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GALLUP & GILANI PAKISTAN

NEWSPAPER CONTENT

ANALYSIS REPORT

***March & April 2023***

A monthly series from Gallup & Gilani  
Pakistan Media Research Wing looking  
at more than 5000 Newspaper columns  
and editorials

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# CONTENT ANALYSIS OF NEWSPAPER ARTICLES PUBLISHED DURING MARCH 2023 AND APRIL 2023

In the 12 English and Urdu newspapers analyzed for March and April 2023 covering more than 5100 opinion pieces, 'Politics' 'Economy,' 'International and 'Governance' issues dominated the space (GALLUP & GILANI PAKISTAN)

Islamabad, 21st June 2023

## 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 during both March and April 2023 in the mainstream media belonged to the categories: 'Politics', 'Economy', and 'International.'*

*An analysis of the content of **12** national newspapers consisting of a total of **2718** opinion articles/columns for March 2023, and **2403** opinion articles/columns written by various columnists for April 2023. This is part of Gallup & Gilani Pakistan Media Research Division's initiative to empirically understand opinion leaders' views on national issues.*

*This is the 50th 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:

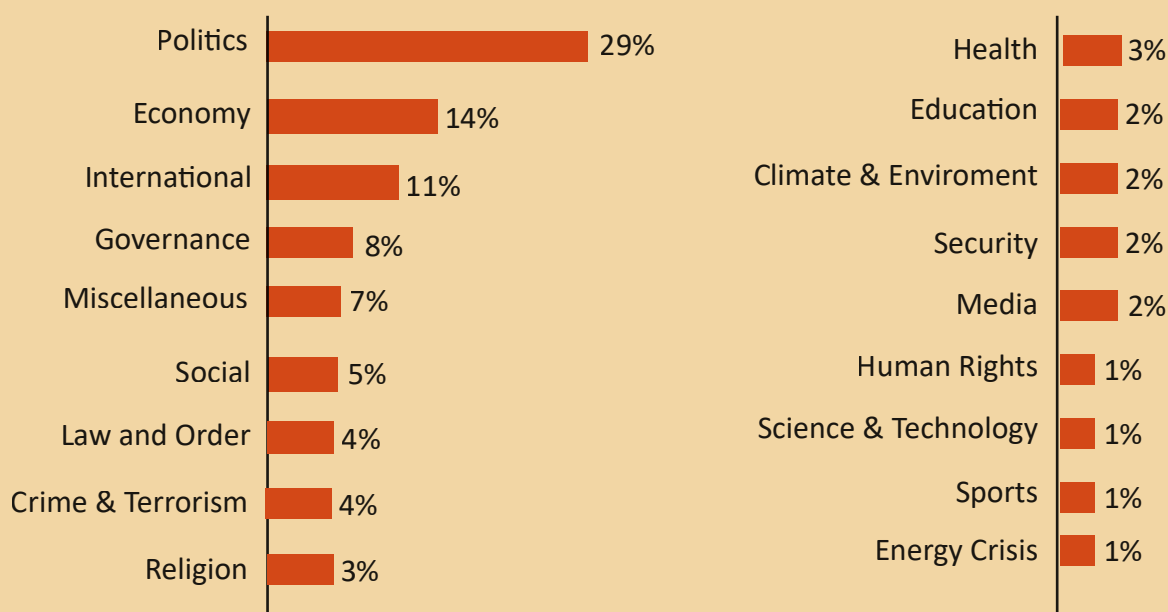
The topics discussed in these opinion articles/columns were categorized into 18 broad themes: 'Climate/Environment', 'Crime & Terrorism', 'Economy', 'Education', 'Energy Crisis', 'Governance', 'Health', 'Human Rights', 'International', 'Law & Order', 'Media', 'Miscellaneous', 'Politics', 'Religion', 'Science & Technology', 'Security', 'Social', and 'Sports'

## MARCH 2023

**Politics dominated with Economy, International and Governance taking priority over the rest.**

Politics received the most attention with 29% of all articles falling within the category. Economy followed with 14% articles. International took up 11% of newspaper space while articles related to Governance made up 8% of the total articles. Miscellaneous articles made up 7% of the total, while Social articles accounted for 5%, followed by Law & Order, and Crime & Terrorism both of which accounted for 4% each of the total articles. Next, Religion, and Health made up 3% each, followed by Education, Climate/Environment, Security, and Media all of which accounted for 2% each. While articles falling in the categories of Human Rights, Science and Technology, Sports, and Energy Crisis accounted for 1% each.

Figure 1: Main Topics Under Discussion March 2023



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

### DISCUSSED WITHIN 'POLITICS':

Political issues heavily dominated the newspaper space in March 2023. Most of the articles surrounded Imran Khan and PTI with relation to the events of Zaman Park, and his involvement in the Toshakhana case. The looming political crisis in the country and the debate on the postponement of Provincial Elections.

