

## **Portrayal of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) government in Print Media: Analysis of The Nation & The Express Tribune**

Muhammad Adnan<sup>1</sup>

Muhammad Awais<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

The article identifies and describes the coverage pattern of first 100 days of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) government performance in the light of agenda setting and framing theories in two leading English dailies of Pakistan: The Nation and The Express Tribune. The front pages of the newspapers were selected for the duration of 100 days to measure the slant, frame, frequency and placement of news stories related to the performance of newly established Pakistan Tehreek Insaf government in the areas of economic affairs and foreign policy. The results indicate that the two leading English dailies cover the activities of the Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) differently. The Nation published 18 news stories related to economic affairs and foreign policy of the government while The Express Tribune published 24 news stories related to economic affairs and foreign policy of the newly established government on their front pages duration the 100 days study period. The language and theme of most of the articles published by The Nation were favorable towards Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI). The language and theme of the articles of The Express Tribune were more neutral and critical towards the performance of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) government in the areas of economic affairs and foreign policy.

***Key Words: Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI), Newspaper, Pakistan's Print Media, Economic Affairs, Foreign Policy, The Nation, The Express Tribune***

---

<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Adnan, Department of Media and Communication Studies, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Awais, Department of Media and Communication Studies, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan

**Introduction**

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is a centrist political party in Pakistan founded in 1996 by Imran Khan, the former captain of Pakistan national cricket team and the current Prime Minister of Pakistan. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) became the single largest party in terms of seats and popular vote at the national level as results of elections 2018 in Pakistan. Due to the high level of expectations from the new government, the media outlets were expected to closely and critically monitor the performance of the newly established government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) especially during their first 100 days in office.

**Problem Statement**

The aim of the research is to explore and analyze the role of Pakistan's print media during the first 100 days of newly established Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government.

The following objectives have been developed for the analysis.

- 1) To know and understand how Pakistan's print media portrayed the performance of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government
- 2) To analyze the content of Pakistan's print media during the first 100 days of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government

And to attain the above objectives, analysis has been done via following research questions.

**RQ1:** What is the amount of coverage for each issue in The Nation and The Express Tribune?

**RQ2:** Did The Nation portray Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government performance more favorably as compare to The Express Tribune?

### **Literature Review:**

In the past a number of different studies are conducted to explore the relationship between the government and the media in the light of framing, and agenda setting theories.

Media framing and agenda setting are two important theories keeping in mind the relationship between media and government. Framing theory actually explains how something is presented (called the “frame”) to the people by the media and how it influences the choices and decision they made. Frames are used to structure and shape the meaning of the specific messages. While on the other hand there are two core assumptions of agenda setting theory. The first assumption is that media filter and shape the content we received while the second assumption is based on the concept that the more the media give importance to any issue the more people will consider that issue to be important. The agenda setting theory was introduced by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972.

In their initial article where they introduced agenda setting theory their abstract states:

*“In choosing and displaying news, editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality. Readers learn not only about a given issue, but also how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position. In reflecting what candidates are saying during a campaign, the mass media may well determine the important issues – that is, the media may set the “agenda” of the campaign.”*  
(McCOMBS, 1972)

### **Method of the Research**

To carry out the research two leading English Pakistani newspapers The Nation Islamabad and The Express Tribune Islamabad have been selected. The criteria for their selection included.

- 1) Both the newspapers are leading newspapers in Pakistan
- 2) Both the newspapers have broad range of readership
- 3) Both the newspapers are popular among the Pakistani public and policy

To keeping in mind the nature of the selected topic, primarily the content analysis technique would be applied in order to accomplish the research study.

### **Sampling**

Two English language newspapers have been taken to explore and analyze the Portrayal of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) government in print media of Pakistan from 18 August 2018 till

24 November 2018. The data was analyzed via systematic sampling and newspaper of every 7th day of both newspapers was considered as part of sample. The front pages of both English newspapers have been selected for this study. The reason behind the selection of the front pages is that usually newspapers highlight the most important core issues on their front pages. The front pages of the newspapers were selected for the duration of 100 days to measure the slant, frame, frequency and placement of news stories related to the performance of newly established Pakistan Tehreek Insaf government in the areas of economic affairs and foreign policy. The measurements of the articles in terms of positive (favorable), negative (unfavorable) or neutral were based on words, phrases, sentences and overall theme.

