

GALLUP & GILANI PAKISTAN
NEWSPAPER CONTENT ANALYSIS REPORT

April 2019

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



31st May 2019



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Content Analysis of Newspaper Articles Published During April 2019

In the 12 English and Urdu newspapers analyzed for April 2019 covering nearly 3000 opinion pieces, political, social, and international issues were the main topics under discussion, whereas issues related to climate change, the environment, and the media were largely overlooked. (GALLUP & GILANI PAKISTAN)

Islamabad, May 31, 2018

1. Introduction

According to a Monthly Research Study conducted by the Media Research Division of Gallup & Gilani Pakistan, the main topics under discussion during April 2019 belong to three categories: Political, Social and International. Economic issues received relatively less space in the newspapers, whereas topics that come under Climate Change/Environment, Media, and Consumer/Commercial received scant attention in the 12 newspapers.

An analysis of the content of **12** national newspapers consisting of a total of **2,876** opinion articles/columns written by various columnists was conducted for April 2019. This is part of Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Division's new initiative to empirically understand opinion leaders' views on national issues.

2. Which newspapers have been analyzed?

Out of the 12 newspapers, **5** were **Urdu** newspapers, namely Daily Pakistan, Daily Express, Daily Jang, Daily Khabrain and Nawa-i-waqt, and **7** were **English** newspapers, namely The Express Tribune, Daily Times, Dawn, Pakistan Today, The Pakistan Observer, The Nation, and The News.

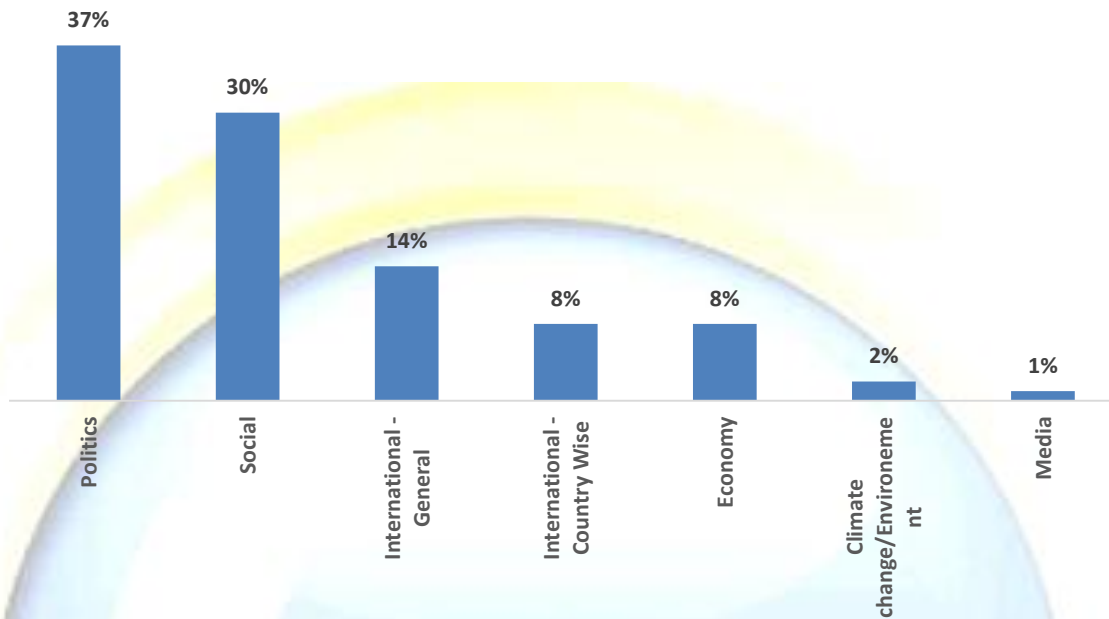
3. Main Topics under discussion: Social, Political, and International take priority while Climate Change/Environment, Media, etc. receive scant attention.

