

Framing Analysis of Ex-Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani's contempt of court case

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Introduction

The sitting Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani was convicted of contempt of court in 2012. The aim of this study is to investigate the print media coverage and treatment given to Yousuf Raza Gilani's case which was discussed in most of the newspapers of Pakistan spanning from January to June 2012. During these six months Gilani and Judiciary have been focus of the media. The study focuses on nature of treatment and framing given to the case by the media and thus affecting media content. Manipulating information by using framing can change judgment and decision making. The perspective of people regarding it can be changed by using visual depictions in the form of images and such verbal communication to have an overview of the information being conveyed (Bradley, 2011). The ultimate next level of agenda was conceptualized by Iyengar and Kinder (1987). This agenda setting does not have any boundaries and surpasses the objective or issue based saliences. The news dictates not only about what perspective to have but also it tells you to allign your views in the same direction as dictated. The most influential agenda setting is thought to be choosing topic for reporting the stories and ultimately selecting the frames (Scheufele, 2011).

Gilani's conviction is based on the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) implementation case. On 5th of October 2007 General Pervez Musharraf, the ex president of Pakistan passed an ordinance known as National Reconciliation Ordinance. This ordinance was a green flag for the people who had accusations of corruption, trafficking, money-laundering, and many other misappropriations ranging for a time period spanning from 1st of January, 1986 to 12th of Octoberz 1999.

According to ordinance corruption cases are to be withdrawn which were against the public offices holders as politicians, political workers and bureaucrats. They shall not be accountable and arrested in future. The ordinance was considered as giving “clean chit” to all such politicians including Benazir Bhutto and Asif Ali Zardari who were assured that they would not be arrested on their return to Pakistan (Shaikh.S, 2007).

Significance of the study

This study is aimed at analyzing how leading English and Urdu Newspapers has framed the Ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan, Yousuf Raza Gilani’s Contempt of Court Case. It will unfold the pro-judiciary, anti-judiciary as well as pro-government and anti-government treatment by the media. Furthermore it will fill the void in media research about the framing of an event or issue in Pakistan and exploring the editorial policy of different media groups towards executive and judiciary. It will also guide the future researchers to evaluate the strife in higher institution like judiciary and executive relations and role of media in this regard. It will also provide the researchers the role of judicial activism in maintaining accountability in a nascent democracy like Pakistan.

Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

According to Chong and Druckman, (2007) Framing is defined as a process which helps people in developing understanding of a matter or an issue, revising the thought process regarding it. From viewpoint of Goffman (1974, p. 21) the frames are viewed as "schemata of interpretation" which makes people capable to "locate, perceive, then identify and label" the ultimately received information or news. Seeing it from the definition of Reese (2001), "The organizing principles which are shared socially and also are valid over long periods are called frames. Also, they have symbolic meanings and validations (p. 11)". Thus, prevalent "selection, then emphasis and ultimate exclusion" (Gitlin, 1980, p. 7) is framing I. Also according to Entman (1993, p. 52), "the selection of salient aspects of perceived reality and then its ultimate communication is called frame"

Framing can be defined as the methods of depiction which most of the Journalists and their ultimate correspondents utilize to present recruited information in such a manner which resounds with the prevailing fundamental plans in their audience. It does

not mean that journalists give any twist to the story or may cheat their audience. In fact journalists use framing as a method to minimize the complication of a news story, keeping in view the limitations given by their particular media regarding space and air time (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

The purpose of using a frame may be depicting the liaison between different linked features in a script. A better understanding of the issue can be developed by identifying such links in the text. So a message is consisted of two elements, specific content and a frame which guides that how to interpret the message (Janssen, 2010). Frames are associated with our cognitive process. We use frames as shortcuts cognitively to get a better overview of the complicated pieces and bits of information provided (Kaufman, Elliott & Shmueli, 2003).

