

US Presidential Elections 2016: A Comparative Study of Media Coverage of CNN and FOX News

Asghar, Rohail; Khan, Mohsin Hassan; Khuhro, Rashid Ali; Adnan, Hamed Mohd; Alqurainy, Sara Hamad

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Asghar, R., Khan, M. H., Khuhro, R. A., Adnan, H. M., & Alqurainy, S. H. (2019). US Presidential Elections 2016: A Comparative Study of Media Coverage of CNN and FOX News. *Media Watch*, 10(3), 675-686. <https://doi.org/10.15655/mw/2019/v10i3/49698>

Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY-NC-ND Lizenz (Namensnennung-Nicht-kommerziell-Keine Bearbeitung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/deed.de>

Terms of use:

This document is made available under a CC BY-NC-ND Licence (Attribution-Non Commercial-NoDerivatives). For more information see: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

US Presidential Elections 2016: A Comparative Study of Media Coverage of CNN and FOX News

ROHAIL ASGHAR¹, MOHSIN HASSAN KHAN², RASHID ALI KHUHRO³,
HAMED MOHD ADNAN⁴, & SARA HAMAD ALQURAINY⁵

¹Superior University, Lahore, Pakistan

³University of Sindh, Pakistan

^{2,4,5}University of Malaya, Malaysia

The Presidential Elections in the United States have always remained the focus of attention for public and media. By playing the role of watchdog in the American society, mass media looks keenly and deeply on the policies, personal life, and character of Presidential Candidates during Presidential Elections of the country. The study examines and compares news coverage of the United States of America's (USA) Presidential Elections-2016 of two most Popular cable news television networks, i.e., FOX and CNN. This quantitative content analysis study purposively selected ninety news stories which were aired during the USA Presidential Elections-2016 from August 7, 2016, to November 7, 2016. The chosen news stories were analyzed according to the Framing theory's episodic and thematic frames. The findings reveal that the CNN, a leading supporter of Hillary Clinton, frames her more episodically and more thematically to Donald Trump in its stories. On the other hand, the FOX News stories presented Donald Trump more in the episodic frames and Hillary Clinton in more the thematic frames. The study concludes that both news channels, FOX and CNN have mostly framed both USA Presidential Elections' candidates; Donald Trump and Hilary Clinton episodically by focusing more on their scandals and controversies related to their personal lives or character rather than on their policies and debates.

Keywords: US Presidential Elections 2016, Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, FOX, CNN, episodic, thematic

The Presidential Elections-2016 is considered one of the significant polls in the history of the United States. First time in the American history, the nomination of a female candidate; Hillary Clinton, by the Democrats for the primaries made the Presidential Elections more interesting. Though Hillary Clinton was considered the real nominee for the candidature (Khan et al., 2019). Nevertheless, Francia (2018) argued that Senator Bernie Sanders was an independent candidate, but he did well during the primaries. He did not stop the campaign; even it was apparent to him that he would not succeed in collecting enough representatives to get him nominated for the candidate of the president. It was probable that Democrats influential delegates are willing to nominate Hillary as a Democrats candidate for president.

On the other side, the Republicans changed the presidential candidate several times during primaries. Some of them were non-politicians, such as Donald Trump and

Correspondence to: Mohsin Hassan Khan, Department of Media and Communication Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur 50603, Malaysia.

Ben Carson. The list of hopefuls for the presidential candidates from the Republicans during the primaries was Donald Trump, Ben Carson, John Kasich, Marco Rubio, and Ted Cruz. Most of them were against the nomination of Donald Trump. Even though the competitors of Trump were dragged ahead and after seeing the popularity of Trump among the public; the Republican dropped other candidates from the competition. The Donald Trump got a nomination for the presidential candidate (Patterson, 2017).

The competition between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton during the Presidential Elections-2016 was challenging. It was interesting because both; Clinton and Trump did not have any history of rivalry before the 2016 Presidential Election. They criticized their opponents' qualification. However, the election trials of Trump were violent, as well as the attitude of his supporters was aggressive.

Nevertheless, (Patterson, 2016) claimed that many incidents of misogyny took place during the rallies of the Democrats also. The Bernie Sander's supporters raised misogynist slogan against the supporters of the presidential candidacy of Hillary Clinton. Though Bernie Sander was out of the race of central contention for the nomination of the presidential candidature, their misogynist propagation affected overall results of the presidential elections for the Democrats party.