The topics discussed in these opinion articles/columns were categorized into **9** broad themes: 'Social', 'Political', 'Electoral Politics', 'Economy', 'Consumer/Commercial', 'Media', 'International (General)', 'International (Country-wise)', and Climate Change/Environment. Although 11 categories were outlined, only 9 of them (excluding 'Demographics' and 'Special Projects') were given space in the papers.

37% of the articles were devoted to politics in Pakistan, followed by social issues which rated at **30%**. After these two topics, international issues take over newspaper space: while **14%** of the news focused on general international issues, **8%** were about specific countries. Economic issues were not far behind, taking up **8%** of the total share.

Topics within the 'Social' category pertain to law, education, health care, religion, and sports. The topics which take the lead are the worsening law and order conditions of the country, and religious and societal violence. Increasing drug prices and the rise in Polio cases were also hot topics in the 'Social' category. In 'Political,' debates over the newly elected Prime Minister Imran Khan's performance in office in the past 8 months took up most of the space. There were also broader pieces analyzing issues of accountability, the stability of the state and Pakistan's policies for governance. Under the International (General) category, recent terrorist attacks including the incident that took place in Christchurch, New Zealand, and the Quetta bombings were discussed, along with other global news such as the fire in Paris's Notre Dame Cathedral. In

the International (Country-wise) category, debates over the upcoming elections in India and Narendra Modi's chances of winning took a lion's share of the total space. Topics such as the increasing incidence of rain in dry seasons and the sharp decline in certain wildlife species were covered in the 'Climate Change/Environment' category. Finally, in the 'Media' category, the Media's freedom was mainly discussed.

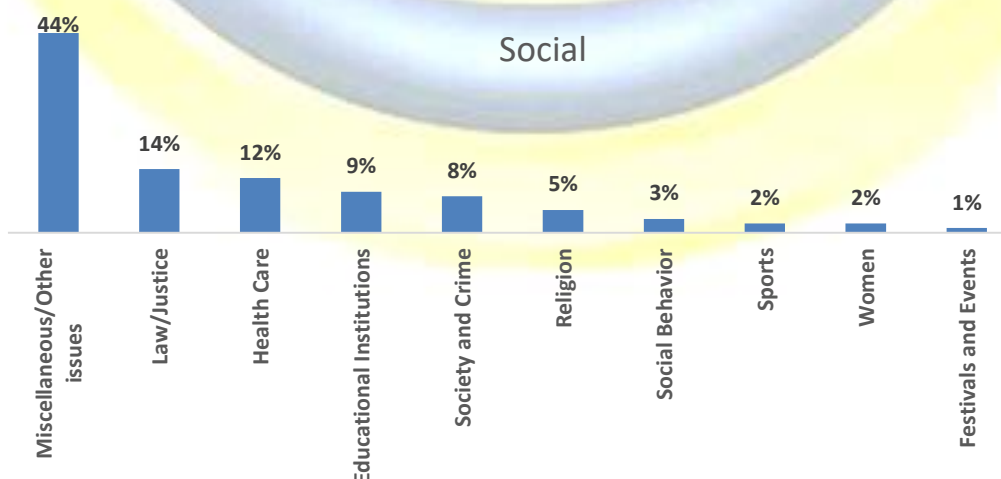


Source: Newspaper Content Analysis by Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Consultancy (www.gallup.com.pk, www.gilanifoundation.com)