Framing is also considered as a part of agenda-setting as it can be termed and defined as the recruitment of a restricted and particular number of thematically related attributes for inclusion on the media agenda when a particular object is being discussed" (McCombs, 1997, p. 6). Agenda-setting deals with the importance of various matters, however the frame-setting or ultimate second-level of agenda-setting focuses on the matter of salience of issues (McCombs, Llamas, Lopez-Escobar, & Rey, 1997). Framing controls the thought process of audience as well as it creates a link between particular issue and its specific interpretations. As agenda theory explains that media influence the thought process of readers, meanwhile the framing theory claims that "the media dictates us in our thinking process, the framing theory is rather skeptical which questions, what media tell us to think about are right things?(Dahmen & Lundy, n.d.).

The Daily Dawn, in its editorial dated 12th March 2007, after the deposition of Chief Justice of Pakistan wrote that, the judiciary more or less agreed in its role as a submissive institution whose duty was to keep accountable every dictatorial ruler violating use of power, whether he acquired it through a military coup, and to upholding his actions which frequently were in absolute violation of the basics of law and constitutional decency (Dawn, 2007, p. 12).

Methodology

This study used content analysis technique to carry out qualitative as well as the quantitative examination of relevant

content in Editorial Pages of the leading Pakistani English as well as Urdu Newspaper; i.e, The News, Daily Dawn, Daily Express and Daily Nawa-i-Waqt. The research study spans over the entire period of Yousuf Raza Gilani's contempt of court case, spanning from January till June of 2012.

Study Population and Sampling

Population of the study includes editorials and opinion articles published in the editorial pages of the The News, Daily Dawn, Roznama Express and Nawa-i-Waqt during the selected timeline as the population. The content was recruited from online and printed archives of the selected newspapers. The timeline span is specified from January 2012 to June of the year 2012. Purposive sampling technique has been used, all the relevant editorials and articles from the Op-ed page has been analyzed in this study.

Selection of Newspapers

Two English (The News International and Daily Dawn) supplemented by two Urdu newspapers (Daily Express & Daily Nawaiwaqt) were recruited for study and analysis. This comprised of detailed analysis of their editorial pages. The timeline spanned from January to June of 2012. Editorial and opinion articles would be taken into consideration only. There is a rationale in selecting these four newspapers as one newspaper in each group (English and Urdu) is neutral/pro to PPP government while other newspaper in both groups is considered significantly anti/unfavorable to PPP government.

Variables

Topic, Slant, Frame and Wordage are the variables under study. Following are details of these variables.

Topic

Zheng (as cited in Siraj, 2006) says that Topic is the depiction of a story. According to the definition, it depicts the social experiences of a particular domain. The gist of a story is called its topic which carries basic subject of the story (Siraj, 2006). Topics regarding contempt of court case were pointed out after an over view by reading of the editorials and articles on contempt of court case in the selected newspapers. Following categorical topics are recruited for the study purpose.

1. Gilani's Contempt of Court Case
2. Presidential Immunity & National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO)

3. PPP Government
4. Judiciary

Data Analysis

The sample of the study is 200 stories, 63(31.5%) from *Daily Nawaiwaqt*, 54 (27%) from *The News International*, 45(22.5%) from *Daily Express*, and 38 (19%) from *Daily Dawn* (Table 1.1).

Collectively the four newspapers published 64(32%) editorials out of which 22(31.4%) from Daily Dawn, 18(28.1%) Daily Nawaiwaqt, 14(21.9%) from Daily Express and The news published 10(15.6) (Table 1.1).

The overall opinion articles published in these newspapers are 136(68) which included 45(33.1%) from Nawaiwaqt, 44(32.4%) from The News International, 31(22.8%) from Daily Express and 16(11.8%) from Daily Dawn. (Table 1.1)

Question No. 1 What was the degree of coverage provided to the issue by the recruited newspapers?

