

Media Coverage of 18th Constitutional Amendment in Newspapers of Pakistan: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze and compare the print media coverage of 18th Constitutional Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan in five selected newspapers from 5th April 2010 to 12th April 2010. The main purpose is to determine the tone and proportion of coverage provided to this Amendment in all four provinces and capital city of Pakistan. This study is based on content analysis of 257 news articles to study the contents of the news items of the selected newspapers. It is argued that the amendment was unanimously passed on 8th April 2010 in National Assembly with full support of all political parties. However, this paper observes that the media coverage differs in each province with some provinces giving its coverage more significance than the other provinces. However, the analysis of the editorials and opinion pages of all the newspapers reflects the concern with regards to the ways through which this amendment can improve the lives of the general masses.

Key Words: 18th Constitutional Amendment, Pakistani Print Media, Provincial Autonomy

Introduction

The Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan was hailed as a landmark event in the constitutional history of Pakistan that reinstated Pakistan constitution's original intention of a decentralized Federation of provinces. This amendment was passed unanimously with support from all political parties in the Parliament and lauded by almost all provinces. The Constitution (Eighteenth Amendment) Act, 2010, received the assent of the President on April 19, 2010 and was promulgated on the following day. The Act consisted of a "total of 102 amendments, which amended, replaced or deleted various provisions of the Constitution".¹

The passage of 18th Amendment was considered to have a deep effect on the way country is governed and its economy is regulated. Abolition of concurrent legislative list reflects the long-standing demand of provinces for provincial autonomy.² It meant transferring large amount of economic authority to the provinces. The amendment also addressed the long-standing demand of the Pakhtun population to rename the province of N.W.F.P as

¹Overview of the Constitution (Eighteenth Amendment) Act, 2010, (Inter Provincial Coordination, 2011).

²Shahid J. Burki, *The 18th Amendment: Pakistan's Constitution Redesigned*, Institute of South Asian Studies, September 2010.

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Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to identify it with the main ethnic group living in this area. The preferred name suggested for the province was Pakhtunkhwa but due to the resistance of other ethnic groups, a compromise was struck, and the province was instead given the name Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.³

Other important changes in the constitution relates to the curtailing the powers of the President. The authority bestowed to the President through General Zia-ul-Haq's 8th Amendment and General Pervez Musharraf's 17th Amendment was withdrawn. The clause that allowed President to dismiss Prime Minister on vague charges such as incompetence and poor governance was removed.⁴ This clause was the legacy of General Zia-ul -Haq and was inserted in 1985 by 8th Amendment. It was removed in 1997 by the 13th Amendment introduced in the National Assembly by then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, but it was again reinstated by General Pervez Musharraf in 2002 when National Assembly at his urge passed the 17th Amendment.⁵ The 18th Amendment has removed this clause once again with additional limits being put on the powers of President.⁶ There has been a time limit "fixed for the President to act on the advice given by Prime minister and his cabinet".⁷ Referendums were in the past held by both Presidents Zia-ul-Haq and Pervez Musharraf to legitimize their rule. However, with 18th Amendment "President's discretionary powers to dissolve the National Assembly or to hold a referendum have been omitted".⁸

The 18th Amendment is also a landmark achievement as it reasserted the two most important institutions of the Federation i.e. the Council of Common Interests and the National Economic Council. The aim of these institutions is to strengthen the provincial authority. The CCI is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes chief ministers of all four provinces along with and three Federal government nominees' as members.⁹ The CCI "has been entrusted with decision making, monitoring, supervision, and control responsibilities over the Federal Legislative List Part II".¹⁰

³ Mahboob Hussain and Rizwan U. Kokab, Eighteenth Amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan: Success and Controversies, *Asian Social Science* , 8, no. 1, 2011. P. 83.

⁴ Ibid. p. 8

⁵ Fakhur-ul-Islam, The 18th Amendment in the 1973 Constitution, *The Dialogue*, 8, no. 2, 2013, p.189.