4. Sub-categories: Social Behavior, Political Opinions, and International Issues

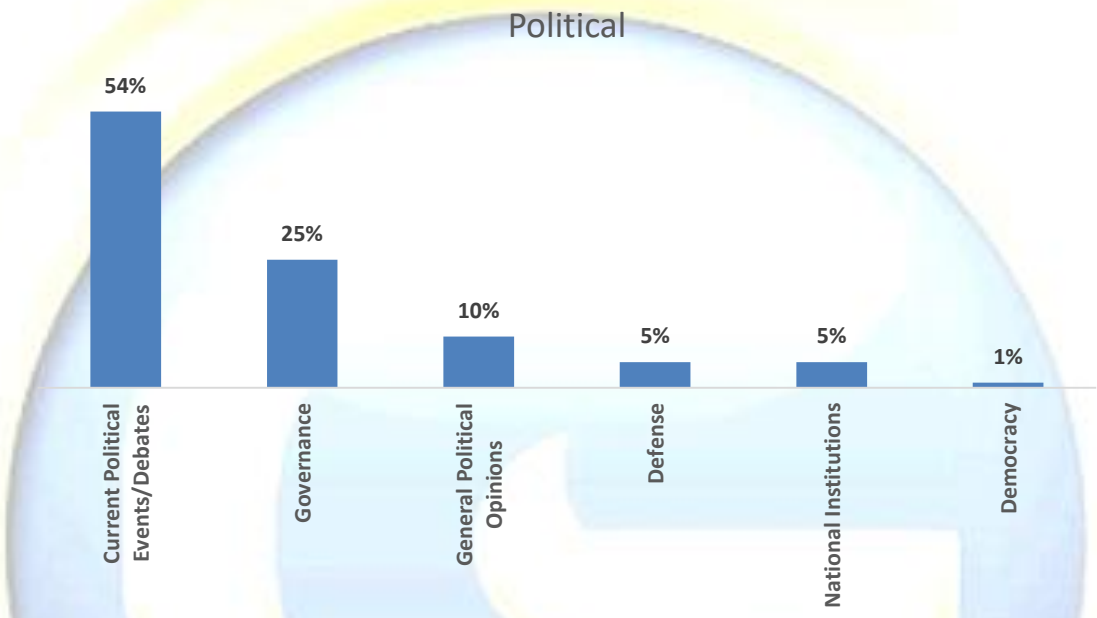
Sub-categories helped further organize broader themes by assessing the proportion.

The most recurring sub-themes in 'Social' (which occupied subject matter of around 30% opinion pieces) were: Miscellaneous/Other Issues (44%), Law/Justice (14%), Health care (12%), Education (9%), and Society and Crime (8%). The remaining percent were taken up by Religion, Social Behavior, Sports, Women, and Festivals & Events.



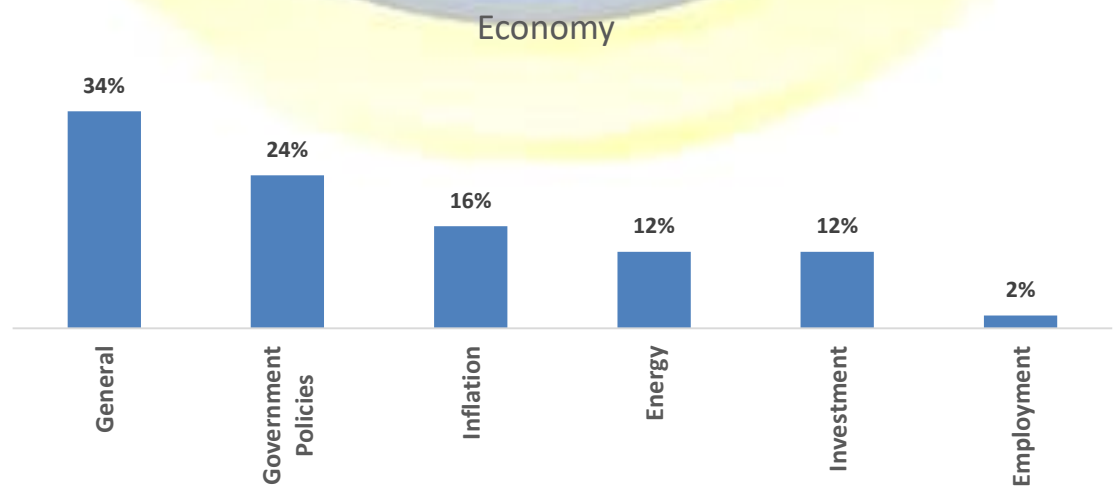
Source: Newspaper Content Analysis by Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Consultancy (www.gallup.com.pk, www.gilanifoundation.com)

In 'Political' (which was a concern for **37%** of articles): Current Political Events/Debates (**54%**) included opinion pieces over PTI's political performance in comparison to PML-N's, Nawaz Sharif's prison situation and Bilawal Bhutto's opposition; Governance (**25%**) covered the new schemes launched by the PTI government to improve social, political, and economic conditions of cities such as Karachi along with other matters of governance; General Political Opinions (**10%**) included topics such as Jinnah and Bhutto's legacies, and realpolitik; Defense (**5%**) focused on the recent standoff between Pakistan and India, and the ensuing military buildup; National Institutions (**5%**) covered topics pertaining to the reformation of NAB and Police institutions.



