

GALLUP & GILANI PAKISTAN
NEWSPAPER CONTENT ANALYSIS REPORT

February 2018

A monthly series from Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Wing looking at around 3000 Newspaper columns and editorials



20th June 2018



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NEWSPAPERS

Content Analysis of Newspapers during February 2018

In the 12 English and Urdu newspapers analyzed during February 2018, covering over 3000 opinion articles, 'Social', 'Political' and 'International' issues were the main topics under discussion while issues related to the Economy and Media were largely overlooked in the articles/columns.
GALLUP & GILANI PAKISTAN

Islamabad, June 20, 2018

1. Introduction

According to a Monthly Research Study conducted by Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Division, 'Social', 'Political' and 'International' issues were the main topics under discussion. Meanwhile, Health, Media, Religion and Sports received negligible coverage in opinion articles/columns published in 12 newspapers of Pakistan. The duration of the analysis is February 2018.

Content analysis of **twelve** national newspapers consisting of a total of **3071** opinion articles/columns written by various columnists was conducted for February 2018. This is part of Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Division's initiative to empirically understand opinion leaders' views on national issues. A similar analysis is already being conducted for the top eight talk shows in the country on a monthly basis. The latest findings can be accessed at <http://gallup.com.pk/polls/gallup-pakistan-media-research/tv-talk-shows-analysis/>.

2. Which newspapers are analyzed?

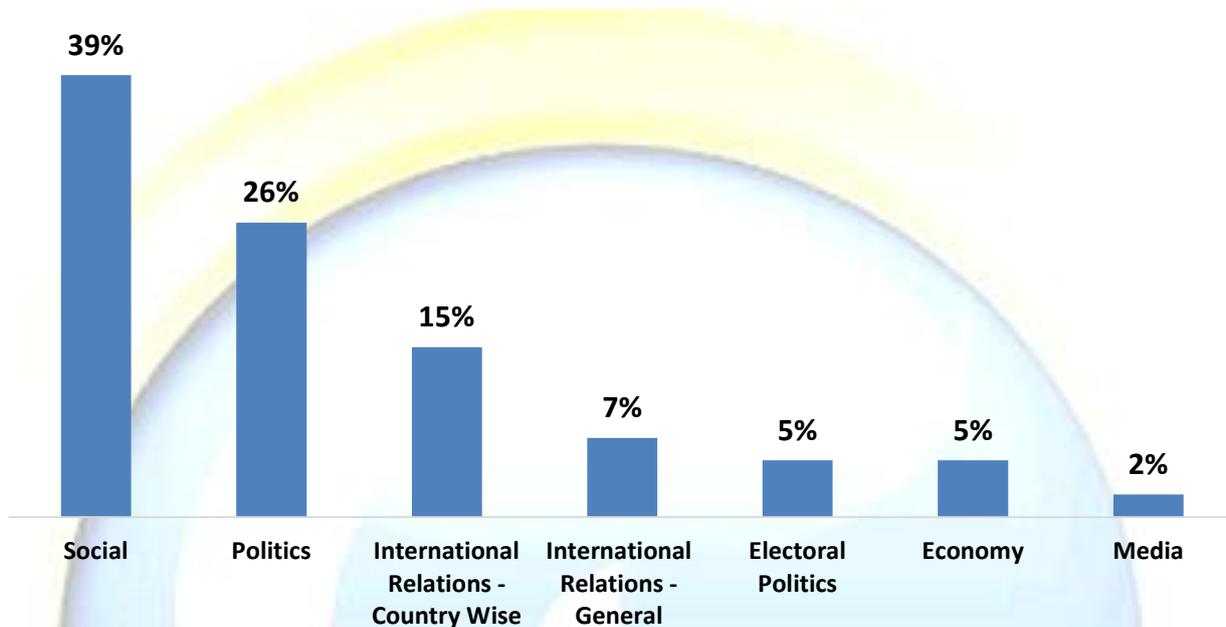
Out of the twelve newspapers, **five** were **Urdu** newspapers, namely Daily Pakistan, Nawa-i-waqt, Daily Express, Daily Jang and Daily Khabrain and **seven** were **English** newspapers, namely Express Tribune, Daily Times, Dawn, Pakistan Today, The Pakistan Observer, The Nation and The News.