⁶ Uzma Khan, History of Federalism in Pakistan (1947 to 2010): From Centralization towards Provincial Autonomy, *The Discourse* 2, no. 2, 2016, p. 69

⁷ Ibid.,p. 11

⁸ Ibid.,p. 69

⁹ Anwar Shah, The 18th Constitutional Amendment: Glue or Solvent for Nation Building and Citizenship in Pakistan? *The Lahore Journal of Economics*, September 2012, p. 393.

¹⁰ Ibid, p.394

Similarly, the National Economic Council has been established as a constitutional body with the responsibility of national economic policies.¹¹ Previously the membership of the Council was “left to the President’s discretion given that at least one member from each province was represented”.¹² But with the 18th Amendment, the balance of power has tilted towards the provinces with delegation of “two members each including the chief minister of each province along with the four other members appointed by the Prime Minister”.¹³ The council is now required to meet at least once every six months. Hence, 18th Amendment has attempted to reinvigorate these institutions to deal with all the matters related to Federating units.

Most of the media coverage of the 18th Amendment focused on the transfer of authority from the office of President to that of Prime Minister. This amendment was considered to restore the 1973 Constitution, which established a Parliamentary form of government in its original form.¹⁴ The intention of the original constitution was that executive authority must reside with the Parliament. However, it was continuously mentioned in the media that powers of the Parliament have repeatedly been seized by the governments dominated by the military and through constitutional amendments; the President became the Chief Executive of the country. Hence, it was unanimously appreciated that 18th Amendment intends to rectify that irregularity by reinstating the powers given to Parliament under the 1973 Constitution.¹⁵ The other part of amendment that marks the substantial increase in the powers of federating provinces has also been discussed frequently. It was also intended in the original constitution that provincial autonomy should be granted to the provinces to address their grievances.¹⁶

¹¹ Amjad A. Magsi, BALANCE OF POWER AT THE CENTRE: THE PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER & PARLIAMENT, in Eighteenth Amendment Revisited (Islamabad: Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), 2011),68

¹² Ibid, 68

¹³ Ibid, 394

¹⁴ K. Adeney, A Step Towards Inclusive Federalism in Pakistan? The Politics of the 18th Amendment, *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 42, no. 4 (2012) doi:10.1093/publius/pjr055.

¹⁵ Zubair F. Abbasi, *Federalism, Provincial Autonomy and Conflicts*, (Islamabad: Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), 2010), http://www.cpdi-pakistan.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/federalism_cpdi_11aug11.pdf.

¹⁶ Nafeer Ahmad Malik, *The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973*, (Lahore: Irfan Law Books House, 2011)

Theoretical Framework

This study is theoretically linked with Ervin Goffman's Media Theory of Framing.¹⁷ He describes frames as "scheme of interpretation" that allocates individuals to trace, identify, perceive and label issues, events, and topics.¹⁸ Robert Entman further modernized this definition by specifying that "to frame a communicating text or message is to promote certain facts of a perceived reality".¹⁹ The print media has proved to be a worthy source of information and has a substantial influence on public opinion. The notion behind this theory is that media focuses attention on certain issues that affects how certain news items are framed and delivered before public. Framing of newspaper editorials and opinion items are considerable important in this regard. They present a persuasive item and define a given situation and present its analysis. Moreover, they highlight the importance of topic to the public. Furthermore, this theory states that frames selected to emphasize specific situations and deduce judgments also have an impact on the perceptions of the recipients of the news.²⁰ Another main premise of this theory is that any issue can be viewed through various perspectives. It basically involves the certain coalition of words and phrases that convey a certain message and influence those perceptions of audiences.²¹

Methodology and Sampling

To analyze the nature and the frequency of coverage of 18th Amendment, five newspapers have been selected for sampling purposes during the period among 5th April 2010 to 12th April 2010: the peak time of passing of the 18th Amendment in the National Assembly of Pakistan. The rationale behind choosing this time frame is that 8th April 2010 was the day that witnessed passing of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan in the National Assembly of Pakistan. The following five newspapers would be the primary data for this study that have been selected based on their availability on the selected time.

- a) Daily Balochistan Express Quetta
- b) Daily Jang Lahore
- c) Daily Nawa-i-Waqt Islamabad

¹⁷ Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1986.