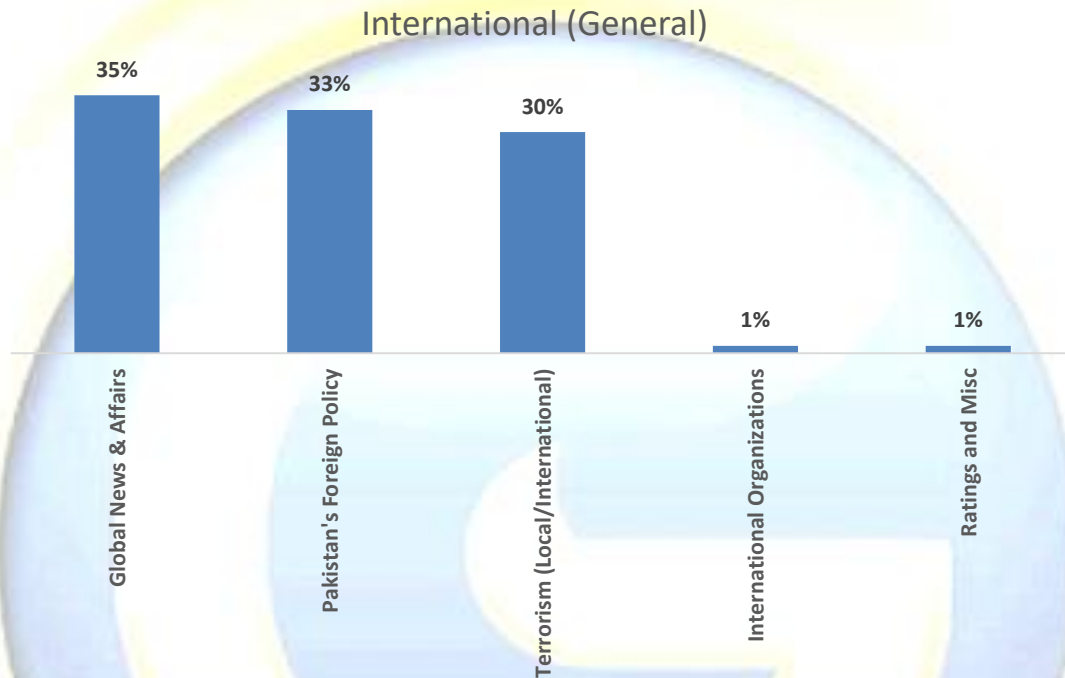
Source: Newspaper Content Analysis by Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Consultancy (www.gallup.com.pk, www.gilanifoundation.com)

In Economy (which was the subject matter for **9%** of op-ed pieces): General (**34%**) covered discussions over the economic slowdown in Pakistan and elite capture of the economy; Government Policies (**24%**) included new policies passed by the PTI government, and the government's decision to seek an IMF bailout; Inflation (**16%**) included debates over the recent price hikes in consumer goods; Energy (**12%**) focused on the rising fuel prices, gas shortfall, and the government's energy projects including the ones in Thar; Investment (**12%**) covered CPEC related news; Employment (**2%**) provided a look into the job market in Pakistan.



