative analysis generated with codes and themes. Following categories were identified; frequency of election news reporting, main news category, news agency, source of news, news origin and news size whereas news representation was studied interpretatively. Interpretative analysis was employed to scrutinize news representation, which was either inspected as positive, neutral and negative. The selection of alternative or anti-establishment newspapers (consider opposition sympathiser i.e., now PMLN) as Dawn and Daily Jang were used to discover the representation of news by the opposition party. The components studied are as follows:

News Types: Any type of news, election related press conferences, election interviews, political rallies, features in relationship with elections, editorial features on elections, pictures related with elections, commentaries, letter to the editors related during elections, profile and caricature depicted in the newspapers about elections.

News objectives: Inform, educate, persuade, explain, refute, to blame and counterattack.

News source/personality in news/issues: Statement made by party, government sources, opposition or independent including government or opposition political leaders, scholars, cultural/political analysts, religious personalities and others.

Election issues: All related news, features and pictures focus was on key news issues. **News representation:** Positive, neutral and negative. Many newspapers work as political mouthpieces of political parties.

Positive News: Reporting on supposed Pro-establishment parties (PTI/ pro established)

Negative News: Reporting on the weakness of PMLN, PPP & other antiestablishment parties.

Balance News: Supposed Pro and Anti-establishment parties are reported in the news without bias and news that does not include any political inclinations.

Findings

Table 1 provide 10 newspapers having 3106 news items that were examined for this research. From these 10 newspapers, largest news item 12.07% came from Dawn, 11.75% from Jang, 11.04% drawn from Express Tribune, 10.53% from Roznama Dunya and 10.11 from Daily Express. Moreover, other newspaper having 9.98%, 9.21, 8.53% and 7.73% namely Daily Kawish, Nawai-Waqt, Sindh Express, The Nation and The News International, respectively.

Table 1: Frequency of Election News Reporting

	1 3	8			
S.No.	Name of Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage		
1	Dawn	375	12.07		
2	Daily Jang	365	11.75		
3	Express Tribune	343	11.04		
4	Roznama Dunya	327	10.53		
5	Daily Express	314	10.11		
6	Daily Kawish	310	9.98		
7	Nawai-waqt	286	9.21		
8	Sindh Express	281	9.05		
9	The Nation	265	8.53		
10	The News International	240	7.73		
	Total	3106	100		

Main Issues in Reported in the Newspapers

The main issues shown in Table 2, corruption news was highest 12.56, followed by infrastructure development, 11.27%, the use of word 'Naya Pakistan' and 'Vote ko Izzat dou or Ladlay' were 10.46 and 9.98% respectively. While at bottom women, minority and sport issues received least share of 2.73%, 1.93% and 1.77% respectively.

Table 2: Main Issues in Newspaper

S.No	Election Issues	Frequency	Percentage
1	Corruption	390	12.56
2	Infrastructure Development	350	11.27
3	The use of the word 'Naya Pakistan'	325	10.46
4	The use of the word 'Vote ko Izzat dou or Ladlay'	310	9.98
5	CPEC	271	8.73
6	Economy	240	7.73
7	Job Employment	220	7.08
8	Power Crisis	190	6.12
9	The Election Commission	145	4.67
10	Environment	133	4.28
11	The use of the word 'Show-baz'	121	3.90
12	The use of the word 'Rot Kapra aur Makan'	120	3.86
13	Morality of leaders	91	2.93
14	Women Issues	85	2.74
15	Minority	60	1.93
16	Sports	55	1.77
	Total	3106	100.00

Purpose of Reporting

The chief purpose of news reporting is to inform its readers/audience. The Table 3 data reported that purpose of reporting in following order as 35.58% to inform, 19.80 to explain or clarify, 17.03% to persuade, 16.13% related to condemn, 6.47% noted to argue purpose, whereas to monitor is 2.58% and others were at 2.41%. Moreover, Table 4 produced detailed description of each newspaper's reporting.

Table 3: Purpose of Reporting

S.No.	Purpose	Frequency	Percentage
1	To inform	1105	35.58
2	To explain/ clarify	615	19.80
3	To persuade	529	17.03
4	To condemn	501	16.13
5	To argue	201	6.47
6	To monitor	80	2.58
7	Others	75	2.41
	Total	3106	100.00

Table 4: Name of Newspaper and Reporting

S.No	Name of		Purpose of Reporting							
	Newspaper	Inform	Explain	Persuade	Accuse	Debate	Monitor	Others		
						and				
						discussion				
1	Dawn	54.5%	18.1%	12.2%	12.1%	2.3%	0.1%	0.7%		
2	Daily Jang	51.1%	22.3%	16.1%	6.8%	2.8%	0.3%	0.6%		
3	Express Tribune	48.9%	19.1%	17.9%	8.9%	4.1%	0.8%	0.3%		
4	Roznama Dunya	44.4%	18.3%	19.5%	11.2%	4.7%	1.1%	0.8%		
5	Daily Express	49.8%	19.7%	13.5%	10.2%	5.5%	1.2%	0.1%		
6	Daily Kawish	41.2%	21.2%	12.2%	17.8%	5.8%	0.9%	0.9%		
7	Nawai-waqt	39.8%	24.5%	14.2%	16.6%	3.8%	0.7%	0.4%		
8	Sindh Express	40.5%	23.3%	16.8%	13.3%	4.8%	0.5%	0.85		
9	The Nation	44.4%	22.7%	15.1%	13.1%	4.3%	0.4%	0		
10	The News International	43.8%	27.9%	10.2%	14.1%	2.9%	0.9%	0.2%		