### **Portrayal**

“The act of showing or describing someone or something especially in print formats.” (Merriam Webster Dictionary)

“A description of someone or something in a particular way; a representation.” (Oxford dictionary)

### **Economic**

“The branch of knowledge concerned with the production, consumption, and transfer of wealth.” (Oxford dictionary)

“Of or relating to an economy.” (Merriam Webster Dictionary)

**Foreign Policy**

<b>Content</b>	<b>Favorable</b>	<b>Unfavorable</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Total</b>
Economic Affairs	5	0	4	9
Foreign policy	8	0	1	9
Overall	13	0	5	18

“A government's strategy in dealing with other nations.”  
(Oxford dictionary)

“The policy of a sovereign state in its interaction with other sovereign states.” (Merriam Webster Dictionary)

**Results and Discussion**

Data is collected from Pakistan leading English newspapers *The Nation* and *The Express Tribune* to examine the Portrayal of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) government in print Media.

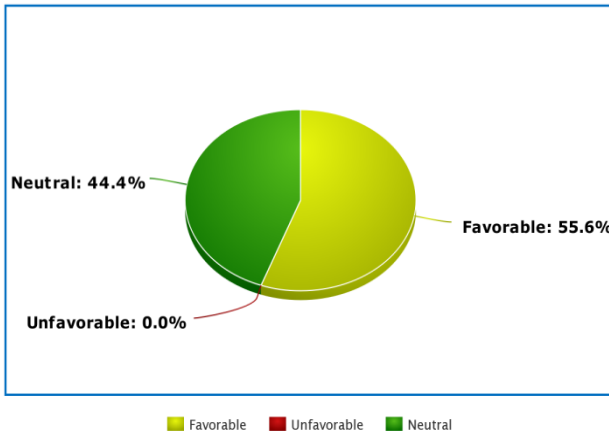
**The Nation**

Total of 18 news stories were selected during the time duration of 100 days from 18 August 2018 to 24 November 2018.

**Framing of News Items in “The Nation”**

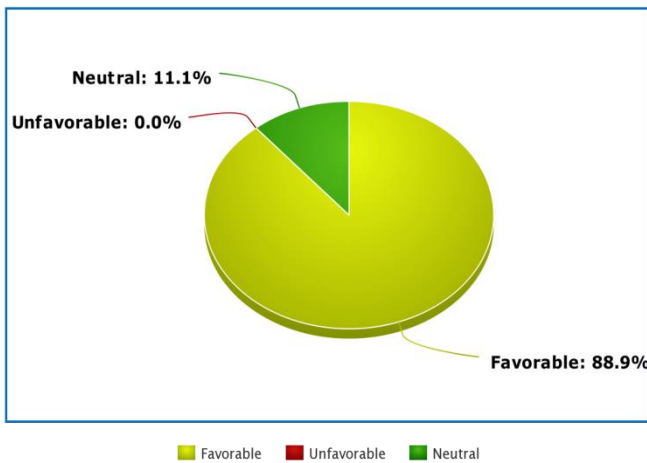
The above table shows that out of 18 news stories, 13 are favorable and 5 are neutral while there are no unfavorable stories. In the economic affairs section out of 9, 5 news stories are favorable, 4 are neutral and there are no unfavorable stories. While in the foreign policy section out of 9 news stories, 8 are favorable, 1 story is neutral and there are no unfavorable stories.

**Economic Affairs coverage in “The Nation”**



The above pie chart shows that 55.6 % stories related to economic affairs of the government are favorable where as 44.6 % news stories are neutral. No negative stories are observed.

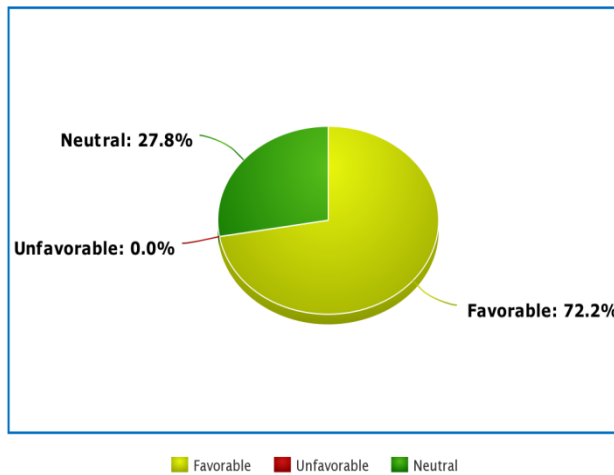
**Foreign policy of coverage in “The Nation”**



## Journal of Media Studies 34(2)

The above pie chart shows that 88.9 % stories related to foreign policy of the government are favorable where as 11.1 % news stories are neutral. No negative stories are observed.

### Overall coverage in “The Nation”



The above pie chart shows that 72.2 % news stories published in “The Nation” during the study period time related to economic affairs and foreign policy of the newly established government of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) are favorable where as 27.8 % news stories are neutral. No negative stories are observed.