3. Main Topics under discussion: Social, Politics and International take priority while Media, Economy etc. receive negligible attention.

The topics discussed in these opinion articles/columns were categorized into **seven** broad themes: 'Social', 'Political', 'Electoral Politics', 'Economy', 'Media', 'International (General)' and 'International (Country-wise)'.
39% of the articles were devoted to social issues in Pakistan, followed by political issues which were rated at **26%**. Following two topics, international issues took over newspaper space: while **15%** of the news articles focused on specific countries, **7%** of the articles were about international relations in general. Economic issues were not far behind, taking up **5%** of the newspaper space. Despite politics taking up a large share of newspaper space, electoral politics specifically took only **5%** of space in the newspaper. The least discussed topics were issues related to the media at **2%**.

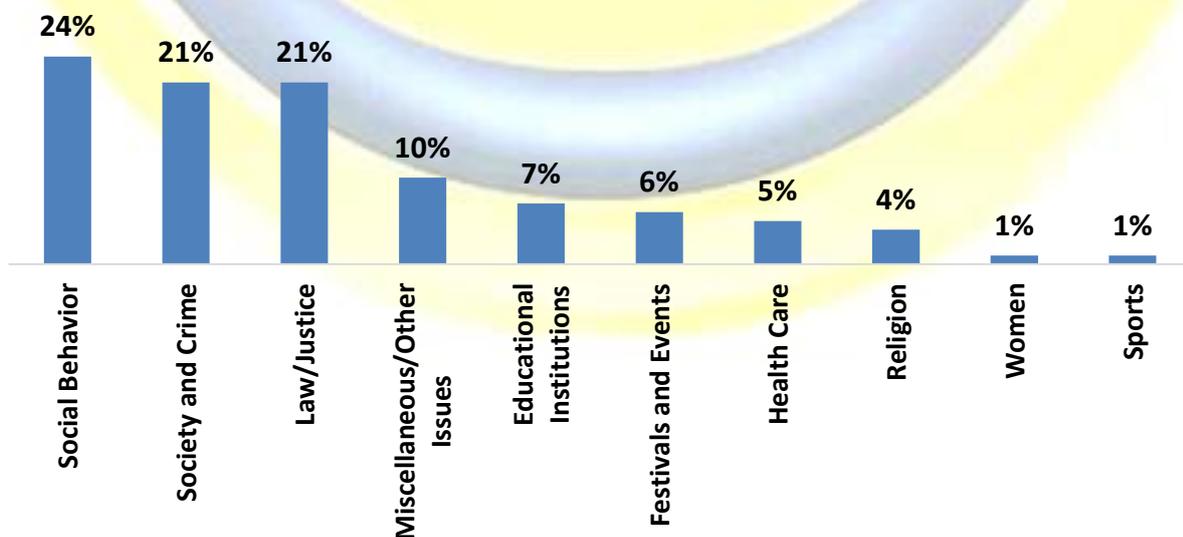
Topics within the 'Social' category pertained to smaller articles on education, healthcare and the persecution of religious minorities. The leading topics were Asma Jahangir's death, the Kasur rape case, and the Mesud murder case, with a few articles pointing to the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement. In the category of 'Politics' the

leading topics were speculation over PML-N’s strategies following Nawaz Sharif’s dismissal as well as the strategies of the opposition and schisms in MQM. There were also broader pieces analyzing issues of accountability, corruption and the stability of the state. Under the International (Country-wise) category were articles relating to Trump’s foreign policy (particularly the concern over NATO and arms deals), worsening Pak-Afghan relations, and the Syrian War. India was featured comparatively less than expected; however, the articles which featured India discussed its domestic reforms and foreign policy.