¹⁸ News Framing on Indo-Pak Conflicts in the News (Pakistan) and Times of India: War and Peace Journalism Perspective, *Journal of Mass Communication & Journalism* 05, no. 08, 2015, p. 3.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ David H. Weaver, Thoughts on Agenda Setting, Framing, and Priming, *Journal of Communication*, 57, no. 1, 2007.

²¹ Kirk Hallahan, Seven Models of Framing: Implications for Public Relations, *Journal of Public Relations Research* 11, no. 3 1999, p. 206.

- d) Daily Mashriq Peshawar
- e) Daily Express Karachi

For content analysis, a sample of 237 news articles and editorial pieces from selected newspapers²² were allocated for the study. According to Berelson (1952), “content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication”.²³ Further, Holsti (1968) “says that it is any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of messages”.²⁴ As for Weber (1985), “it is a research methodology that utilizes a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text”.²⁵ These inferences are based on the sender of the message, the message itself and the audience that message targets.

The entire newspaper focusing on editorials and news articles including headline, body text and theme has been taken as units of analysis. Opinion pages have also been selected as a sample for the study. The editorial has also been chosen for the analysis because editorial depicts the opinion of the newspaper while opinion pages reflect the opinion of analysts on this Amendment. Hence, the study would be descriptive in nature. The frames which have been repeatedly used in the analysis can be divided into the following categories as: i) 18th Amendment ii) 17th Amendment/LFO iii) General Zia-ul-Haq/ Pervez Musharraf iv) Asif Ali Zardari/Nawaz Sharif v) Great Achievement/ Success of Parliamentary Democracy vi) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa/Strikes vii) Impact on Ordinary Masses.

Data Analysis: Results and Discussion

In this section, all five newspapers have been evaluated independently based on their coverage of 18th Amendment. Due to the nature of the study, categories on which these newspapers were evaluated are diverse. The newspapers were studied comparatively as well as assessed individually. The categories were chosen based on number of coverage in a

²² No sample of selected newspapers was available online for free. The samples of all five selected newspapers were only accessible through the offices of these newspapers hence availability of all these newspapers had to negotiate with the staff at newspaper agencies to get the samples in a print version. The examination watch of this study will be able to explore and analyze the Pakistani print media coverage towards 18th Amendment.

²³ Roberto Franzosi, Content Analysis: Objective, Systematic, and Quantitative Description of Content, *Content Analysis*, 1, 2008, p. 22

²⁴ Steve Stemler, An Overview of Content Analysis, Practical Assessment, *Research and Evaluation* 7, no. 17, 2001, p. 1.

²⁵ Kimberly, A. Neuendorf, *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2002, p. 10.

newspaper during the study period. So, the findings of one newspaper cannot be generalized for others.

Lahore-Daily Jang Coverage

This study observed a total of 28 news articles related to 18th Amendment within the time frame of eight days.

Analysis

The analysis of the news items in Daily Jang Lahore shows that most of the opposition parties welcomed the passing of the 18th Amendment without any fierce opposition. Moulana Fazlur Rehman supported the passage of the Amendment however, maintained that PakhtunKhawa is the name suggested by Lahore and won't be accepted by the local people there. Jamat-ul-Hadees Pakistan maintained that 18th Amendment would strengthen democracy in Pakistan. Similarly, leaders of even small parties like Khaksar Tehreek supported the 18th Amendment. However, opposition leaders like Imran Khan opposed the 18th Amendment calling it a way of government to control the judiciary.

In every news item related to PPP, the newspapers maintained their stance that after passing of 18th Amendment, dictators would not be able to dissolve the political institutions. They stated that new Pakistan is being built on the philosophy of Zulifqar Ali Bhutto. Moreover, it would also be the beginning of providing rights to the people of Baluchistan. PPP stated that Parliament should pass the amendment without any delay. There was also news regarding strikes in Hazara Division thus, calling the changing of name of N.W.F.P to Pakhtunkhwa as a vested interest of ANP but 264 votes were casted in Parliament in favor of Khyber Paktunkhwa. Also, with the passage, 258 votes were casted in Parliament to end LFO and 17th amendment and there was a mutual consensus on forming Judicial Commission.