A total of 200 stories were selected from four newspapers which gave opinions on the editorial articles and journals; Daily Nawaiwaqt led in the coverage to the Contempt of court case of EX-Prime Minister by publishing (63 or 31.5%) stories, followed by (54 or 27%) stories by The News International, then Daily Express published (45 or 22.5%) stories and finally (38 or 19%) stories appeared in Daily Dawn (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1
Distribution of stories coverage in the newspapers of the study by No. of stories, Type of stories, Topics, and Mean Story length

News papers	The News	Daily Dawn	Daily Express	Daily Nawaiwaqt	Total N (% of each category)	X ²
Variables	N (% against total stories of each	N (% against total stories of each	N (% against total stories of each	N (% against total stories of each	N (% against total stories of all newspapers)	

	category)	ory)	ory)			
No. of stories	54 (27)	38 (19)	45 (22.5)	63 (31.5)	200 (100.0)	25.920; p: .000
Type of story	10 (15.6)	22 (31.4)	14 (21.9)	18 (28.1)	64 (32) 136 (68)	5.000; p: .172 16.294; p: .001
*¹Editorial Opinion	44 (32.4)	16 (11.8)	31 (22.8)	45 (33.0)	104 (52)	30.154; p: .000
Topic	40 (38.5)	6 (23.0)	24 (2)	12 (46.2)	26 (13)	6.615; p: .085
s*² Gilan	4 (15.4)	16(31.8)	3.0 ()	9 (19.6)	46 (23) 24 (12)	6.000; p: .112
i's contempt of court case	4 (16.7)	12 (50.0)	4 (15.4)	6 (25.0)	1062.7 5(200)	9.333; p: .025
Presidential immunity & NRO PPP Government Supreme Court	6 (13.0)	621.0 5(38)	15 (3)	1306.9 5(63)		
Mean Story length	4 (16.7)		2.6 ()			
h*³	966. 22(54)		2 (8.3)			
			12 09. 69 (4 5)			

Note: *¹ X²: 25.920; p: .000 *² X²: 83.680; p: .000

*³ X²: 51.120; p: 1.000 F= 157

Question No. 2 Was there any difference among the newspapers in number of stories by Type of story?

There were 200 stories fall in the sample of the study out of which 64 were editorials; Daily Dawn led in editorials with 22(31.4%)s stories after that Daily Nawaiwaqt published 18(28.1%) stories thirdly 14(21.9%) stories came Daily Express and lastly The News International published 10(15.6%) stories ($X^2 = 5.000$; $p: .172$)(Table 1.1). 136 opinion articles most of them 45(33.0%) appeared in Nawaiwaqt followed by The News International which published 44(32.4%) then Daily Express published 31(22.8%) and 16(11.8%) stories appeared in Daily Dawn ($X^2 = 16.294$; $p: .001$)(Table 1.1).

Question No. 3 Was there any difference among the newspapers in number of stories by Slant?

There were many unfavorably inappropriate slants for Yousuf Raza Gilani. Out of which 200 stories 130(65%) stories were unfavorable towards Yousuf Raza Gilani. Whereas 34(17%) out of the total stories appeared to be favorable for Gilani where as, 36(18%) ultimate articles and stories were neutral ($X^2 = 90.280$; $p: .000$) (Table 1.2).

Of the total 130 unfavorable declared stories to ‘Gilani’; 52(40%) were from Nawaiwaqt supplemented by 47(36.2) stories from The News International, 19(11.6%) stories came from Daily Dawn and 12(9.2%) from Daily Express ($X^2 = 36.708$; $p: .000$) (Table 1.2).

Overall 34 stories were ‘favorable to Gilani’ most stories 20(58.2%) came from Daily Express followed by 11(32.4%) stories from Daily Dawn, 3(8.8%) from The News International from Daily Daily Nawaiwat did not publish any story favorable to Gilani ($X^2 = 12.765$; $p: .002$) (Table 1.2). 36 neutral stories came into being published, out of these, 13(36.1%) were from Daily Express supplemented by 11(30.6%) from Daily Nawaiwaqt, 8(22.2%) from Daily Dawn and 4(11.1%) from The News International($X^2 = 5.111$; $p: .164$) (Table 1.2)

Table 1.2
Distribution of stories coverage in the newspapers of the study by Slants