### **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'ECONOMY':**

The articles in this category talked about the soaring inflation and consequent economic hardships. Many articles referenced the dealings with the IMF, the progress of CPEC, opportunities for Trade both internal and international. The government's strategies toward economic policies and carried advice on how to best deal with the situation of instability within the country.

### **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'INTERNATIONAL':**

In this category, the articles talked about global issues ranging from the Ukraine War, the Israel-Palestine issue, to the Kashmir issue. In early March, we also experienced the Crotona disaster which included a number of Pakistanis onboard and resulted in multiple deaths. Moreover, the historical step in Saudi-Iran relationships was also a topic extensively covered.

### **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'GOVERNANCE'**

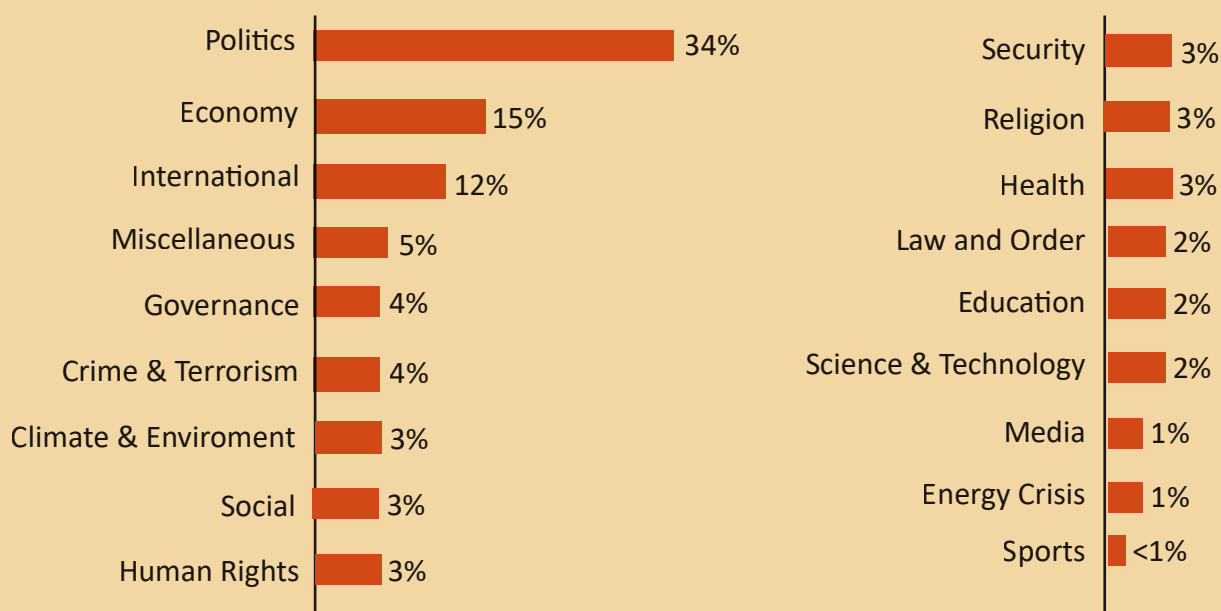
In this category, the articles included profiles of both historical and contemporary figures, narratives around historical events as well as poetry. A large number of these articles were also biographical in nature, writing extensive character sketches of influential social and political personalities.

## APRIL 2023

### Politics dominated with Economy, International and Governance taking priority over the rest.

Politics received the most attention with 34% of all articles falling within the category. Economy followed with 15% articles. International took up 12% of newspaper space while articles with topics falling under the Miscellaneous category comprised 5% of the total, followed by Governance and Crime & Terrorism related articles made up 4% each of the total, while Climate/Environment, Social, Human Rights, Security, Religion and Health made up 3% each. Articles falling in the categories of Law and Order, Education, and Science and Technology accounted for 2% each. Media, Energy Crisis and Sports made up 1% or less of the total articles.

Figure 2: Main Topics Under Discussion April 2023



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

### DISCUSSED WITHIN 'POLITICS':

Political issues heavily dominated the newspaper space in April 2023. Most of the articles analyzed the rift between the government and Supreme Court relating to provincial elections and the SC's controversial decisions in April. A significant number of articles talked about the Constitution following its Golden Jubilee and discussed the political state of affairs in the country relating to that, while a large number explored the possibility of dialogues between PDM and PTI that could put an end to the persisting political tensions.

### **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'ECONOMY':**

The articles in this category talked about the economic crisis faced due to inflation and possibilities as well as the consequences of an IMF loan. Many articles discussed the government's economic policies, the prospects of an economic default and the effect of these conditions on the local public. Several writers suggested policies or penned advice to best deal with the situation.

### **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'INTERNATIONAL':**

The articles in this category discussed the Israel-Palestine issue, the unrest in Sudan, China's role in the Middle East, and the United States' internal political climate. A vast majority of the articles also talked about proceedings in India, from the Khalistan movement to the G-20 summit, along with highlighting the Kashmir issue.