The opinion pages of this newspaper raised a very critical question that if the politicians and leaders would not change their attitudes, then 18th Amendment would also not do anything fruitful. After passing of this Amendment, it would be noteworthy to monitor the changes brought in the lives of the ordinary citizens. However, bringing new constitutional amendments would not be sufficient unless stern steps are taken to ensure their proper implementation. Analyzing the Constitution of Pakistan shows that it has nothing to do with the daily lives of ordinary citizens because practically what has been happening in this country has nothing to do with the constitution. These opinion pages highlighted that politicians have not been successful in implementing the laws. Several questions were also raised such as, before 17th Amendment by Pervez Musharraf, were Nawaz Sharif

and Benazir Bhutto successful in improving the lives of the masses? Would transferring the authority to Prime Minister result in good governance? Would renaming the province end corruption in the province? It was also mentioned that 17th Amendment was not hurdle in the way of good governance nor it advocated corruption, inflation, target killing, crime or law and order. Hence, if politicians are not serious about implementing the amendments, then this Amendment will also not affect the lives of masses in any way.

Islamabad- Daily Nawa-i-Waqt Coverage

Within the time frame of eight days, 77 news articles related to 18th Amendment were analyzed.

Analysis

The coverage of news articles in Nawa-i-Waqt newspaper was similar to the other selected newspapers. Most of the news items appreciated the efforts of PPP and President Asif Ali Zardari. PML-N also hailed this effort in a way that Parliamentary Democracy would be created with the passage of 18th Amendment. Most of the opposition parties supported the passage of Amendment. However, PML-Q specifically blamed Nawaz Sharif for deceiving people of Hazara to become Prime Minister third-time. PML-Q held the stance that 18th Amendment won't be able to solve the issues of load shedding and poverty. It also criticized 18th Amendment for doing nothing substantial for education and not offering and educational policy.

There were plenty of news items that covered the news related to the strikes regarding the renaming of the province. Tehreek Tahafuz Adliya supported referendum to decide the name of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Similarly, PML-Q termed the renaming of the province of NWFP as a vested interest of Nawaz Sharif. There was also mention of the research report in this newspaper that politicians have not been paying any heed to other issues such as corruption, load shedding and promotion of law and order. Moreover, implementation of 18th Amendment would be a big problem for politicians as they have no proper plan.

Interestingly, this newspaper also covered opposition to 18th Amendment by General Zia-ul-Haq's son Ejaz-ul-Haq who challenged the removal of elections within the parties. He maintained that province should be renamed after proper referendum. He said that Zia-ul-Haq added Objective Resolution in the constitution and contributed article 62 and 63 in the constitution. He maintained that nobody can remove the name of Zia-ul-Haq from the constitution until Islamic provisions are retained in the constitution.

Nawa-i-Waqt also published a special edition on 18th Amendment Bill. It termed 18th Amendment as the big achievement in the political and constitutional history of Pakistan. It discussed the main provisions added in the bill such as i) Abolition of article 58 (b) 2 from the constitution ii) The ban on third time prime minister ship and chief minister ship has been lifted iii) Ban on introduction of any ordinance by President in session of National Assembly and Senate iv) Transfer of authority from President to Prime Minister in appointment of services chief v) A judicial commission will recommend the appointment procedure of superior judges and the final names of judges will be decided by parliamentary commission vi) 17th Amendment and Legal Framework Order as introduced by Musharraf has been repealed vii) Abolition of concurrent list for provincial autonomy viii) The name of the former President of Pakistan, General Zia, has been removed from the text of Constitution ix) Holding constitution in abeyance is tantamount to high treason. It also highlighted that apart from the issue of renaming Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this amendment can prove to establish stability in the country. This amendment has achieved consensus from almost all major parties as this amendment has closed doors for the military dictators to rule the country and paved way for Parliamentary democracy.