News and Issues related to the Elections

The good governance news on PTI was positively reported as 26.16% whereas PMLN & PPP was only 21.52%. The PMLN related CPEC news items were positively reported at 25.95%, while PTI related CPEC news items only managed to receive mere positive reporting at 15.57% only. As obvious that PTI's main slogan of main election campaign was based on corruption free Pakistan and overseas Pakistani issues, generated huge positive news report of 36.31% & 41.28%. Whereas PMLN and

PPP related news items generated more negative news representation on corruption and overseas Pakistani issues, 16.71% and 11.01% respectively. It is evident that parties related with their main election campaign issues received positive orientation from news reporting as presented in below table 5.

Table 5: News Representation and Election Issues

S.No.	.No. Issue Representation							
		Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Balanced	
		of PTI	PTI	PMLN	PML &			
				& PPP	PPP			
1	Good	79	40	65	38	45	35	
	Governance	26.16%	13.25%	21.52%	12.58%	14.90%	11.59%	
2	Terrorism	43	42	46	39	33	45	
		17.34%	16.94%	18.55%	15.73%	13.31%	18.15%	
3	Law & Order	110	38	100	65	55	62	
		25.58%	8.84%	23.26%	15.12%	12.79%	14.42%	
4	Religious	74	33	62	28	45	29	
	Issues	27.31%	12.18%	22.88%	10.33%	16.61%	10.70%	
5	CPEC	45	43	75	38	41	47	
		15.57%	14.88%	25.95%	13.15%	14.19%	16.26%	
6	Education	120	42	65	45	62	55	
		30.85	10.80%	16.71%	11.57%	15.94%	14.14%	
7	Economy	129	38	110	65	51	47	
		29.32	8.64%	25%	14.77%	11.59%	10.68%	
8	Internal	43	21	62	67	46	42	
	Conflict in PMLN	15.30%	7.47%	22.06%	23.84%	16.37%	14.95%	
9	Youth	110	40	45	55	39	42	
		33.23%	12.08%	13.60%	16.62%	11.78%	12.69%	
10	Overseas	135	23	51	36	41	41	
	Pakistani issues	41.28%	7.03%	15.60%	11.01%	12.54%	12.54%	
11	Inflation	121	31	45	60	44	47	
		34.77%	8.91%	12.93%	17.24%	12.64%	13.51%	
12	Corruption	126	23	42	58	47	51	
		36.31%	6.63%	12.10%	16.71%	13.54%	14.70%	
13	Infrastructure	102	33	104	35	32	36	
	Development	29.82%	9.65%	30.41%	10.23%	9.36%	10.53%	
14	Health	89	31	65	34	51	41	
		28.62%	9.97%	20.90%	10.93%	16.40%	13.18%	
15	Women issues	51	35	55	35	39	49	
		19.32%	13.26%	20.83%	13.26%	14.77%	18.56%	
16	Poverty	77	34	68	37	45	36	
		25.93%	11.45%	22.90%	12.46%	15.15%	12.12%	
17	Benazir income	43	35	77	33	48	51	
	Support Program	14.98%	12.20%	26.83%	11.50%	16.72%	17.77%	
18	International	77	29	65	33	41	46	

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	Issues	26.46%	9.97%	22.34%	11.34%	14.09%	15.81%
19	Panama Case	77	34	26	62	51	43
	of Nawaz	26.28%	11.60%	8.87%	21.16%	17.41%	14.68%
20	Lahore	46	42	85	23	51	55
	Development	15.23%	13.91%	28.15%	7.62%	16.89%	18.21%
21	Marginalisation	73	34	67	31	45	40
	of Small Provinces or Section of Population	25.17%	11.72%	23.10%	10.69%	15.52%	13.79%
22	Provincial	81	42	77	48	38	37
	Rights	25.08%	13.00%	23.84%	14.86%	11.76%	11.46%

News Representation of the Newspapers

The news representation of political parties indicate polarisation within elite newspapers based on the sympathies towards their favourite political parties. Hence, findings revealed that the newspaper sympathy towards a political party also severely change the orientation of news reporting on issues of its favourite political parties. For example, daily Jang is known as anti PTI, extended majority of positive news reporting of PMLN & PPP at 33.50%, while PTI's positive news reporting at 22.25%. However, PTI empathise newspapers also vastly differ news reporting of opposing parties, for example, Express Tribune & Roznama Dunya positively reported news items at 28.94% and 34.94% whereas PMLN and PPP related news items were positively reported in these dailies at 26.36% and 26.15% respectively. The popular English daily newspaper was reporting news items in favour of PML and PPP at 27.18% whereas PTI was given optimistic coverage at 24.54%.

