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Since Year 2015



GALLUP & GILANI PAKISTAN

NEWSPAPER CONTENT

ANALYSIS REPORT

February and March 2021

A monthly series from Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Wing looking at approximately 2500 Newspaper columns and editorials



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In the 12 English and Urdu newspapers analyzed for February 2021 and March 2021 covering nearly 5700 opinion pieces, the categories of 'International' and 'Politics' dominated the space (GALLUP & GILANI PAKISTAN)

Islamabad, June 2nd, 2021

INTRODUCTION

According to a Monthly Newspaper Content Analysis Research Study conducted by Gallup & Gilani Pakistan under the supervision of Executive Director, Bilal I Gilani, the main issues under discussion in the mainstream media belonged to the categories 'International', 'Politics', and 'Social' for February 2021 and 'International' and 'Politics' for March 2021. For February 2021, the main rise compared to January was in articles related to Social. For March 2021, articles related to 'Politics' increased the most compared to February.

A content analysis of 12 national newspapers consisting of a total of 2,651 opinion articles/columns for February 2021 and 2999 opinion articles/columns for March 2021 written by various columnists was conducted. This is part of Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Division's initiative to empirically understand opinion leaders' views on national issues.

This is the 37th edition of this study. The rest of the editions (dating back to 2015) can be accessed at the following link: <http://gallup.com.pk/polls/newspaper-analysis/>.

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.

Main Topics under discussion for February: International, Politics and Social took priority while discussions related to Sports, Crime & Terrorism, and Religion received little attention.

Main Topics under discussion for March: International and Politics took priority while discussions related to Media, Crime & Terrorism, and Sports received little attention.

The topics discussed in these opinion articles/columns were categorized into 14 broad themes: 'Politics', 'Security', 'Media', 'Law and Order', 'Economy', 'Governance', 'International', 'Social', 'Sports', 'Health', 'Education', 'Religion', 'Crime/Terrorism, and 'Miscellaneous'.