One interesting opinion article suggested the name Khanistan for N.W.F. P instead of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It outlined that N.W.F.P was not a name relevant to the identity of the people living in that province. However, N.W.F.P consists of many other regions such as Hazara, Dera, Chitral, Kohistan etc. Hence, it was necessary that these regions also agreed to a proposed name. If this does not happen, then many complexities will arise. It raised the point that name reflects the identity of the people living in a region and since common identity in N.W.F.P is Khan hence, N.W.F.P should be renamed as Khanistan. This would be suitable for the whole province since Khan is usually associated with people from every walk of life in N.W.F.P.

Baluchistan-Daily Baluchistan Express Coverage

A total of 44 news items were found on 18th Amendment within time frame of seven days.

Analysis

Daily Baluchistan Express contained opinions by few political analysts such as Farooq Moin who maintained that 18th Amendment would soon be passed by the Parliament resulting in restoration of 1973 Constitution to its original form. With the approval of the bill, the provinces would get more autonomy and parliamentary democratic system would be restored in the country. The amendment would also pave the way for the supremacy of

the parliament and the constitution. The government would now be better able to assert itself to address the problems being faced by common people. Eminent analyst Mehdi Hassan said that with the approval of the bill, the demand for provincial autonomy would eventually be realized, enabling the provinces to resolve the problems of people themselves. Political analyst Dr. Rashid Ahmed said that provincial autonomy was meant to help provinces to stand on their own feet thus, with the approval of 18th Amendment provinces would be able to generate resources themselves and now it would be responsibility of the provinces to redress the problems of the people of their respective provinces.

Almost all news items had a tone of appreciation towards 18th Amendment. Chairman Senate expressed delight and profound satisfaction over the introduction of 18th Amendment in the Parliament. He termed it as a historic consensus document that symbolizes sovereignty of the Parliament. ANP leader Bilour termed the renaming of the province Khyber Paktoonkhwa a great contribution of the President and the Constitutional Reforms Committee. ANP Asfand Yar Wali urged effective implementation of 18th Amendment to resolve FATA and Baluchistan issues. ANP leader Mian Iftikhar said many people in Hazara support Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa as a new name.

In almost all news items, there was widespread appreciation towards the President for voluntarily surrounding his powers to the Parliament. It was believed that with 18th Amendment constitution will be revived in its true spirit. Parliamentarians hailed the passage of 18th Amendment by National Assembly saying that the document would go on a long way in strengthening democracy in the country. PPP hailed 1973 constitution as a dream of Bhutto which he made into a reality. Many people welcomed the unanimously passage of 18th Amendment bill by National Assembly and termed it an unprecedented achievement of PPP-led government in the history of Pakistan. Removal of highly unpopular amendments introduced by two military dictators ensures provincial autonomy by striking down concurrent list. Specifically, there was mention of LFO and 17th Amendment which were the symbols of dictatorial regime. Zia-ul-Haq's name has also been stricken out from the constitution. Consensus on constitutional reforms was considered as dawn of a new era towards strengthening democracy and political system.

However, among all the newspapers, there was only one letter to the editor that questioned the 18th Amendment that how would the transfer of power from the President to Prime Minister exactly solve the power crisis and help Pakistan pursue a more independent foreign policy? And how was the consensus on renaming N.W.F.P or the method of appointment of judges

help address the rising unemployment or severe economic crisis? Another letter to the editor disagreed with renaming the province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It outlined that far from propelling Pakhtuns to international renown, there was the danger that the new name would consign them to an obscurity they do not deserve. The N.W.F.P has far from being the extent of the land of Pakhtuns. Pakhtuns also inhabit large swathes of Afghanistan as well as of Baluchistan. This letter questioned that don't those Pakhtuns also deserve to be part of this newly recognized Pakhtun nation? Moreover, it suggested that the name changing has only been a distraction from the pressing problems the province had been facing.

Peshawar-Daily Mashriq Coverage

A total of 35 news items were found on 18th Amendment within time frame of seven days.