### **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'MISCELLANEOUS':**

Miscellaneous articles included personal narrative and historical pieces. While most were from the personal lives of the authors, some looked in-depth at the contexts of historically significant occasions like the Pakistan resolution. A large number of these articles were also biographical in nature, writing extensive character sketches of influential social and political personalities.

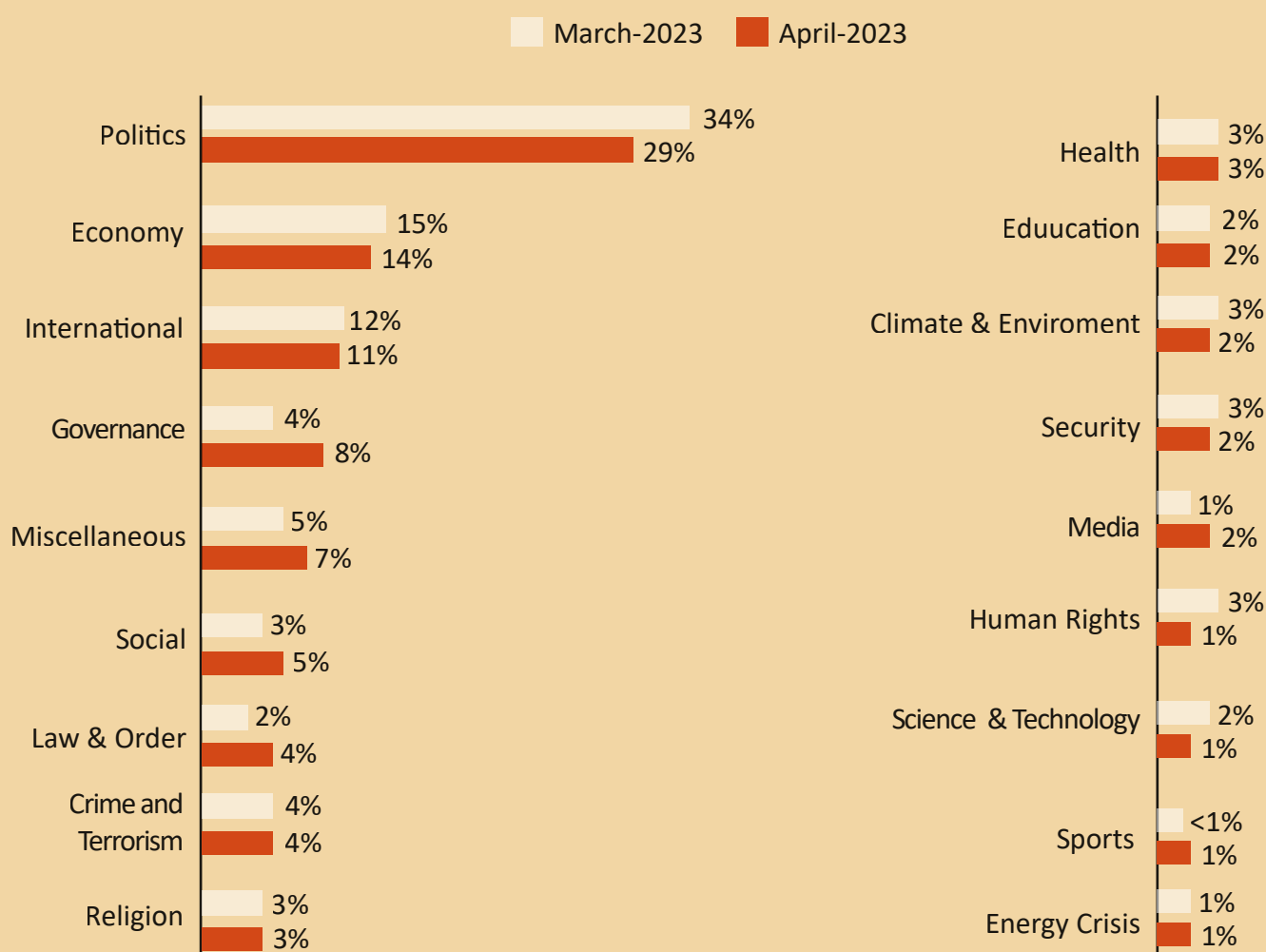
### **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'GOVERNANCE':**

Articles falling under this category mainly analyzed reforms made by the government or problems such as the census issue, lack of traffic and railway regulations. Some authors also took a more holistic approach and talked about the governance structure of Pakistan as a whole, comparing it to other countries or suggesting improvements to the current state of affairs.

## COMPARISON BETWEEN MARCH 2023 AND APRIL 2023

While both the issues saw 'Politics' to be the dominating category, from March 2023 to April 2023 'Politics' decreased by 5%, and 'Economy' and 'International' each decreased by 1%. On the other hand, 'Governance' increased by 4% and, 'Miscellaneous', 'Social', 'Law & Order' each increased by 2%, while 'Human Rights' decreased by 2%. 'Climate/Environment', 'Security', 'and 'Science & Technology' each experienced a decreased of 1%, while 'Media' and 'Sports' increased by 1% each. The categories of 'Crime & Terrorism', 'Religion', 'Health', Education', and 'Energy Crisis' experienced no shift.