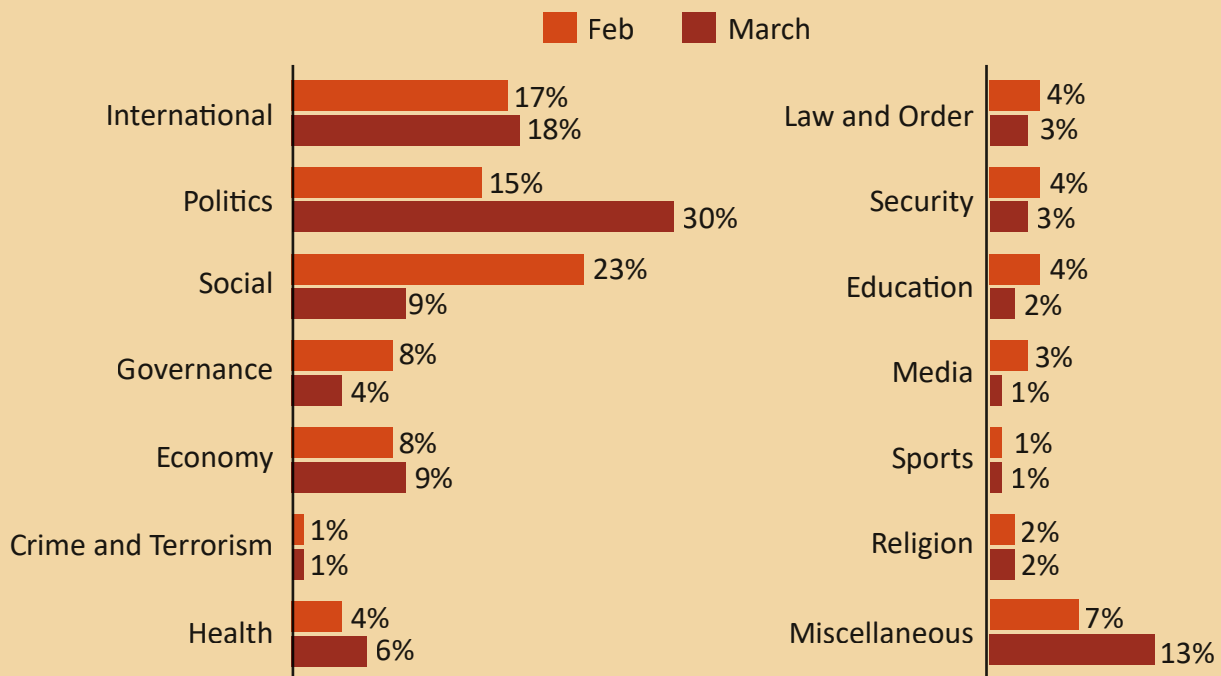
FEBRUARY

23% of the articles were devoted to 'Social', followed by 'International' at 17% and 'Politics' at 15%. 'Economy' and 'Governance' occupied 8% of the space while miscellaneous topics made up 7% of the total share. 'Health', 'Security', 'Law & Order', and 'Education' took up 4% each. 'Media' was at 3%, 'Religion' was at 2%, and 'Sports' as well as 'Crime & Terrorism' were at 1% each. The most significant increase in space compared to January was in 'Social' (a 14% shift from 9% to 23% this month). The upward shift in share of articles covering social themes can be attributed to increased discussion surrounding climate change and human rights.

MARCH

30% of the articles were devoted to 'Politics', followed by 'International' at 18% and 'Miscellaneous' at 13%. 'Economy' and 'Social' occupied 9% of the space while 'Health' topics made up 6% of the total share. 'Governance' took up 4%. 'Security' and 'Law and Order' were at 3%; 'Education' and 'Religion' were at 2% each; and 'Sports', 'Media', and 'Crime and Terrorism' were at 1% each. The most significant increase in space compared to February was in 'Politics' (a 15% shift from 15% to 30%). The upward shift in share of articles covering political themes can be attributed to increased discussion surrounding senate elections and rifts in the PDM.

Figure 1: Main Topics Under Discussion in February and March 2021



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

FEBRUARY

DISCUSSED WITHIN 'SOCIAL':

The 'Social' category took center stage in newspapers in February because of reflections over climate change and human rights.

DISCUSSED WITHIN 'INTERNATIONAL':

'International' was a popular category in February owing to abundant discussion surrounding Kashmir, China, US politics, and Afghanistan.

DISCUSSED WITHIN 'POLITICS':

The category of 'Politics' occupied a lot of space mainly due to discussion on PDM politics, senate elections, and the Daska verdict.

MARCH

DISCUSSED WITHIN 'POLITICS':

The 'Politics' category took center stage in newspapers in March because of reflections over senate elections and rifts in the PDM

DISCUSSED WITHIN 'INTERNATIONAL':

'International' was a popular category in March owing to abundant discussion surrounding Kashmir, India (like in terms of human rights and Pakistan's relationship with it), US (in terms of its foreign relations), Afghanistan (in terms of peace processes and US's exit), and violence in Myanmar.

DISCUSSED WITHIN 'MISCELLANEOUS':

The category of 'Miscellaneous' occupied a lot of space mainly due to discussion on specific topics like Pakistan Day and a mining accident as well as generally related to historical and patriotic themes.

COMPARING JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2021:

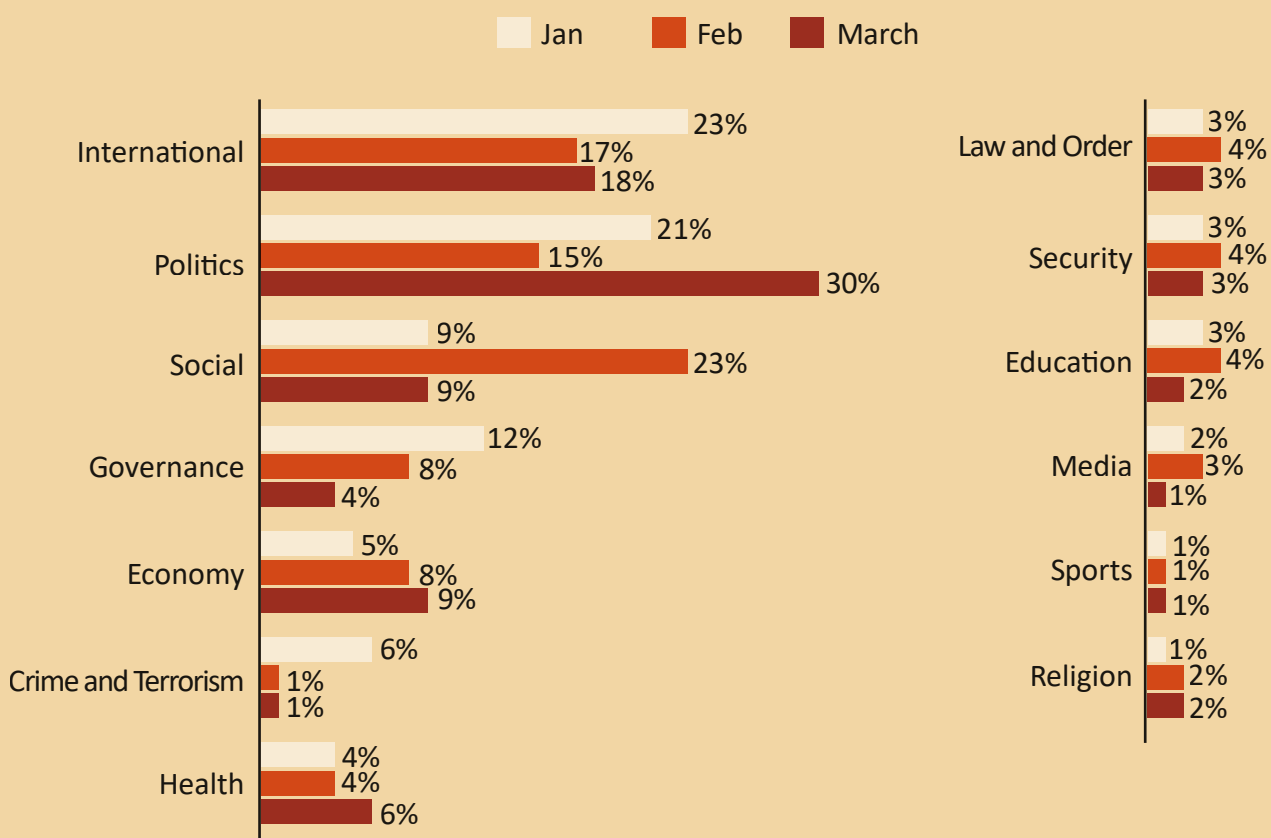
In January 2021, 'International' was a popular category due to the discourse regarding Trump and Biden politics; violence in Afghanistan; the Kashmir issue; India's exposure, human rights violations, and farmer protests; and events in Israel and China.

Political themes were also heavily covered, with many pieces related to PDM activity, the Broadsheet scandal, political accountability, and the PM's visit to Quetta regarding the Mach tragedy. The category of 'Governance' occupied a lot of space and was largely related to NAB, bureaucratic reforms, gas shortages, the power breakdown, fighting corruption, and PIA troubles.

COMPARING FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2021:

In February 2021, 'International' was a popular category due to the discourse regarding Kashmir, China, US politics, and Afghanistan. Political themes were also heavily covered, with many pieces related to PDM politics, senate elections, and the Daska verdict. The category of 'Social' occupied a lot of space and was largely related to human rights and climate change.