Analysis

The coverage of the news items reflected a mixture of positive and negative news stories. Most of the news stories welcomed the 18th Amendment and termed it as the revenge that democracy has finally taken. Many news stories stated that Article 58 (2) has been the greatest weapon of non-democratic forces in Pakistan. This article has been used by leaders such as Farooq Leghari and Ghulam Ishaq Khan in the past to serve the interests of the establishment. This article has halted the progress of democracy and weakened democratic institutions. Since Pakistan is a Federation whose existence depends on democracy, this amendment would prove to be beneficial for Pakistan. However, congratulations were also offered to Nawaz Sharif who would benefit most from lifting of the ban from third-time Prime Minister ship as he has been the only candidate after assassination of Benazir who would get advantage from this clause.

One interesting news story highlighted that 18th Amendment has specifically been a source of great happiness for Asfan Yar Wali. Most of the people who congratulated him were the Punjab members of PML-N and PML-Q from National Assembly who had not opposed the renaming of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, most of the opposition came from the province of Asfan Yar Wali. The members of assembly appreciated that ANP worked constitutionally without any protests to change the name of the province. Apart from one newspaper and 20 members of assembly, all have supported ANP in this regard. Another interesting point covered was that ANP has also set the pace for the people of South Punjab who can now peacefully struggle for a separate province.

Another interesting news story covered the 18th Amendment with respect to women. This was the single most news item in analysis of all the newspapers that have talked about the perspective of women with regards to 18th Amendment. It stated that no political party consulted women during the discussions regarding preparation of this amendment since no women member was part of the parliamentary committee on this Amendment. Further, no political party has tried to address the clauses related to women in 8th Amendment such as Zina Ordinance. Because of these articles women have been subjugated to discriminatory policies. Despite this fact, the position of women remained disappointing with regards to this Amendment.

One interesting opinion page raised a very critical point that Pakhtun nation has become an educated nation. This nation now requires its rights and opportunities along with the recognition of their identity. However, if government's working would be similar as the last two years then soon this nation would become disappointed and forget the landmark renaming of the province associated with their identity. This nation would now not only have concern about the new name given to their province but also questioned the work done for their betterment.

Similarly, most of the opinion pages questioned that will the conditions of democracy be fulfilled with this amendment. It was interesting to note the general reservation in the opinion pages that the political parties who have given a joint consensus on this amendment are just democratic parties or just political groupings? They highlighted that as our political parties had not been in the favor of internal party elections, so how the parties that are not democratically organized themselves can work for democracy? Also, 18th Amendment also gives rights to those parties who do not fulfill the requirements of democracy.

The general opinion regarding 18th Amendment in the newspapers was that what fruits this amendment would yield for local masses of Pakistan such as vendor, motor mechanic, hawker, rickshaw driver etc. It raised the question that what does it matter that President has right to dissolve the Assembly or the Prime Minister? If dissolving assembly has been acceptable, then what did it matter that who dissolved it? Moreover, it had become a norm that changing the institutions remained under constant scrutiny of our leaders but not improving the lives of our masses. Critics questioned that proponents of PPP said that they would restore the 1973 Constitution, but has the constitution been solution to all problems of local masses? What percentage of people would get better lifestyle with this Amendment? And most importantly, who would give the guarantee of the implementation of this Amendment?

Karachi-Daily Express Coverage

A total of 53 news items were found on 18th Amendment within time frame of seven days.

Analysis

The analysis of coverage of 18th Amendment in these newspapers demonstrates that most of the news stories praised the passing of this Amendment in the National Assembly and considered it as a hallmark of democracy in the country. 8th April was considered as the most important day in the history of Pakistan. It was termed as a day of political consensus. Zardari had been appreciated for doing everything that was the requirement of the democracy. One opinion article suggested that now Zia-ul-Haq's name would be written as Revoked Zia-ul-Haq.

However, analysis of most of the editorial and opinion pages showed that there were also reservations regarding the Amendment. It was highlighted that although all political parties had shown consensus in National Assembly in this regard and had opened a new chapter by approval of 18th Amendment, the situation had not as simple as it might have seemed to be. It had not completely removed the dangers faced by democracy. It was mentioned that citizens and political analysts have reservations about the many clauses of this Amendment especially the ones about the method of appointment of judges and renaming of the province. This could result in many new issues such as renaming of the province could hurt the sentiments of Hazara and Hindu ethnic groups who had demonstrated against renaming the province. No province has the right to decide the name of the province except the people of that province. Moreover, every province has people of other languages residing in them. Hence, 18th Amendment has ultimately resulted into few new complex questions.