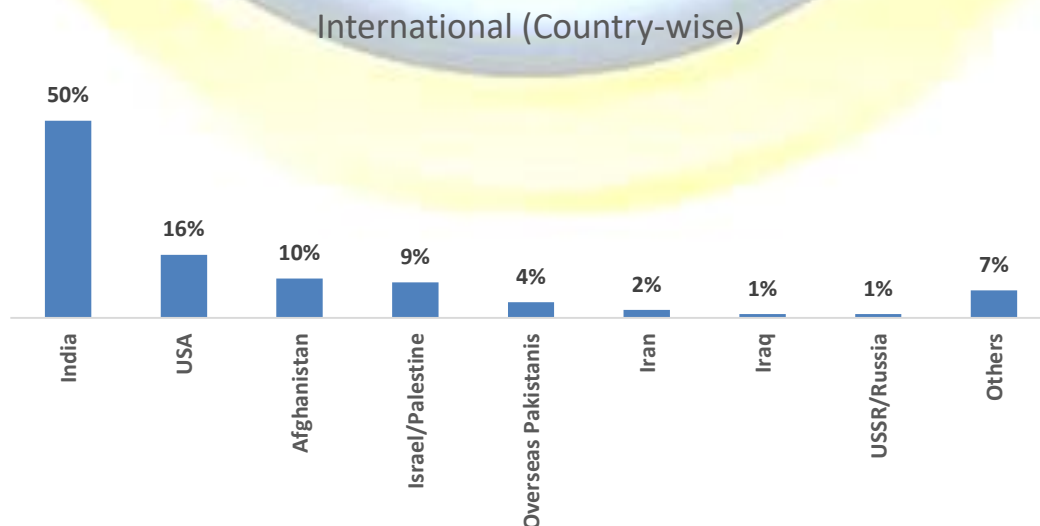
Source: Newspaper Content Analysis by Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Consultancy
www.gallup.com.pk, www.gilanifoundation.com

In International (General): Global News & Affairs (**35%**) covered recent events such as the fire in Paris's Notre Dame Cathedral, and Julianne Assange's arrest; Pakistan's Foreign Policy (**33%**) included the Prime Minister's visits to China and Iran, and peace talks with Afghanistan; Terrorism (**30%**) covered the terrorist attack in Christchurch in New Zealand and the recent bombings on the Hazara community in Quetta, Pakistan.



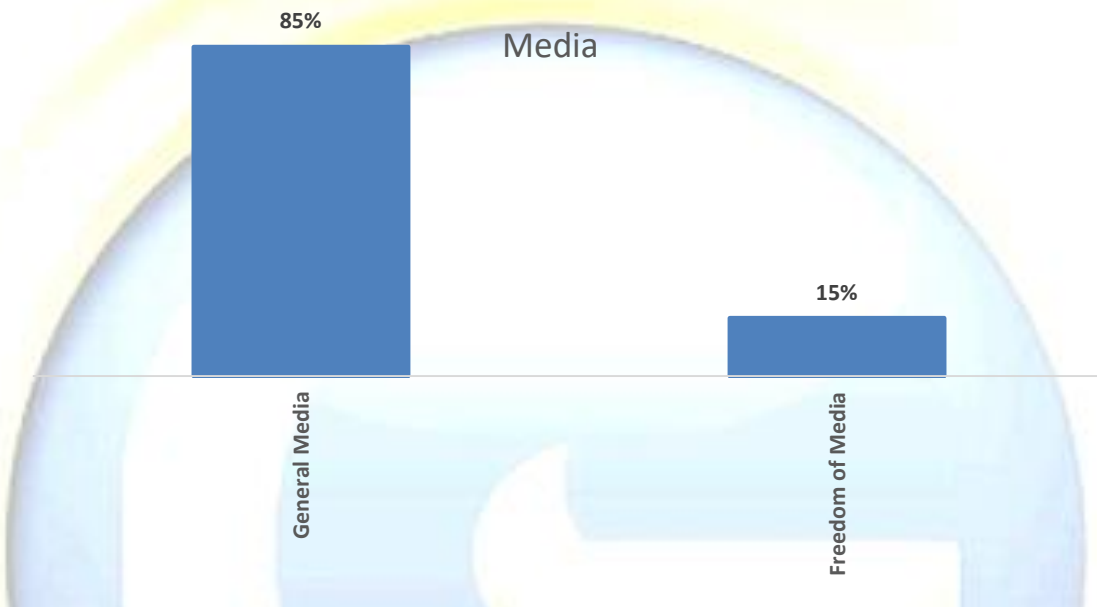
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The countries which received the most attention in International (Country-wise) category were: India (**50%**) for the upcoming government elections and Narendra Modi's aggressive campaign; USA (**16%**) on Donald Trump's foreign policies; Afghanistan (**10%**) for the surge in violence in the country, and recent peace talks; Israel/Palestine for the atrocities that are a result of the ongoing conflict between the two countries.