Figure 2: Comparison between January, February and March 2021



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

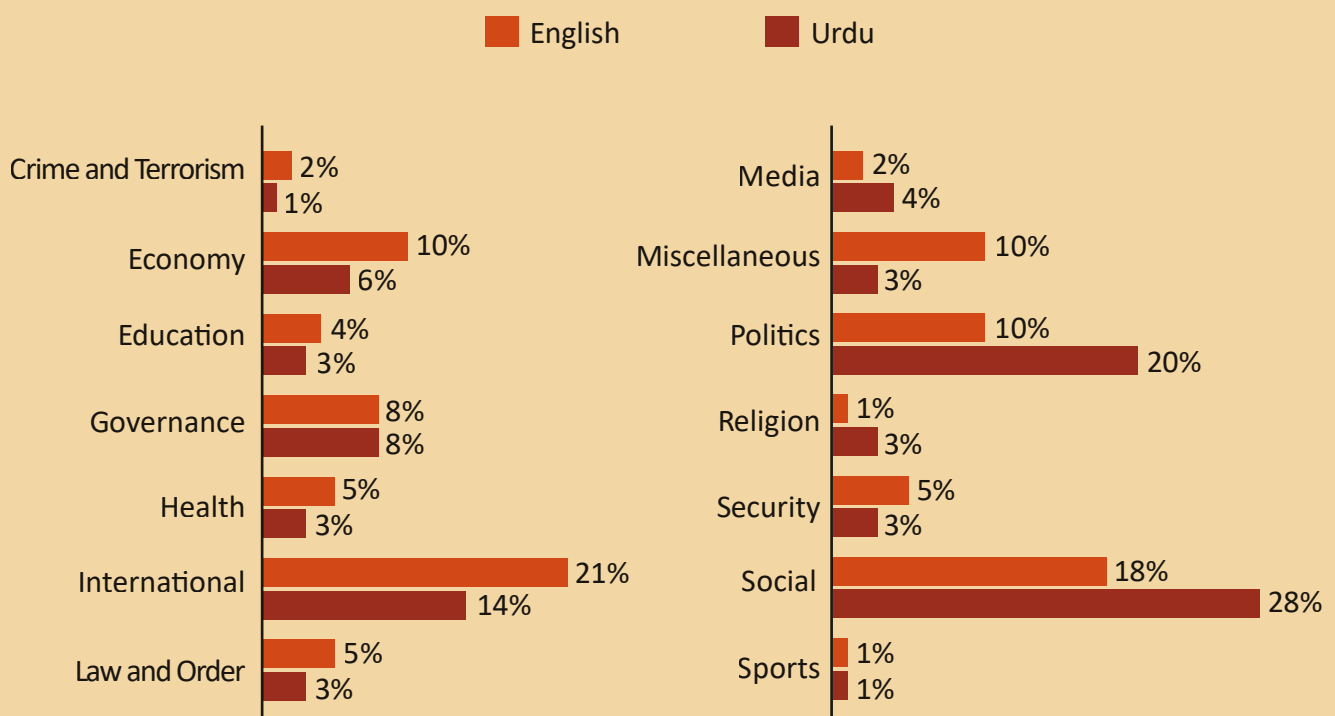
Urdu vs. English: ‘International’ was the most discussed category in English while ‘Social’ occupied the most space in Urdu newspapers.

Out of a total of 1,351 articles/columns written in Urdu newspapers in February 2021, majority were on topics falling under the banner of ‘Social’ at 28% and ‘Politics’ at 20%.

‘International’ occupied 14% followed by ‘Governance’ at 8%, ‘Economy’ at 6%, ‘Media’ at 4% and ‘Education’, ‘Security’, ‘Religion’, ‘Health’, ‘Miscellaneous’, and ‘Law and Order’ at 3% each. ‘Sports’ and ‘Crime & Terrorism’ was at 1%.

Out of a total of 1,300 articles/columns written in English during this month, the greatest share of 21% was occupied by ‘International’, followed by ‘Social’ at 18%, and ‘Politics’, ‘Miscellaneous’ and ‘Economy’ at 10%. ‘Governance’ was at 8%. ‘Security’, ‘Health’, and ‘Law & Order’ were at 5% each. ‘Education’ was at 4%. ‘Crime & Terrorism’ and ‘Media’ were at 2%. ‘Religion’ and ‘Sports’ were at 1%.