The Sindhi daily newspapers called Kawish & Sindh Express positively covered the news with very minor difference between these political parties. For example, Daily Kawish positively reported news items of PTI at 32.08% whereas PML and PPP at 31.76%. Moreover, other Sindhi newspaper as Sindh Express covered positive news items of PTI at 28.90% and PML and PPP at 27.98% correspondingly.

PTI is very popular in terms of positive news reporting in the Urdu language Daily Express and Nawai-waqt. As Daily Express positively reported news items of PTI and PMNL & PPP at 31.60% and 26.69% respectively. Nawai-waqt also produced similar with positive news reporting items of PTI at 34.23% and PMLN received 28.86% only.

Furthermore, English daily, The Nation was more positive towards PMLN & PPP and reported news items at 26.54%, whereas PTI received only 23.46%. The last 10th newspapers, The Nation International noted minor difference in reporting positive news items of PTI and PMLN at 24.24% and 25.45% respectively.

Table 6: Newspapers and News Representation

S.No.	Newspaper	News Representation						Total
		Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Balanced	
		of PTI	PTI	PMLN	PML &			
				& PPP	PPP			
1	Dawn	121	75	134	34	65	64	493
		24.54%	15.21%	27.18%	6.90%	13.18%	12.98%	100%
2	Daily Jang	87	61	131	38	32	42	391
		22.25%	15.60%	33.50%	9.72%	8.18%	10.74%	100%
3	Express	112	35	102	51	43	44	387
	Tribune	28.94%	9.04%	26.36%	13.18%	11.11%	11.37%	100%
4	Roznama	120	22	91	51	33	31	348
	Dunya	34.48%	6.32%	26.15%	14.66%	9.48%	8.91%	100%
5	Daily	103	32	87	43	31	30	326
	Express	31.60%	9.82%	26.69%	13.19%	9.51%	9.20%	100%
6	Daily	102	33	101	36	22	24	318
	Kawish	32.08%	10.38%	31.76%	11.32%	6.92%	7.55%	100%
7	Nawaiwaqt	102	34	86	29	25	22	298
	_	34.23%	11.41%	28.86%	9.73%	8.39%	7.38%	100%
8	Sindh	63	25	61	22	24	23	218
	Express	28.90%	11.47%	27.98%	10.09%	11.01%	10.55%	100%
9	The Nation	38	23	43	19	20	19	162
		23.46%	14.20%	26.54%	11.73%	12.35%	11.73%	100%
10	The News	40	18	42	18	24	23	165
	International	24.24%	10.91%	25.45%	10.91%	14.55%	13.94&	100%

Discussion and Conclusion

This can be said that elite newspapers have fulfilled their roles as the medium of obtaining election information related to issues that are the focus of reporting. Based on above developed news categories in this research, it is indicated that news related with the elections also become a significant agenda for all the major newspapers in Pakistan. Thus, this can easily deduce that two-thirds of news (politics and election) coverage has been given by these newspapers. Regarding news position, national news items have been given priority by major national and local newspapers. Moreover, newspaper editorials are voice of newspapers; these editorials are naturally inclined to report issues of the elections. Subsequently, it is obvious that the whole process (the election and related issue) has been politicised. The newspaper also followed political campaigns and discussed campaigns' main issues through opinion selection and also reported with their own loyalties or orientation towards respective political parties. Thus, newspapers focused on 'corruption', 'Vote ko Izzat do' and 'overseas Pakistan issues 'related news items as these items were heavily advanced by major political parties in the election campaign rallies. Every newspaper has its own approach and localised style to present the news to its readers.

The main issue of the 2018 general elections revolved around the question pertaining to the nation's political environment particularly those that became the public agenda as reported by the newspaper such as 'Naya Pakistan', corruption, 'Vote Ko Izzat Do', development, CPEC and terrorism. However, women, minority, sports and environment issues were not given much priority in the newspapers investigated.

Issues such as the deforestation are not given preference even though they were highlighted by Imran Khan of PTI. It seems that the purpose of reporting news was mainly to attack and humiliate each other's opponent. This seems to adhere of the notion that during the election season, newspapers serve as the medium to introduce and advance their favourite political parties besides condemning and criticizing the opponent political parties.

Limitations of the Study

The current research was limited to content analysis, as it was conducted after completion of general elections; hence, result was only based on content of newspaper, but not public opinion. Due to paucity of time, only selected newspapers were taken, more newspapers could not be selected for this study.

Future Study

The future study should conduct quantitative method based on voters' opinions about participating with political parties before, during and after elections. Besides, longitudinal study can greatly enhanced the understating exposure of media coverage of elections to voters' behaviours.

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