Figure 3: Comparison between March 2023 and April 2023



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

## URDU VS. ENGLISH

### MARCH 2023

**‘Politics’ was the most discussed category in both English and Urdu newspapers.**

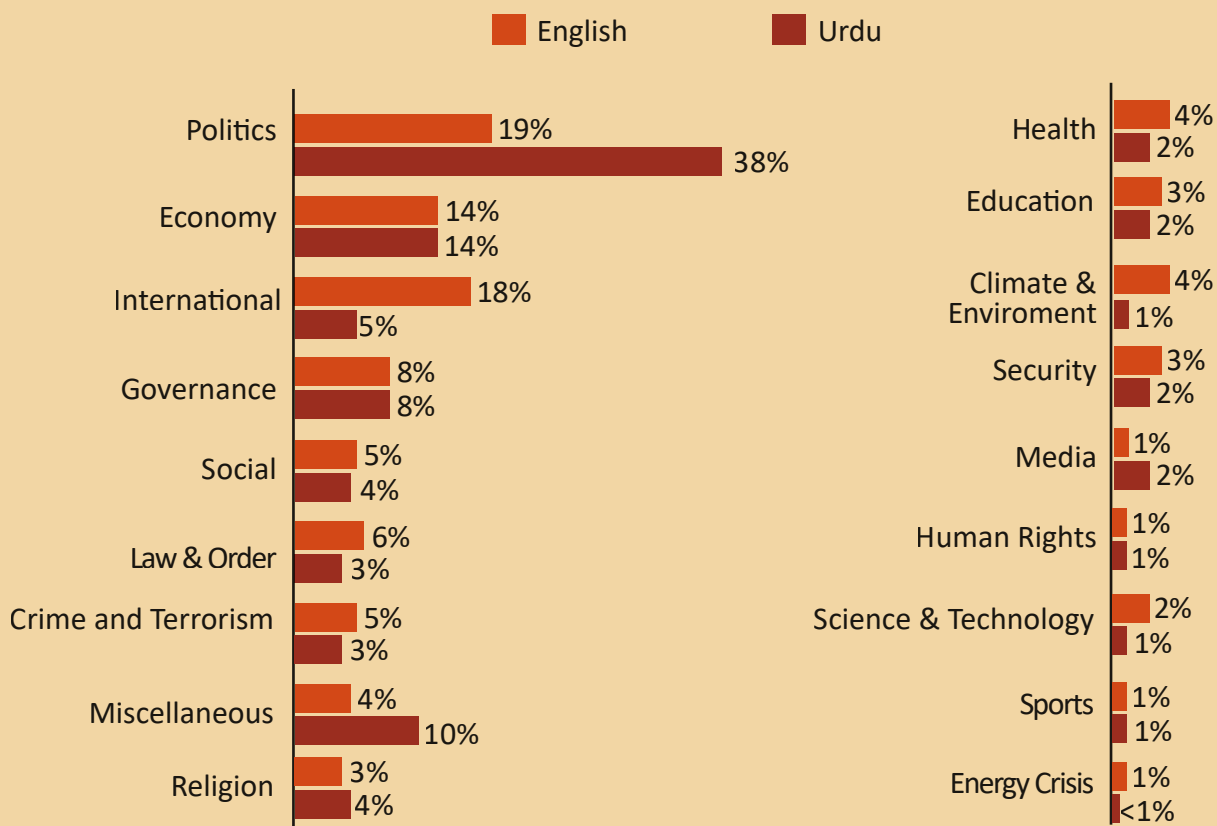
The category of ‘Politics’ dominated both Urdu and English newspapers, however, with a significant difference in the percentage of representation and In Urdu newspapers, it was higher with 38% of the share of total as compared to 19% in English newspapers.

The categories which had a higher representation in Urdu newspapers were: Miscellaneous – 10% in Urdu compared to 4% in English. Religion – 4% in Urdu as compared to 3% in English, and Media with 2% in Urdu and 1% in English.

In English newspapers, the categories that had a higher share than in Urdu newspapers were: International with 18% as compared to 5% in Urdu, Law & Order – 6% in English and 3 % in Urdu, Crime & Terrorism 5% in English and 3 % in Urdu, Health 4% in English and 2 % in Urdu, and Climate/Environment – 4% in English and 1% in Urdu.

All other categories shared fairly the same percentage of space in both English and Urdu newspapers.