### The Express Tribune

Total of 25 news stories were selected during the time duration of 100 days from 18 August 2018 to 24 November 2018.

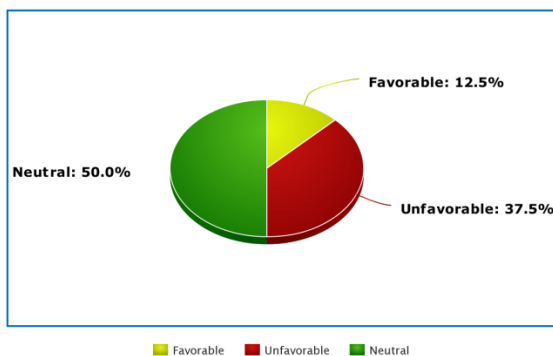


**Framing of News Items in The Express Tribune**

Content	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Total
Economic Affairs	2	6	8	16
Foreign policy	1	0	8	9
Overall	3	6	16	25

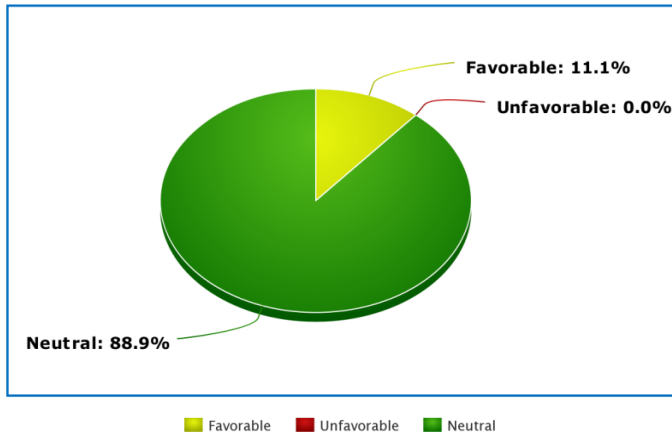
The above table shows that out of 25 news stories, 3 are favorable, 6 are unfavorable and 16 are neutral. In the economic affairs section out of total 16 news stories, 2 are favorable, 8 are neutral and 6 are unfavorable. While in the foreign policy section out of 9 news stories, 1 is favorable, 16 are neutral and there are no unfavorable stories.

**Economic Affairs coverage in “The Express Tribune”**



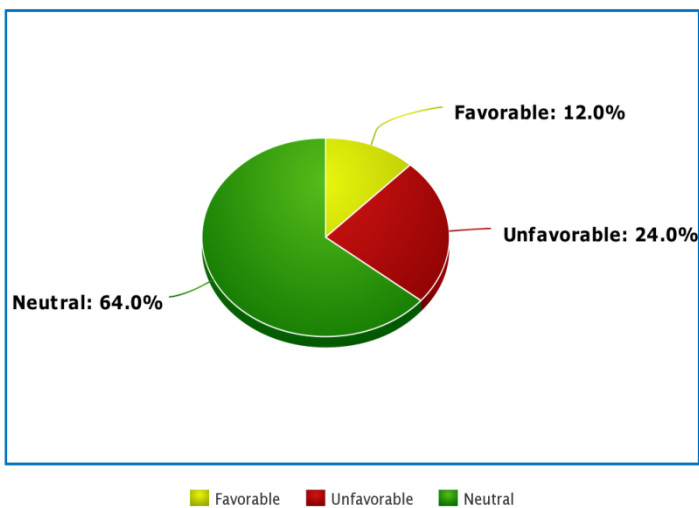
The above pie chart shows that 12.5 % news stories related to economic affairs of the government are favorable, 37.5 are unfavorable where as 50 % news stories are neutral.

Foreign policy of coverage in “The Express Tribune”



The above pie chart shows that 11.1 % news stories related to foreign policy of the government are favorable, 88.9 % news stories are neutral whereas no unfavorable stories are observed.

Overall coverage in “The Express Tribune”



The above pie chart shows that 12 % news stories published in “The Nation” during the study period time related to economic affairs and foreign policy of the newly established government of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) are favorable, 24 % are unfavorable where as 64 % news stories are neutral.

### **Conclusion**

Results indicate that “The Express Tribune” has given more coverage to the economic affairs of the newly established government of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) as compare to “The Nation”, whereas both newspapers have given equal coverage to the foreign policy of government.

The results also indicate that “The Nation” has given more positive coverage to the economic affairs and foreign policy of the newly established government of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) as compare to the neutral and critical coverage of “The Express Tribune”.

### **References**

Mccombs, s. (1972). The agenda-setting function of mass media.

*Public opinion quarterly* , 176-187.