Figure 3: Comparison between English and Urdu Newspapers February 2021



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

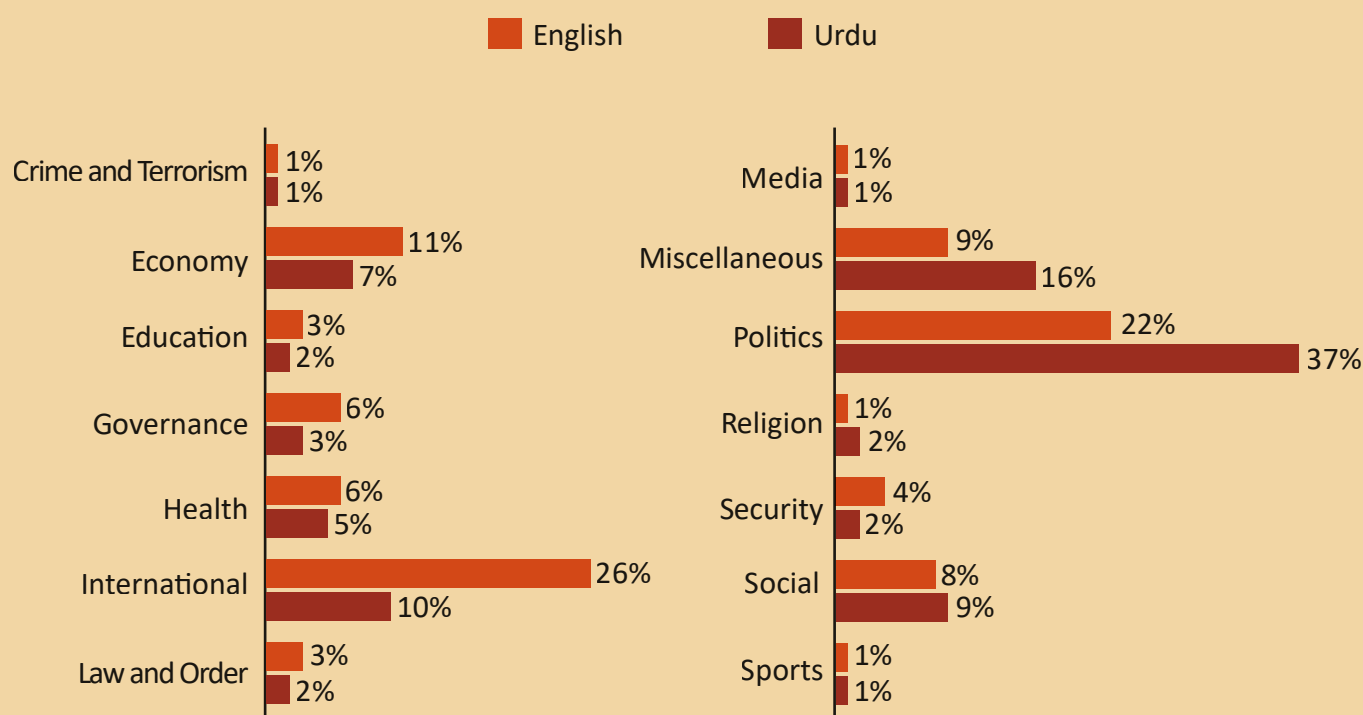
Urdu vs. English: 'International' was the most discussed category in English while 'Social' occupied the most space in Urdu newspapers.

Out of a total of 1,525 articles/columns written in Urdu newspapers in March 2021, majority were on topics falling under the banner of 'Politics' at 37% and 'Miscellaneous' at 16%.

'International' occupied 10% followed by 'Social' at 9%, 'Economy' at 7%, 'Health' at 5%, 'Governance' at 3%, 'Religion', 'Law and Order', 'Security' and 'Education' at 2%, and 'Media', 'Crime and Terrorism' and 'Sports' at 1%.

Out of a total of 1,474 articles/columns written in English in March 2021, the greatest share of 26% was occupied by 'International', followed by 'Politics' at 22%, and 'Economy' at 11%. 'Miscellaneous' was at 9%, 'Social' was at 8%, 'Health' and 'Governance' were at 6%, 'Security' was at 4%, 'Education' and 'Law and Order' were at 3%, and 'Media' was at 2%. 'Crime and Terrorism', 'Religion', and 'Sport' were each at 1%.