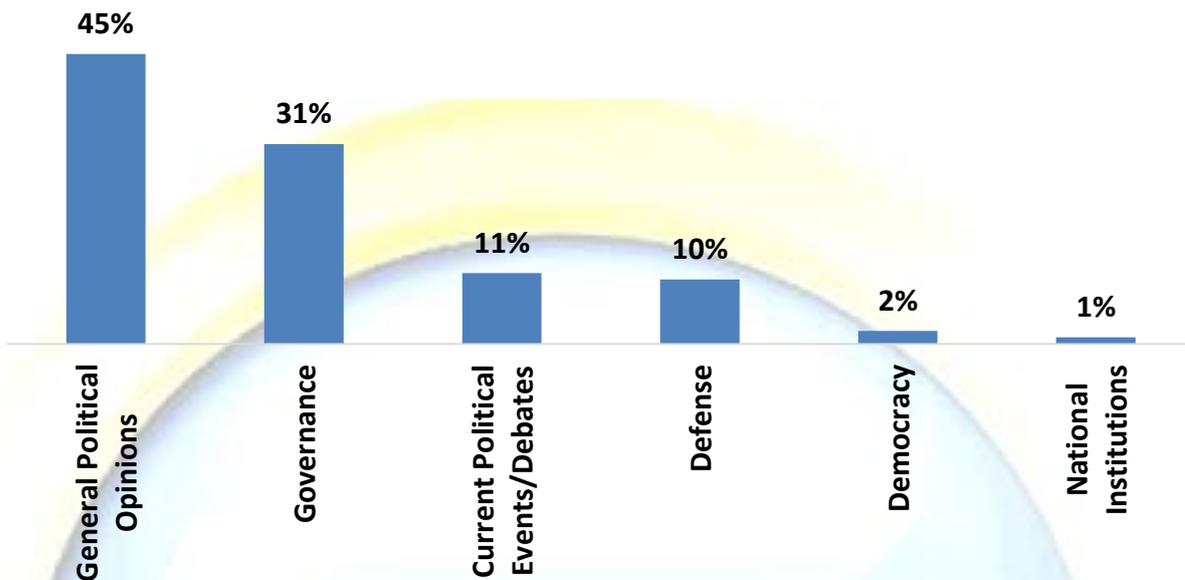


4. Sub-topics Within Wider Topics: Social Behavior, Political Opinions and International Issues

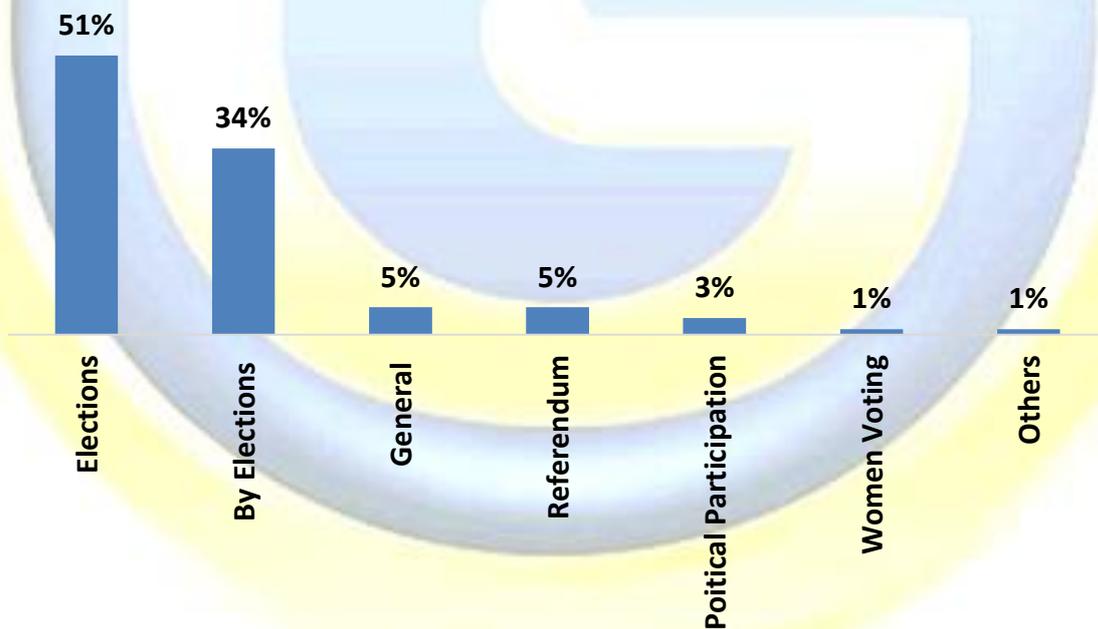
The main themes were further organized into sub-categories and assessed by proportion. The most recurring sub-themes in ‘Social’ were: Social Behavior (24%), Society and crime (21%), Law/Justice (21%), Other/Miscellaneous Issues (10%). The remaining percent were taken up by sports, festivals & events, women, religion, health care and news pertaining to educational institutions.