In Climate Change/Environment: Issues pertaining to global warming, water shortage, unruly weather, gas shortfall, destruction of wildlife habits and the extinction of animal species were addressed.

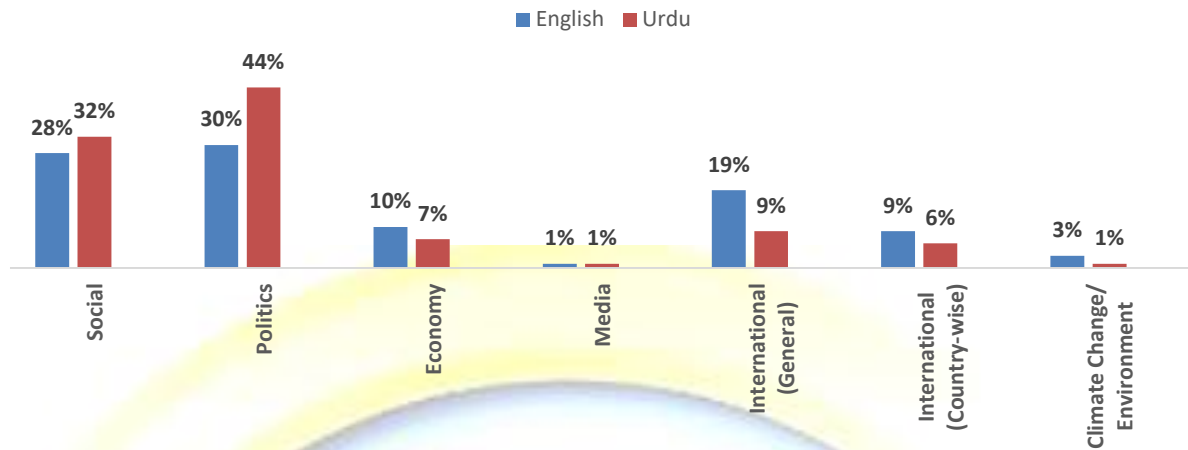
In Media: General Media (**85%**) included discussions over new features of social media and their role in the 21st century, as well as the rising incidence of bullying on social media platforms; Freedom of Media (**15%**) covered topics such as press freedom and the spread of fake news.



5. Urdu versus English Newspapers: Social issues almost equally dominant in English and Urdu Newspapers, English Newspapers discuss Politics less; Economy, Foreign Affairs more than Urdu Newspapers.

Out of a total of **1391** articles/columns written in Urdu newspapers in April 2019, the majority were on topics falling under the banner of 'Politics' at **44%**. The second topic which occupied public imagination was 'Social Issues' at **32%**. Following that, International news was featured relatively less at **9%** overall and **6%** for different countries. 'Economy' had a share of **7%**. 'Climate Change/Environment', 'Electoral Politics' and 'Media' received scant attention.

Out of a total of **1485** articles/columns written in English in the same month, **30%** focused on politics. Like in the Urdu newspapers, English newspapers devoted the second most attention to social issues, as **28%** of the articles/columns belonged to this category. Next, **19%** of space was used by International (general) Issues and **9%** by country-wise international issues. Articles regarding the economy got **10%** coverage whereas discussions around climate change/environment took up **3%** of newspaper space. Media was given the least amount of attention.



Source: Newspaper Content Analysis by Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Consultancy
www.gallup.com.pk, www.gilanifoundation.com

6. The rationale behind this Content Analysis

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 happens. 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 April 2019. This data was obtained after reviewing 2,876 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, policymakers, 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 Ph.D. 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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