Figure 4: Comparison between English and Urdu Newspapers March 2021

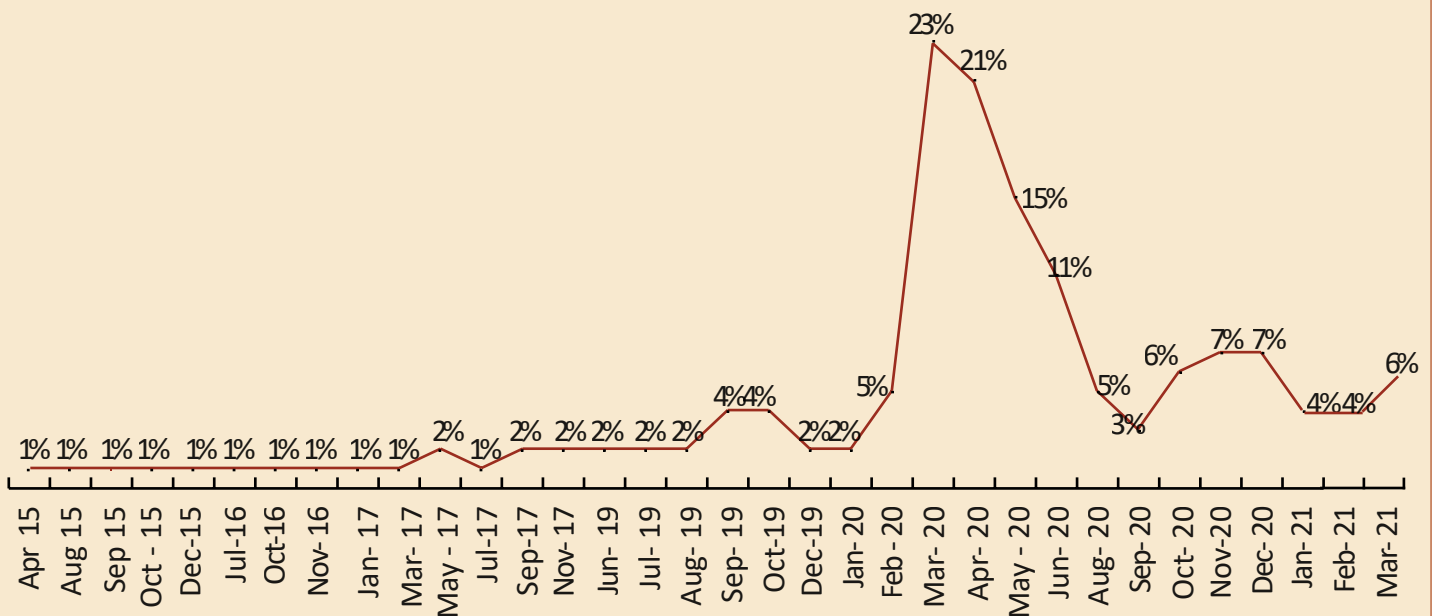


Source: Newspaper Content Analysis by Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Consultancy
(www.gallup.com.pk, www.gilanifoundation.com)

THE RISE AND FALL OF DISCUSSIONS ON HEALTH ISSUES IN OP-EDS:

The discussion on Health remained high in the peak months of the pandemic i.e. March (23%), April (21%), May (15%). However, health related articles started taking less space gradually with 11% in June and a dramatic fall to 5% in August and 3% in September. Despite the fact that fears of a second-wave are entering the sphere and cases seem to be rising again, coupled with the lack of adherence to SOPs, health issues are no longer occupying substantial space in newspapers. Health had been one of the least discussed categories among the Op-Eds; the highest percentage of share was recorded first in February 2020 at 5% when discussions related to re-emergence of Polio cases in Pakistan and the covid-19 had begun. Since then the percentage of share rose to 23% in March 2020, the highest share ever recorded for Health category; a reminder of how severe the Coronavirus pandemic has proven to be. While health related articles started taking up less space as the Pakistan braved through the COVID-19 pandemic, this category once again seems to be gaining momentum in terms of the space it occupies in newspapers. This is possibly due to the increased discussions surrounding the coronavirus vaccine.

Figure 5: The Rise and Fall of Health Issues in Op-Eds



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

WANT TO ACCESS OUR NEWSPAPER OP-ED HEADINGS AND COLUMNIST NAMES LIST?

We are now providing access to our database comprising of titles of all the newspaper articles analyzed, as well as names of columnists who wrote them, for all columns published from the time Gallup Pakistan initiated this activity. If you wish to gain access to this database, kindly write to Ms. Natasha Amir at natasha@galluppakistan.com

The rationale behind this Content Analysis

Bilal Ijaz Gilani, Executive Director and Chief Editor of this series, explains, '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 January 2021. This data was obtained after reviewing 2,996 Op-Eds, spread over 12 newspapers (as 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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