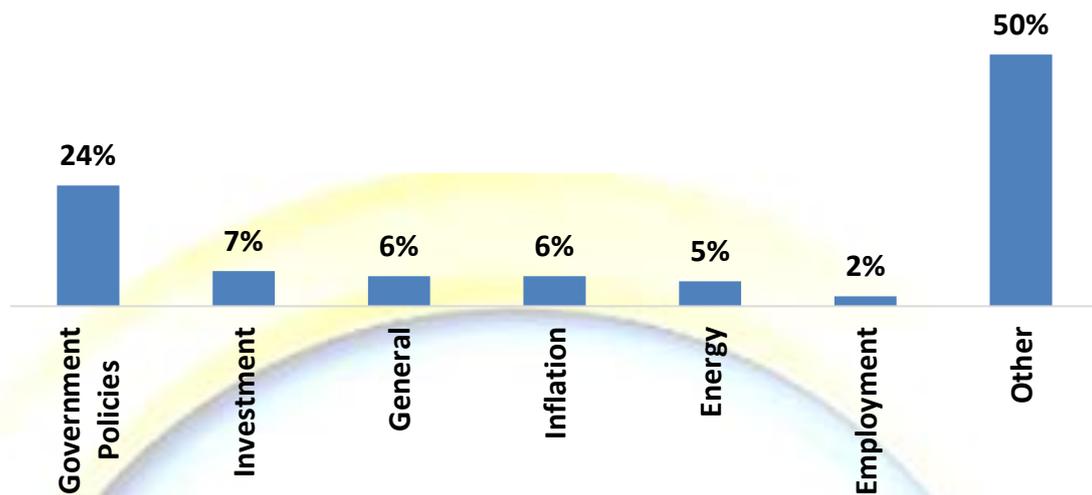
In 'Politics' the most frequent themes were General Political Opinions (45%), Governance (31%), Current Political Events/Debates (11%) while the remaining articles were divided into Democracy, Political Performance, Defense and National Institutions.