Newspapers Variables	The News International N (% against total stories of each category)	Daily Dawn N (% against total stories of each category)	Daily Express N (% against total stories of each category)	Daily Nawaiwaqt N (% against total stories of each category)	Total N (% of each category against total stories of all newspapers)	X²
Slant*¹						
Favorable to Gilani	3 (8.8)	11 (32.4)	20 (58.2)	0 (.0)	34(17)	12.765; P: .002
Unfavorable	47 (36.2)	19 (11.6)	12 (9.2)	52 (40)	130 (65)	36.708; P: .000
Neutral	4 (11.1)	8 (22.2)	13 (36.1)	11(30.6)	36 (18)	5.111; P: .164

Note:

*1 X²: 90.280; p: .000

Question No. 4 to what extent were the selected newspapers unfavorable to PPP Government?

Overall 46 stories appeared on the topic out of which 25(51.3%) stories were unfavorable which included 10(40%), 7(28%), 4(16%), and 4(16%) from Daily Dawn, Daily Nawaiwaqt, The News International and Daily Express respectively (X² = 3.571; p: .059)(Table 1.3). 7(15.2%) stories were favorable which appeared 6(85.7%) and 1(11.3%) in Daily Express and The News International respectively,

Presidential immunity and NRO*²	0 4(23.5)	4(80.0)	1(20.0)	0 11(61.7)	5(25.0)	1.800; p: .180
Favorable	0(0)	2(11.8)	0	1(25.0)	17(85)	7.882; p: .019
Unfavorable		0	0	0	4(2)	1.000; p: .317
Neutral						
PPP Government*³	1(11.3)	0	6(85.7)	0 7(28)	7(35)	3.571; p: .059
Favorable	4(16)	10(40)	4(16)	2(11.3)	25(12.5)	3.960; p: .266
Unfavorable	1(7.1)	6(42.9)	5(35.7)	3	14(7)	1.857; p: .183
Neutral						
Supreme Court*⁴	0(.0)	5(83.3)	1(16.7)	0(.0)	6(3)	2.667; p: .102
Favorable	3(25.0)	5(41.7)	0(.0)	4(33.3)	12(6)	.500; p: .779
Unfavorable	1(16.7)	2(33.3)	1(16.7)	2(33.3)	6(3)	.667; p: .881
Neutral						

Note: ¹X²: 71.154; p: .000 ²X²: 12.077; p: .000

³X²: 10.739; p: .000 ⁴X²: 3.000; p: .000

Q No. 5 To what extent was the slant of the newspapers unfavorable towards the topic Presidential Immunity and NRO?

Overall 26 stories published on the topic ‘Presidential immunity and NRO’ out of which most stories 17(65.4%) were unfavorable to the topic or Gilani; most of the stories 11(61.7%) came from Daily Nawaiwaqt followed by 4(23.5%) and 2(11.8%) to stories by The News International and Daily Dawn respectively, however Daily Express did not publish any story unfavorable to the topic ($X^2 = 7.882$; p: .019)(Table 1.3). Daily Dawn and Daily Express published 4(80.0%) and 1(20.0%) stories respectively favoring presidential immunity and NRO, The News and Nawaiwaqt did not publish any story in favor of the topic ($X^2 = 1.800$; p: .180)(Table 1.3). 3(11.5%)

and 1(3.8%) Neutral stories published Daily Express and Nawaiwaqt but The News International and Daily Dawn did not published any neutral story on the topic ($X^2 = 1.000$; $p: .317$)(Table 1.3).

H₁: The overall slant of the newspapers will be more unfavorable towards Gilani's contempt of court case.

Out of 200 stories 104(52%) stories fall under the topic 'Gilani's contempt of court case' which included 76(73.1%) stories unfavorable to the topic. The News International published most unfavorable 36(48.6%) stories followed by 30(39.5%) stories from Daily Nawaiwaqt, 8(10.5) stories came from Daily Express and 2(2.6%) stories published by Daily Dawn ($X^2 = 43.158$; $p: .000$)(Table 1.3). Hence H₁ was supported.

Q No. 6 What was the slant of the newspapers on Gilani's contempt case?