It was also repeatedly discussed in the newspapers that people are waiting for real good news when their day-to-day issues would be tackled appropriately. Issues like robbery, theft, injustice, inflation, unemployment and poor health and education services have plagued our country since decades. If any leader wants to solve the issues at local level, then he should start with improving the health and education facilities in Pakistan. There had been no clause in the Amendment that especially talked about tackling these issues. So, the question arises as one news story read that although 18th Amendment had been passed, will the disappointment in the masses go away with passage of this Amendment?

Another clause that was discussed and which had been considered very dangerous was one which removed the election within the parties. The

alarming part had been that all the political parties have mutually agreed to this clause. Now with this clause, politics would be sealed with the stamp of few family dynasties that would rule the parties now just as they had been doing since decades. Repeatedly, it was highlighted that 18th Amendment had nothing to do with the issues of the local masses as politics had again been made safe for rich and powerful. It had no clause associated to social security or health care that could be related to poor people of this country.

Findings

This study evaluated the print media coverage of 18th Amendment in Pakistani Print Media from 5th April 2010 to 12th April 2010. The findings are as follow:

Table 1: Total Number of News Stories related to 18th Amendment in all Five Newspapers from 5th April 2010 to 12th April 2010.

Sr. No	Newspaper	Total No. of News Stories (including News Articles and Opinion Pages)
1	Daily Jang Lahore	28
2	Daily Balochistan Express	44
3	Daily Nawa-i-Waqt Islamabad	77
4	Daily Mashriq Peshawar	35
5	Daily Express Karachi	53
	Total	237

It can easily be comprehended from the data given in the table that there has been a difference of treatment of news items regarding 18th Amendment. It can be noted that this amendment has been given highest coverage by Daily Nawa-i-Waqt that has been selected as a newspaper for Islamabad edition while on the contrary, Daily Jang Lahore gave less coverage as compared to other newspapers which can be due to the reason that provincial autonomy is not considered a major issue in Lahore, a capital city of Punjab province. Hence, all the newspapers for different reasons differ in the frequency of publishing of news stories.

Table 2: Comparison of Frequency of Positive and Negative News Stories in All Five Newspapers

Sr.No	Newspaper	No of News Stories	Positive	Negative
1	Daily Jang Lahore	28	14	14
2	Daily Balochistan Express	44	40	4
3	Daily Nawa-i-	77	44	33

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Waqt Islamabad				
4	Daily Mashriq Peshawar	35	22	13
5	Daily Express Karachi	53	23	30

This study also considered the positive and negative intonation of both articles and headlines.²⁶ The overall tone refers to the general attitude towards 18th Amendment and was formulated to represent the predominant feeling of the article's tone after reading the entire article. It was considered as negative if the overall tone of the article or headline towards the 18th Amendment was negative. However, it was considered as positive if the overall tone of the article or headline towards 18th Amendment was neutral or positive. Table 2 explains the number of positive and negative news stories published in these newspapers regarding this amendment. Most of the newspapers covered more positive news regarding this amendment as compared to the negative news stories. Editorials and opinion pages had the negative tone as compared to other published news stories.

Fig 1: Percentage of Positive and Negative News Stories in Each Respective Newspaper