Figure 4: Comparison between English and Urdu Newspapers March 2023



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

## URDU VS. ENGLISH: APRIL 2023

### ‘Politics’ was the most discussed category in both English and Urdu newspapers.

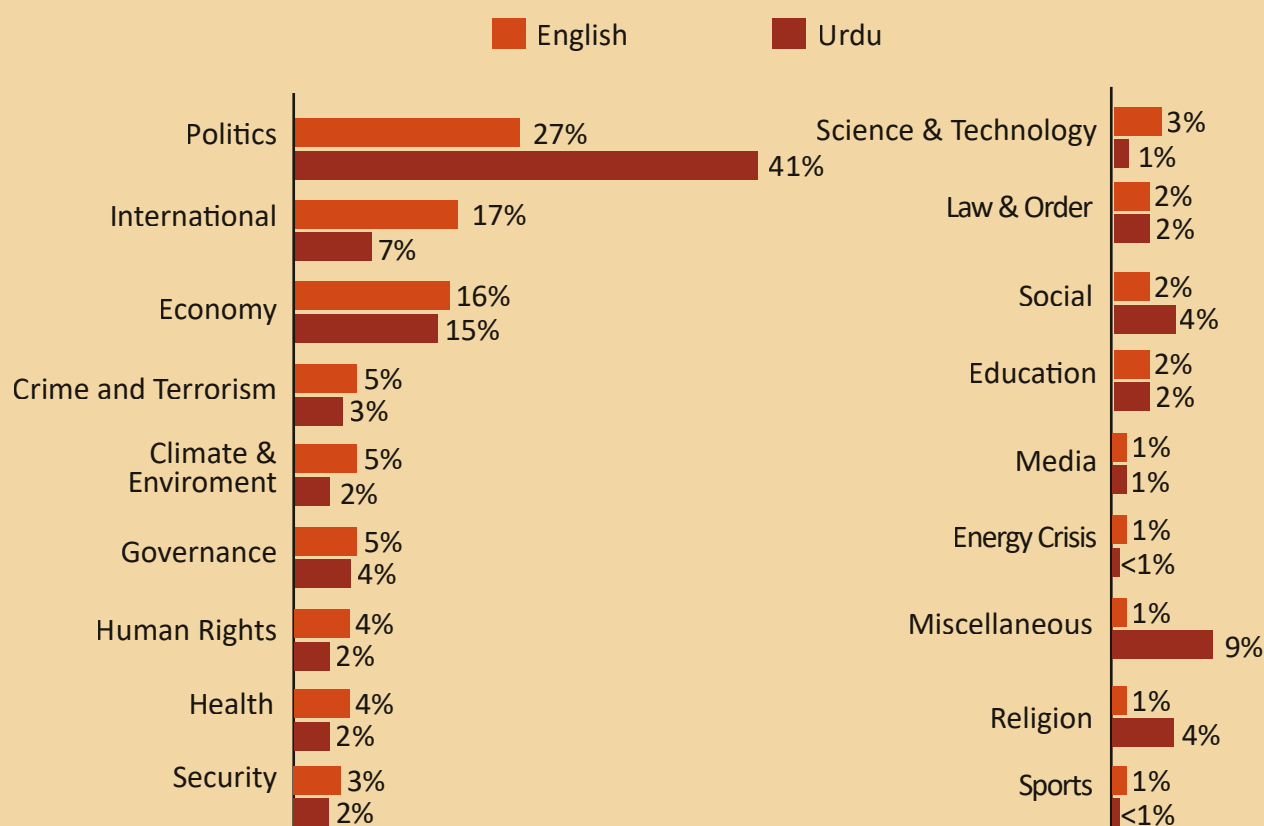
The category of ‘Politics’ dominated both Urdu and English newspapers with a significant difference in the percentage of representation. In Urdu newspapers, it was higher with 41% compared to 27% in English newspapers.

Other categories which had a higher representation in Urdu newspapers were Social with 7% in Urdu compared to 2% in English, Miscellaneous making up almost 9% of Urdu newspapers while contributing only 1% to English articles, and Religion with 5% Urdu articles and 1% English articles.

In English newspapers, the categories that had a much higher share compared to Urdu newspapers were International with 17% English articles compared to only 7% Urdu ones, Climate and Environment which consisted of 5% English articles while making up 2% of the Urdu articles, Human Rights – 4% English articles compared to 2% Urdu ones – and Science and Technology, which made up 3% of English articles but only 1% of Urdu articles.

As far as the rest of the themes go, they were present in both English and Urdu newspapers with similar percentages, but still in larger amounts in the former compared to the latter.