Out of 200 stories 104(52%) stories fall under the topic 'Gilani's contempt of court case' which included 76(73.1%) stories unfavorable to the topic. The News International published most unfavorable 36(47.4%) stories followed by 30(39.5%) stories from Daily Nawaiwaqt, 8(10.5%) stories came from Daily Express and 2(2.6%) stories published by Daily Dawn ($X^2 = 43.158$; $p: .000$) (Table 1.3). 16(15.4%) stories carried favorable slant which include, 12(75%), 2(12.5%) and 2(12.5%) from Daily Express, Daily Dawn and The News International respectively whereas Nawaiwaqt did not any favorable story ($X^2 = 12.500$; $p: .002$) (Table 1.3). 12(11.5%) neutral stories appeared out of which 6(50%), 4(33.3%) and 2(16.7%) came from Daily Nawaiwaqt, Daily Express and The News international respectively, however Daily Dawn did not publish any neutral story on the topic ($X^2 = 2.000$; $p: .368$) (Table 1.3).

Q No. 7 How was Gilani's court case contempt portrayed by the selected newspapers?

Overall 50(25%) stories framed Gilani's contempt of court case out of which 39(78%) framed Gilani's contempt of court case justified most stories 18(46.2%) for justified frame came from The News International, followed by 15(38.5%) stories published by Daily Nawaiwaqt, 4(10.3%) stories came from

Daily Express, and 2(11.3%) stories were from Daily Dawn ($X^2 = 19.359$; $p: .000$)(Table 1.4). Out of 50 stories only 11(22%) stories framed Gilani's contempt of court case unjustified out of which 4(36.4%) came from Daily Express, 3(27.3%) from The News International, also 3(27.3%) from Daily Dawn and 1(9.0%) published by Nawaiwaqt($X^2 = 1.727$; $p: .631$)(Table 1.4).

Q. No. 8 How the selected newspapers portrayed the role of PPP Government?

Overall 82 stories framed the role of PPP Government out of which 71(86.6%) stories framed PPP as confronting judiciary in NRO implementation case. Most of the stories 26(36.3%) came from The News International followed by 21(28.1%), 20(29.6%) and 4(5.6%) stories by Daily Nawaiwaqt, Daily Dawn and Daily Express respectively ($X^2 = 15.366$; $p: .002$)(Table 1.4). 10(90.9%) and 1(9.1%) stories framed PPP Government as helping Judiciary in NRO implementation case by the Daily Express and Daily Dawn respectively however not a single story published by The News International and Daily Express ($X^2 = 7.364$; $p: .007$)(Table 1.4).

Table 1.4
Distribution of stories coverage in the newspapers of the study by Frames

Newspapers	The News International	Daily Dawn	Daily Express	Daily Nawaiwaqt	Total	X^2
Variab les	N (% against total stories of each category)	N (% against each category)	N (% against total stories)	N (% against total stories of each category)	N (% of each category against total stories of all newspapers)	

			ta l s t o r i e s o f e a c h c a t e g o r y)			
Frames						
Frame A*²	3 (27.3)	3 (27.3)	4 (36.4)	1 (9.0)	11 (5.1)	<i>1.727;P :.631</i>
Gilani's court case contem pt unjustif ied Gilani's court case contem pt justifie d	18 (46.2)	2 (5.1)	4 (10.3)	15 (38.5)	39 (18.2)	<i>19.359 ;P:.000</i>
Frame B*³	0 (.0)	4 (57.1)	3 (42.9)	0 (.0)	7 (3.3)	<i>.143;P: .705</i>
Preside ntial immuni ty and NRO legal and	11 (37.9)	2 (6.9)	2 (6	14 (48.3)	29 (13.6)	<i>15.828; P:.000</i>