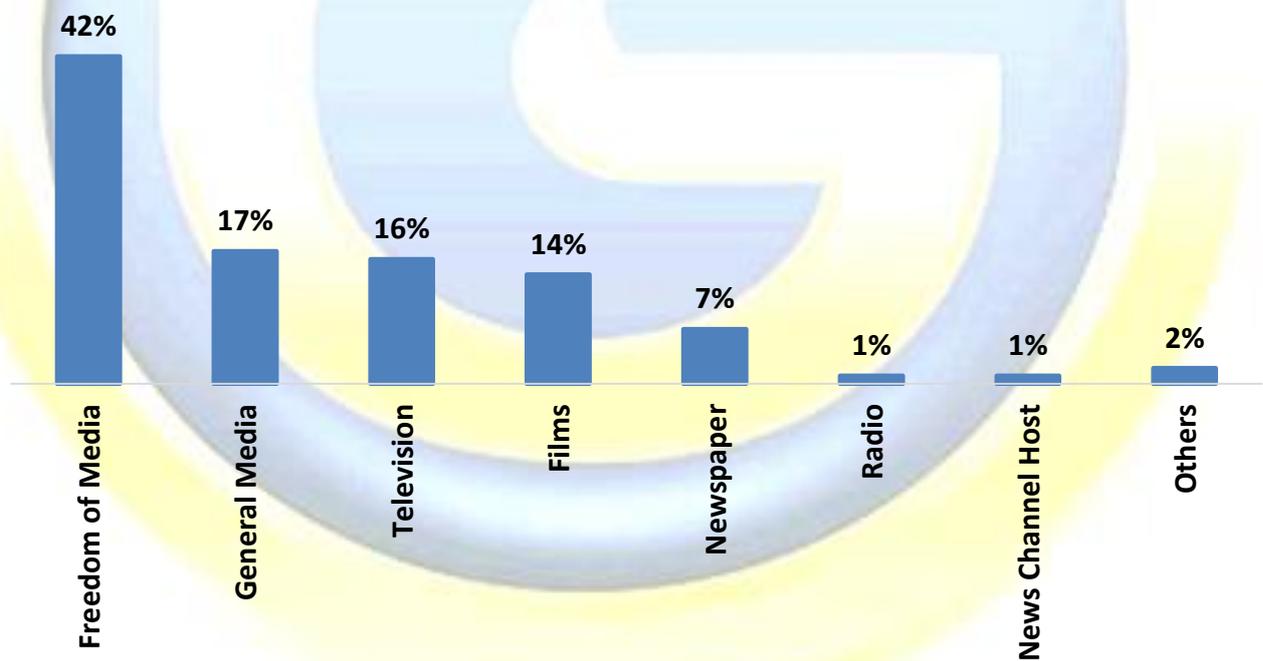
The leading themes in Electoral Politics were Elections (51%) and By Elections (34%). Topics relating to Women Voting, Political Participation, General Issues and Referendums were also discussed.



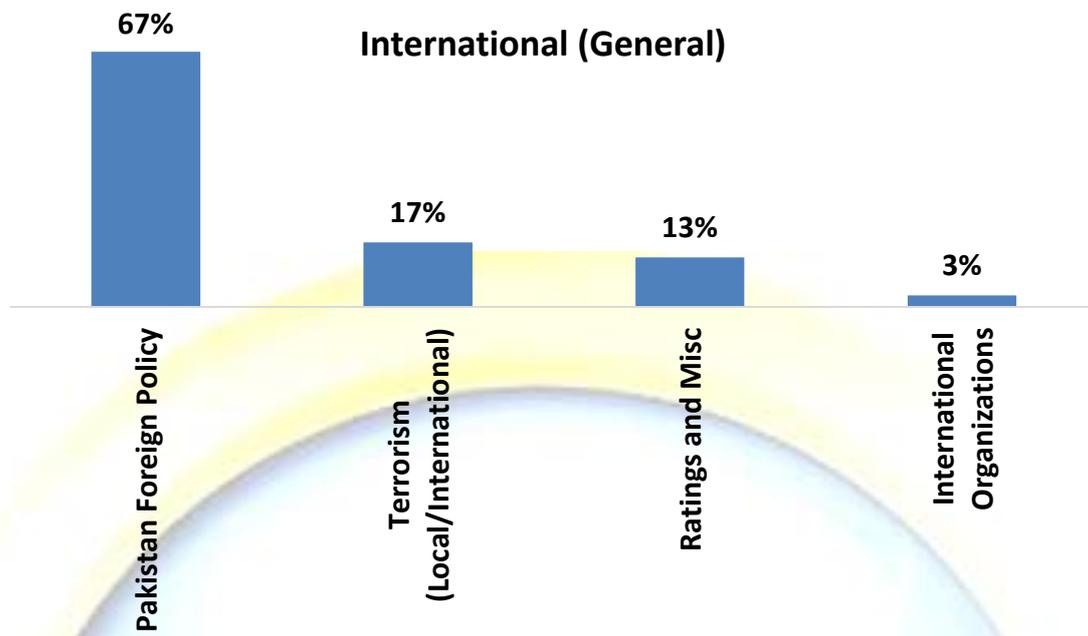
In Economy, Government Policies (24%), Investment (7%), Inflation (6%), Energy (5%) and Employment (2%) were the oft-discussed topics.