Figure 5: Comparison between English and Urdu Newspapers April 2023

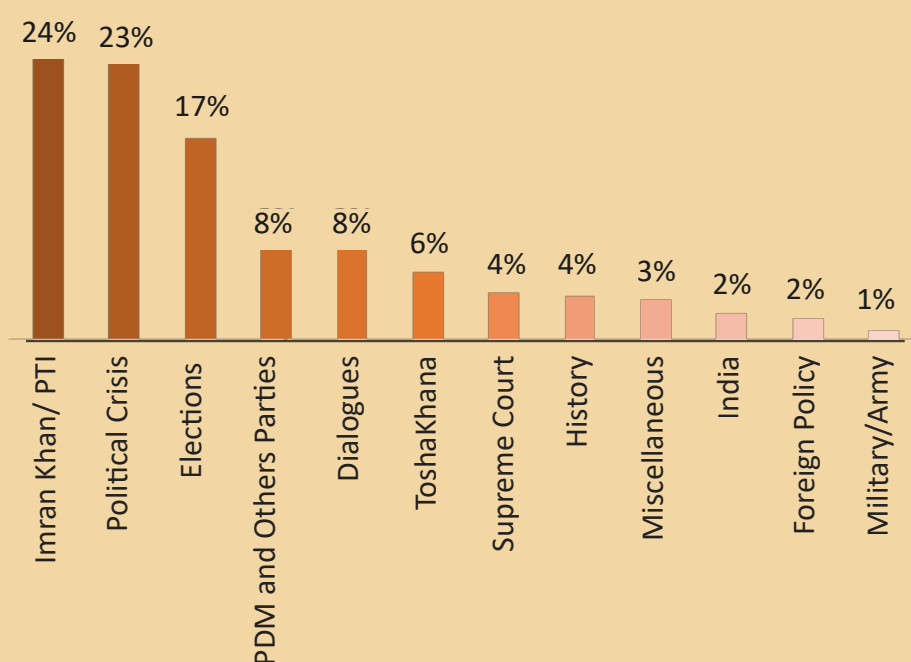


## SUBCATEGORIES WITHIN 'POLITICS'

### MARCH 2023

From a total of 2718 articles, 780 fell within the category of 'Politics.' These articles spanned a broad range of topics – from discussions on 'Imran Khan and PTI', 'Political Crisis', 'Elections', 'PDM and other parties', 'Dialogues' to 'Toshakhana', 'Supreme Court' and 'History'. Several of them also spanned into the categories of 'India', 'Foreign Policy', 'Military/Army', and 'Miscellaneous'.

Figure 6: Subcategories within 'Politics' March 2023



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

## **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'IMRAN KHAN/PTI'**

This topic dominated the political discourse in the newspaper articles in March 2023, with its primary point of focus being Imran Khan's refusal to appear in court awaiting his trial, and then the events of Zaman Park. Articles in this category also overlapped with the Toshakhana category as that also related to Imran Khan and his time as Prime Minister.

## **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'POLITICAL CRISIS'**

Articles within this category covered a wide range of topics. Some looked at the performance of PDM as the ruling party and took a critical approach to their politics, while others talked general state of affairs and the rifts between the ruling party and supporters of PTI, especially in lights of the incidents at Zaman Park, as well as the unstable condition the country had found itself in as a result.

## **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'ELECTIONS'**

A large number of articles explored the disagreements between the government and the Supreme Court relating to provincial elections and the SC's controversial decisions first to hold the provincial elections for Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and then the debate around their postponement. What that meant for the electoral process as well as the power of the judiciary.

## **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'PDM AND OTHER PARTIES'**

Articles within this category covered a wide range of topics. Some looked at the performance of PDM as the ruling party and took a critical approach to their politics, while others talked about the internal state of PML-N. Several articles also analyzed the role of PPP and JUI.

## **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'DIALOGUES'**

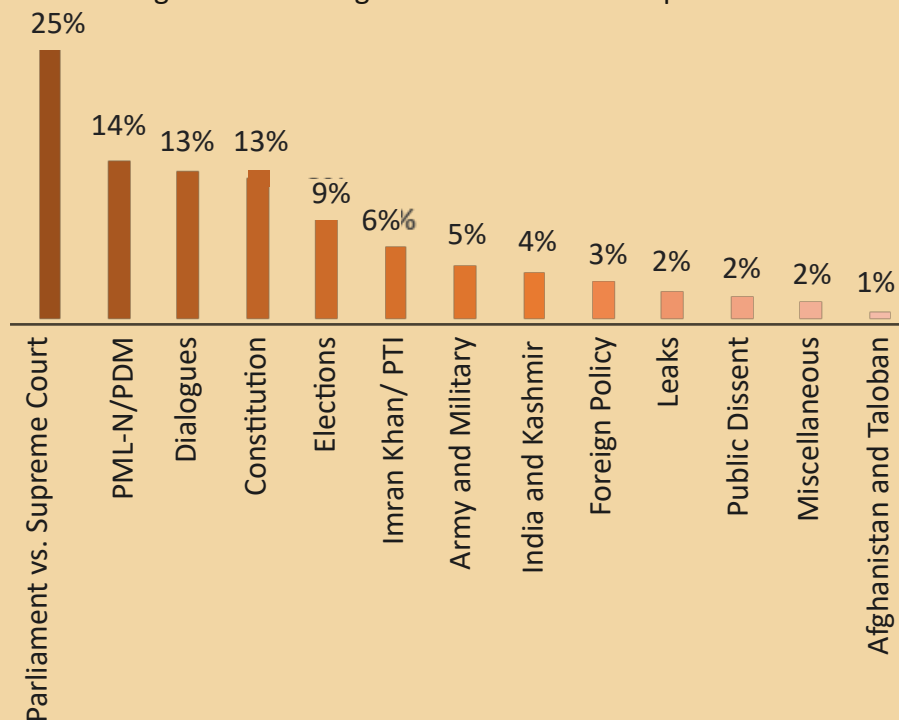
While this category overlaps with all those above, as these mainly included articles expressing personal opinions on the general political condition within the country, and well as comparison to the political history including eras of martial law.