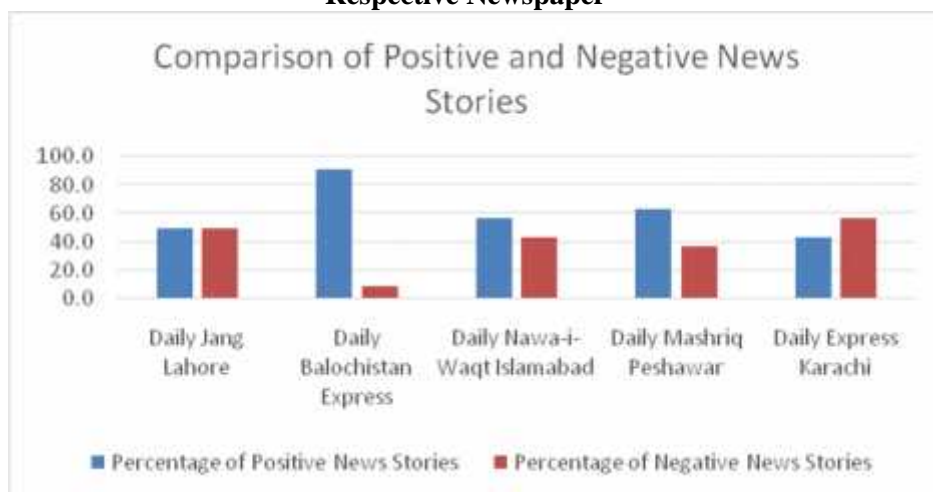


Figure 1 illustrates Daily Baluchistan Express exhibited the highest percentage of positive news stories (90.9%) regarding the 18th Amendment as compared to the negative stories (9.09%). The percentage of negative news

²⁶ Pippa Norris, *Negative News, Negative Public?* in *A Virtuous Circle: Reinventing Political Activism*, Cambridge: John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 2000.

stories (56.6%) regarding this amendment was highest in Daily Express Karachi as compared to negative news stories (43.4%).

Conclusion

The analysis of all five respective newspapers demonstrates that Nawa-i-Waqt Islamabad edition gave the most coverage to 18th Constitutional Amendment in its publications. Most of the coverage was given in the form of news articles however; Daily Express Karachi gave this Amendment considerable coverage in the opinion pages. It is also important to note that there has been a minute difference between the news articles while discussing 18th Amendment in all these newspapers. The news articles especially that are published on front pages appreciated PPP and discussed the high hopes from this amendment regardless of the ground realities. These news stories also appreciated the efforts of Zardari in establishment of democracy in the country. The frames selected in these news items emphasized the significance of passage of 18th Amendment which led to the formation of opinions that this amendment is vital in strengthening democracy in Pakistan.

However, the analysis of the editorials and opinion pages of these newspapers reflected the opinion with regards to ways through which this amendment can improve the lives of general masses. The frames and themes used to describe this amendment in editorials and opinion pages reflected negativity and pessimism regarding the effects of this amendment on public. As discussed in the analysis section, the general opinions regarding 18th Amendment in the newspapers were that what fruits this amendment will yield for local masses of Pakistan such as vendor, motor mechanic, hawker, rickshaw driver etc. It raises the question that what does it matter that President has right to dissolve the Assembly or the Prime Minister? If dissolving assembly is acceptable, then what does it matter that who dissolves it? Moreover, it has become a norm that changing the institutions remain under constant scrutiny of our leaders but not improving the lives of our masses. Critics questioned that proponents of PPP say that they will restore the 1973 constitution, but the question arises that is 1973 the document has all the solutions to problems to local masses? What percentage of people will get better lifestyle with this amendment? And most importantly, who will give the guarantee of the implementation of the Amendment?

It was also repeatedly discussed in the newspapers that people are waiting for real good news when their day-to-day issues will be tackled properly. Issues like robbery, theft, injustice, inflation, unemployment and poor health and education services have plagued our country since decades. If any leader wants to solve the issues at local level, then he should start with

improving the health and education facilities in Pakistan. There has been no clause in the Amendment that specially talks about tackling these issues. So, in most of the opinion pages, question has been raised that although 18th Amendment has been passed, will the disappointment in the masses go away with passage of this amendment?

The nature of the discourse remained the same throughout the newspapers covered for this research i.e. from 5th April 2010 to 12th April 2010. As mentioned earlier, framing of news have remarkable influence on forming the perceptions of public. Newspaper editorials create certain point of views that promote a specific perspective. The editorials of these newspapers repeatedly highlighted the realistic concerns of ordinary citizens about how this amendment can help in bringing change in daily lives of masses. They did this by selectively using frames and engaging in words and phrases that generate the impression of 18th Amendment being passed only to serve the interests of few political elites. Hence, overall it can be assessed that this issue was viewed through various perspectives and can be evaluated through both the positive and negative coverage of news items in these newspapers.