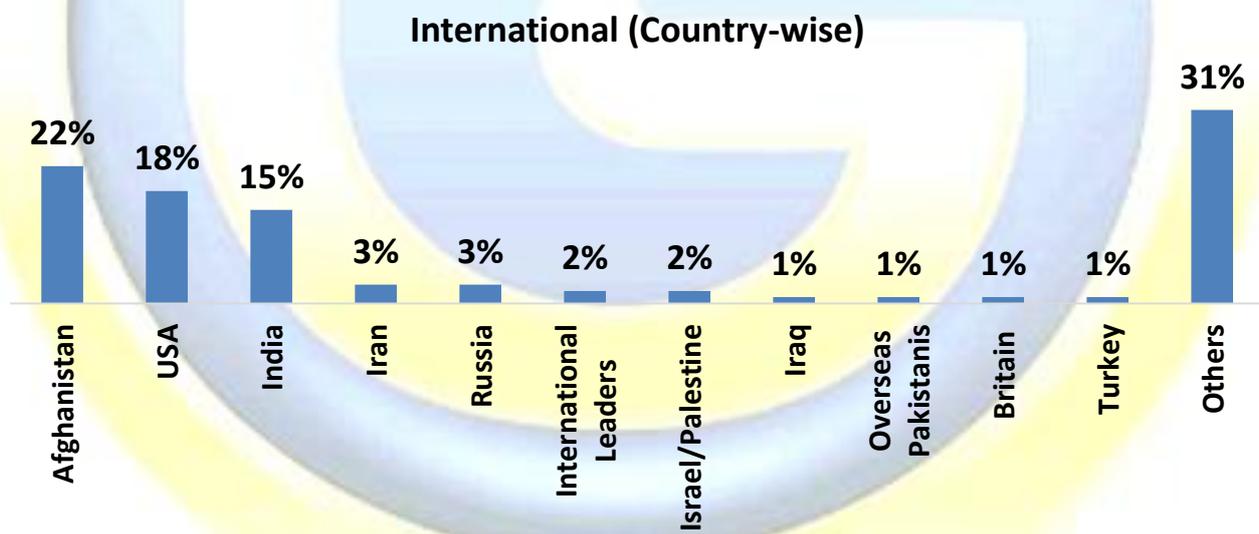
In Media, the most occurring themes were Freedom of Media (42%), Television (16%), General Media (17%), Films (14%) with News Channel Hosts and Radio.



The main themes present in International (General) are as follows: Pakistan's Foreign Policy (67%), Terrorism (17%), Ratings and Miscellaneous (13%) and International Organizations (3%).