## SUBCATEGORIES WITHIN 'POLITICS'

APRIL 2023

From a total of 2402 articles, 809 fell within the category of 'Politics.' These articles spanned a broad range of topics – from discussions on 'Parliament vs. Supreme Court', 'PML-N/PDM', 'Dialogues', 'Constitution', 'Elections' to 'Imran Khan and PTI', 'Army and Military' and 'India and Kashmir'. Several of them also spanned into the categories of 'Foreign Policy', 'Leaks', 'Public

Figure 7: Subcategories within 'Politics' April 2023



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

### DISCUSSED WITHIN 'PARLIAMENT VS. SC'

This topic dominated the political discourse in the newspaper articles in April 2023, with its primary point of focus being the disagreements between the government and the Supreme Court relating to provincial elections and the SC's controversial decisions in April. Some writers took sides while others suggested ways in which these rifts could be neutralized.

### DISCUSSED WITHIN 'PML-N/PDM'

Articles within this category covered a wide range of topics. Some looked at the performance of PDM as the ruling party and took a critical approach to their politics, while others talked about the internal state of PML-N and Nawaz Sharif. Several articles also analyzed the role of PPP in the government along with its performance in Sindh. On account of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's death anniversary in April, articles related to PPP also mentioned him and his impact on national politics.

### **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'DIALOGUES'**

A large number of articles explored the possibility of dialogues between PDM and PTI that could put an end to the persisting political tensions, highlighting the consequences of not having these dialogues, and the role of parties like JI and politicians within PDM who were pining for these talks to happen.

### **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'CONSTITUTION'**

A significant number of articles talked about the Constitution following its Golden Jubilee in April, and discussed the political state of affairs in the country relating to that. Some of these were informative in nature, while others took a more retrospective and comparative approach.

### **DISCUSSED WITHIN 'ELECTIONS'**

While this category overlaps with all those above, namely the Parliament vs. Supreme Court, dialogues, and Constitution, there were a large number of articles that talked about the politics of elections removed from the above themes and inquired about the timely execution of provincial and national elections. Some articles also discussed the problems in the way of conducting elections and what could be done to ensure they are conducted smoothly. Constitutional amendments were discussed under this category, along with its implications for the situation of democracy in the country.

## METAPHORS IN MEDIA

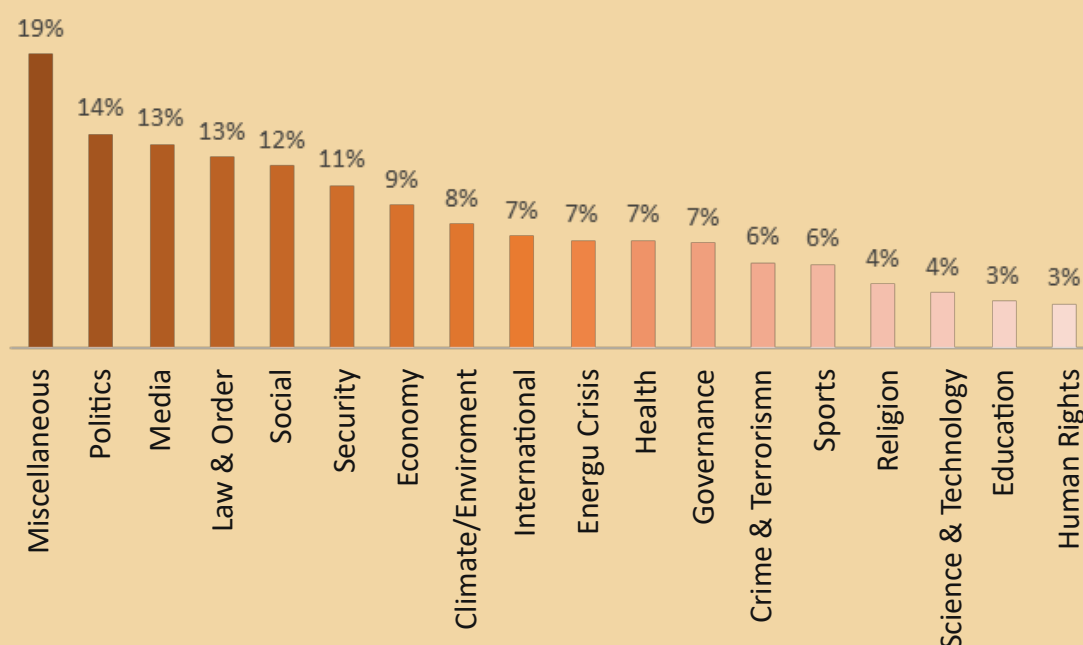
This section will look at the titles of the news articles from various newspapers, to analyze how many used metaphors or other techniques to make the titles stand out.