constitutional Presidential immunity and NRO illegal and unconstitutional			.9)			
Frame C*⁴						
PPP	0 (.0)	1 (9.1)	1	0	11 (5.1)	7.364;P :.007
Government helping judiciary in NRO implementation case	26 (36.3)	20 (28.1)	0 (90.9)	21 (29.6)	71 (33.2)	15.366;P :.002
PPP Government confronting judiciary in NRO implementation case			4 (5.6)			
Frame D*⁵						
Judicial activism obstructing democratic	2 (9.5)	13 (61.9)	6 (28.6)	0 (.0)	21 (9.8)	8.857;P :.012
	9 (36)	6 (24)	8 (63)	7 (28)	25 (11.7)	3.000;P :.392

system Judicial activis m helping democr atic system			(1 2)			
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Note:*¹X²: 162.130; P: .000 *²X²: 216.790; P: .000*³X²: 86.290; P: .000 *⁴X²: 171.730; P: .000

H₂: The slant of The News International will be more unfavorable towards Yousuf Raza Gilani than the slant of the Daily Dawn.

Overall 66 unfavorable stories were published by the English newspapers out of The News International published 47(71.2%) stories having unfavorable slant towards Gilani 19(28.2%) unfavorable stories came from Daily Dawn. (X²: 11.879; p: .001) (Table 1.5). Hence H₂ was supported.

Discussion

The News International and Daily Nawaiwaqt issued greater publications which were against Gillani as compared to Daily Dawn and Daily Express. These two newspapers published more content regarding this issue and the articles comprised of unfavorable context. However Daily Dawn remained somewhat balanced and neutral as expected and as far as other three newspapers of the study are concerned, The News International and Daily Nawaiwaqt had been significantly unfavorable on the other hand Daily Express has been mainly favorable to Gilnai in its coverage. Gilnai's contempt of court case was discussed and studied the most in this research paper.

The News International published most unfavorable stories on Gilani's contempt of court case. Ameer Bhutto states in an opinion article published in The News on May 15, 2012, that "although Gilani seemed thoroughly dishonored under legal and constitutional authority, what to talk about the requirements of respect and integrity? Do they add up for not anything? We are discussing about men who purportedly affirmed that they can only be detached from the corridors of power in ambulances. They treat the country like their private domain and crush over

laws and all essentials of civilized democratic behavior with reckless abandon” (The case of Gilani, para. 5).

The editorial columns of Daily Nawaiwaqt also viewed Gilani’s role contrary to law as editorials of Nawaiwaqt (2012) state that, “If PPP government does not show political vision then we can be dragged to the situation like Egypt, Libya and Syria. Are our rulers aware of this threat? If they are then it’s time to act that Prime Minister leave his office in the larger interest of country and nation. Government should avoid such steps which may push country into riots and unrests.”

Judicial activism got mixed portrayal, Daily Nawaiwaqt and The News International strongly appreciated the role of Judiciary in strengthening democratic system however Daily Dawn mainly and then followed by Daily Express criticized judicial activism which is obstructing democratic system in Pakistan. Not surprisingly judicial activism viewed somewhat biased by a credible newspaper like Daily Dawn which portrayed most unfavorable stories on judicial activism as an editorial titled *Contempt charges*, published on February 3, 2012, states that, “A judiciary perceived to be in a selective hurry does not help the cause of national political instability”(para. 1).

Limitations/Recommendations and Further Research

The first limitation being the fact that only articles and editorials were analyzed since it was not a practical implementation to review the entire relevant context from the newspapers and articles. Moreover, this study has to be seconded with analysis of new data. In this research paper, Gilani’s contempt of court case was included which is outcome of NRO implementation case a detailed study starting from the drafting of the NRO to the disqualification can give a broader view of the issue. Judicial activism is quite prevalent these days. So, this niche needs to be studied in detail.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the newspapers framed the issue according to their editorial policies. Overall the issue remained strongly unfavorable to Prime Minister Gilani. However mixed slants and frames observed regarding judicial activism. Frames related to judicial activism frames reflected critical approach of newspaper. Gilani and PPP government was mainly a target of

criticism in the coverage for their confrontational approach. Whenever a case prolongs in a confrontation/conflict situation then the parties involved in it are considered responsible for the rift. PPP government and Gilani considered mainly responsible for this case and judicial activism partially.

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