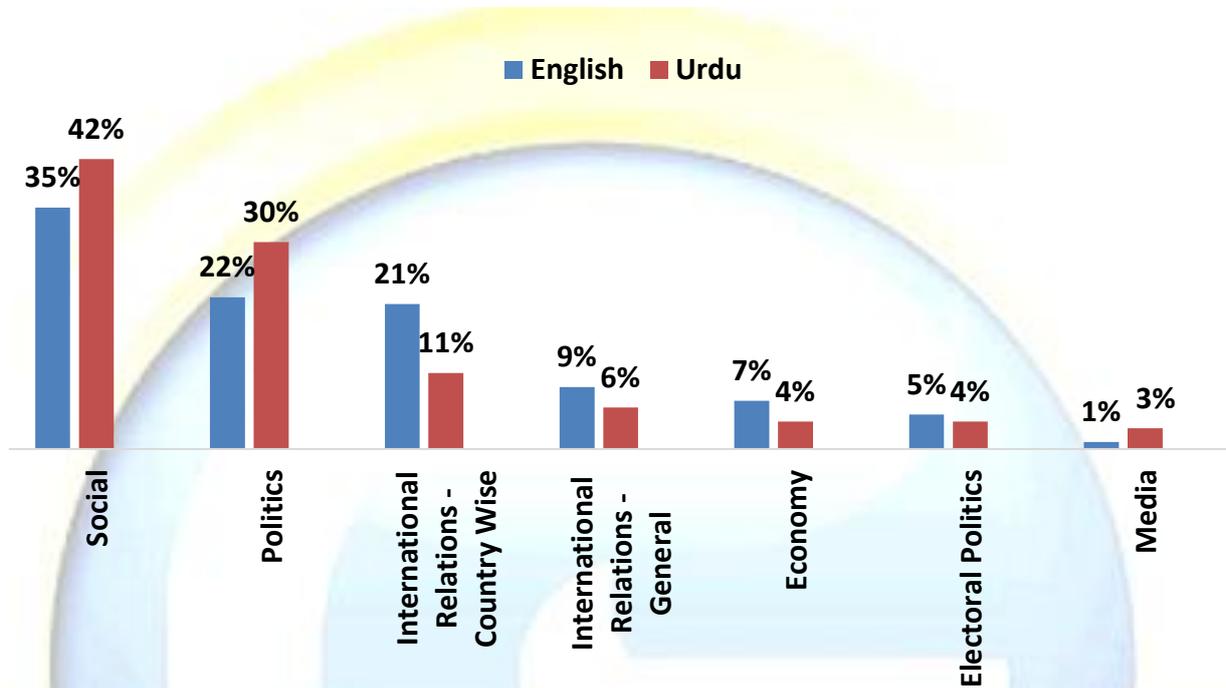
The countries which received the most attention in International (Country-wise) were Afghanistan (22%), USA (18%), India (15%) and others (31%).



5. Urdu versus English Newspapers: Social and Political Issues Dominant in both English and Urdu Newspapers

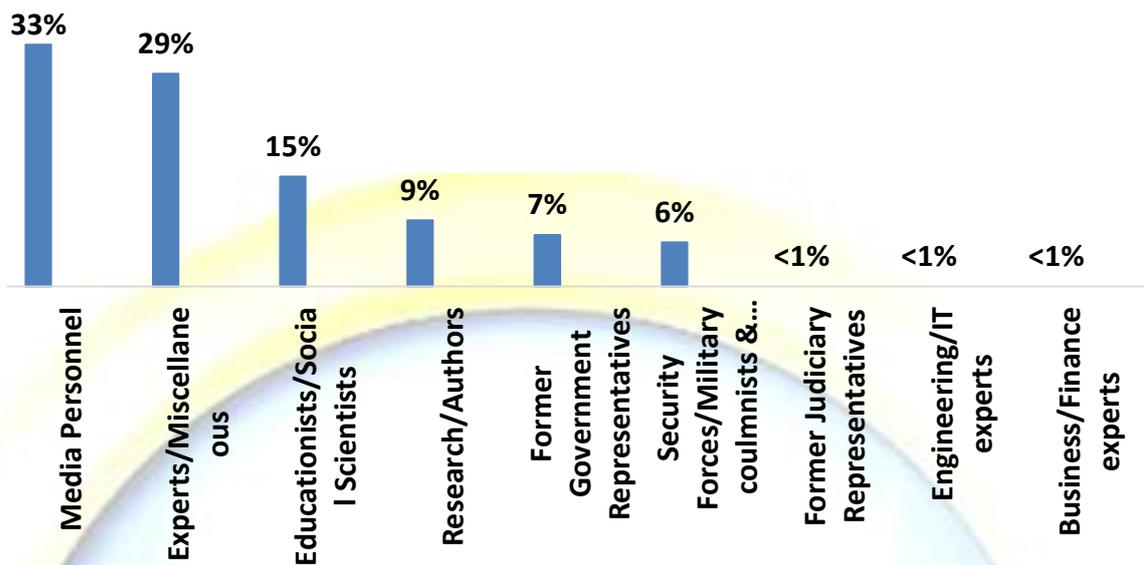
Out of a total of 1742 articles/columns that were written in Urdu newspapers in the month of February, the majority were on topics falling under the banner of Social at 42%. The second topic which occupied public imagination was Political Issues at 30%. International news was featured relatively less at 11% for different countries and 6% overall. Electoral Politics also garnered little attention; only 4% of the articles revolved around the issue of elections. Both economy and media got similar coverage, with 4% of articles dedicated to the economy and 3% to the media.