### MARCH 2023

Of the 2718 articles analyses from March 2023, 289 articles (11%) had either a metaphor within their titles or were referencing popular poem, films, dialogues etc. Examples include: “Clipped wings”, “Battleground Pakistan”, “In the fire of spring”, “TikTok in the dock”, and “The mystery cat”.

Of these, we observed that the highest number of metaphors were seen within the ‘Miscellaneous’ category where 19% articles had been titled as such - it is the case because a significant number of articles categorized as Miscellaneous were poems published in Urdu newspapers. This was followed by 14% of ‘Politics’ articles, 13% of ‘Media’ and ‘Law & Order’ articles. The lowest representation of metaphors within titles was seen in ‘Human Rights’ and ‘Education’ at 3% each.

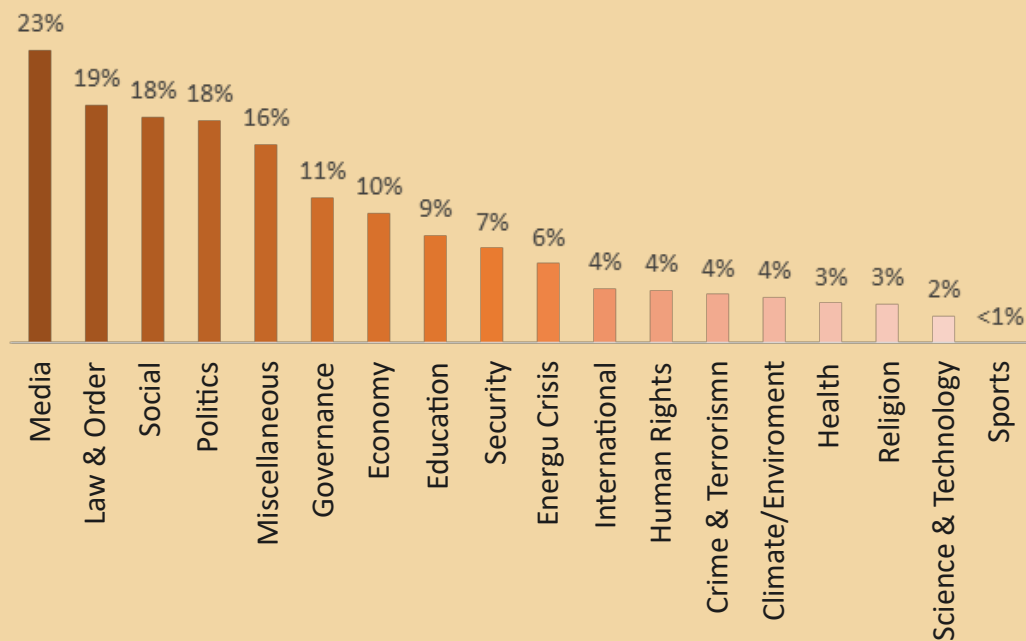
Figure 8: Metaphors in Newspaper Titles March 2023



## APRIL 2023

This section will look at the titles of the news articles from various newspapers, to analyze how many used metaphors or other techniques to make the titles stand out. While a majority of them are straightforward and reflect the subject matter of the article (89%), 11% of the articles have titles that are either vague or metaphorical. Examples include, “Long Live the King”, “Light at the End of the Tunnel”, “Square One”, “Eye on the Ball” and “Chips of the Same Block”. By far the most metaphorically titled category in April was Media, with almost 23% of the articles having dramatic or indirect titles. It was followed by Law and Order with 19%, Social with 18% and Politics-themed articles with 18% metaphorical titles.

Figure 9: Metaphors in Newspaper Titles April 2023



## 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. Zainab Khan at [zainab@gallup.com.pk](mailto:zainab@gallup.com.pk)

## 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 **March 2023** and **April 2023**. This data was obtained after reviewing **5126** 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.

Disclaimer: Gallup Pakistan is not related to Gallup Inc. headquartered in Washington D.C. USA. We require that our surveys be credited fully as Gallup Pakistan (not Gallup or Gallup Poll). We disclaim any responsibility for surveys pertaining to Pakistani public opinion except those carried out by Gallup Pakistan, the Pakistani affiliate of Gallup International Association. For details on Gallup International Association see website: [www.gallup-international.com](http://www.gallup-international.com)

For more survey data on social and other issues see website [www.gallup.com.pk](http://www.gallup.com.pk)

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