Out of a total of **1329** articles/ columns written in English in February, **35%** and **22%** of the articles focused on social and political issues respectively. Unlike in the Urdu newspapers, English newspapers devoted much attention to international issues, with **21%** of space being used by country-wise international issues and **9%** on general discussions about international relations. Articles regarding the economy got **7%** coverage whereas discussions around elections took up **5%** of newspaper space. Media was given the least amount of attention in newspapers at only **1%**.



6. Background of Columnists: Professional Columnists Take Lead in English Papers in February 2018

An analysis of the columnists' background and profession was conducted for **734 English articles in February 2018** to determine a relationship between the types of topics discussed and the occupation of the columnists writing them. The writers' professions span over a wide range of theoretical and practitioner professions. However, due to the unviability of relevant information, it is difficult to find a comprehensive list of occupations in the remaining English and Urdu newspapers. Professional columnists, TV anchors, editors and freelance journalists dominate the news, writing **33%** of all articles. They were followed by Experts/Miscellaneous at **29%** and Educationists/Social Scientists at **15%**. Researchers/Authors wrote **9%** of the articles while former government representatives wrote **7%** of them. In contrast former security forces/Military columnists and health experts wrote only **6%** of the articles. Former Judiciary representatives, experts in Engineering/IT and business/finance had negligible representation in February 2018.



7. Rationale behind Content Analysis of Media

The aim of this new series of content analysis of mainstream media (newspapers as well as talk shows) is to understand how public disclosure and agenda-setting takes place. Among other issues, once significant monthly data collection happens, we hope to establish a monthly ‘trend’ analysis and see how sensitive Urdu and English newspaper opinion articles/ columns are to changing current issues. It is also hoped that this analysis sheds some light on understanding who sets the agenda and who follows, i.e. whether TV talk shows set the themes for newspaper opinion articles/ columns or vice versa.

Another theme that we hope to explore is to understand who are the opinion leaders/ shapers when it comes to the media. Is there a significant difference in the background of English and Urdu opinion article/ column writers? How does the profile of TV talk show guests vary from newspaper opinion article/ column writers? The overall theme of the research is to empirically understand the Pakistani Media which has undeniably witnessed exponential growth in its numbers, its audience and also improved its legitimacy (and therefore its soft power) in the public sphere.

We hope that these two studies (newspaper as well as talk shows) and their analysis would help shape a healthy and constructive debate among media practitioners on how the media industry can improve its quality and outreach in the future.

The study was released by Gilani Foundation and carried out by Gallup & Gilani Pakistan, the Pakistani affiliate of Gallup International. The duration of the analysis is February 2018. This data was obtained after reviewing 3071 articles, spread over 12 newspapers (mentioned in the third paragraph of this press release).

About Gilani Research Foundation

Gilani Research Foundation is a not for profit public service project to provide social science research to students, academia, policy makers and concerned citizens in Pakistan and across the globe.

Gilani Research Foundation is headed by Dr. Ijaz Shafi Gilani who pioneered the field of opinion polling in Pakistan and established Gallup Pakistan in 1980. Currently Dr. Gilani, who holds a PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and has taught at leading universities in Pakistan and abroad, is Chairman of Gallup & Gilani Pakistan.

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For more survey data on social and other issues see website www.gallup.com.pk

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