The media exposure for the presidential candidates is highly essential to get attention during elections. For that, the significant endorsements are considered to be crucial for the victory in general elections. These endorsements usually help a lot but sometimes became the dragging indicator too. Many political analysts say that money is the primary sources for the election victory. However, media exposure is considered pure gold for better results. The media coverage can improve the position of the candidate and brings endorsements from all stakeholders too— those presidential elections campaigns which get less attention from media become futile. Nevertheless, proper media coverage motivates presidential candidates (Leubsdorf, 1976). The purpose of this article is to determine the news media coverage patterns of the USA Presidential Election-2016 campaign through the two primary news outlets, i.e., CNN and FOX.

In the US presidential elections, the candidates are given a big opportunity during the party convention in which they present their agenda to the public through live coverage. The aspirants of presidential candidacy portray themselves and disseminate their messages directly to the public during this live session. Nevertheless, small versions of party conventions do not get media attention. In the highly mediated second-hand alternative version, people learn about the presidential candidates through the voices of reporters; not through the voices of presidential candidates. However, the results proved that just how real that was of the convention period 2016 (Patterson, 2017).

By Matheny, Poe, Fisher, and Warren (2018), the good statements were presented by Donald Trump; in which Republicans will be following the path of prosperity, peace, and stability. In contrast, the other opposition party, i.e., Democrats were revolving around the path of evil, violence, agony, and terrorism.

The power of Donald Trump's campaign method boosted the evolution of a gigantic news content eco-system. By the peak period of US presidential elections 2016, fake results were being demonstrated by Google search engine throughout the world, i.e., "whether Barack Obama was American?" and "Did Hilary Clinton run a prostitution racket?" (Gopalkrishnan, 2017).

Though the actions of newsmakers make significant news stories in the media, the reporters' interpretations build the actuality of message. It is believed that the ancient style of description prevailed during the period of the 1960s. In that, the duration of the average sound bite in the evening news of nominee exceeded 40 seconds. The normal

continuous quote of the candidate in the newspaper touched about twenty lines. However, it changed during the late 1980s; the candidate's average sound bite had touched to ten seconds only, which was considered sufficient for a sentence. However, the two-thirds had reduced the average quote of the nominee in the newspaper also. Resultantly, with time news content got changed as the candidates' voices became quieter than the reporters' voices (Patterson, 2016).

During the presidential elections in the US, the narratives of the presidential candidates depend on raising voice about the problems, knowledge, and qualifications of the other candidate. The idea to propagate these things in news content is to motivate the public to get better results during elections. Mostly, the reporters analyze the presidential campaigns distinctively. Their search for exciting and newsworthy stories never ends. That is why they try to remain updated about the current political scenario.

As it is discussed above that currently, the news content is journalist-centered. Consequently, policy issues usually lack novelty. The coverage of the presidential campaign is dependent on the latest developments of the issues. Contrary, the nature of the policy problems is usually constant and long-lasting. In media, permanent issues are considered newsworthy. However, the media does not consider significant to temporary issues. That is why the during election campaigns, many issues come and go in news content. However, the stories of the presidential candidate's policy declaration get media attention. Later, it commonly does not. According to Patterson (2016), during the party convention of the Democrat and the Republicans in the presidential elections-2016, these actions were evident in the news reporting (Patterson, 2016). In this study, the issues mentioned above have been addressed. The purpose of this article is to determine the news media coverage patterns of the USA Presidential Election-2016 campaign through the two primary news outlets, i.e., CNN and FOX.

Study Objectives

- (i) To investigate the degree of coverage received by both Presidential candidates; Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump during Presidential Elections-2016 in the CNN and FOX.
- (ii) To compare coverage patterns between CNN and FOX during the US Presidential Elections-2016.
- (iii) To investigate Specific Frames built by The FOX News and CNN about presidential candidates Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton during the US Presidential Elections-2016.

Research Questions

- RQ1:** What is the degree of coverage received by both Presidential candidates; Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump during the Presidential Elections-2016 in the CNN and FOX?
- RQ2:** What are the coverage patterns between CNN and FOX during the US Presidential Elections-2016?
- RQ3:** What are the prevailing news frames of both news channels, i.e., CNN and FOX about the presidential candidates Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton during the Presidential Elections-2016?

This research will add more scope to previous studies concluded on these subjects, such as media biases, media framing, and internal policies. It also presents the research gap in the comparative study of FOX and CNN. Generally, it would also help to understand the news content of global media presented during elections and the US presidential elections individually. Further, this study of the US presidential elections 2016 highlighted the viewpoint that neutrality and media ethics must be followed by TV news channels in any case during the time of elections.

Furthermore, news content should be free from all biases, personal interests, or internal policies during elections campaigns. This study discloses the different campaigns and strategies of Trump and Hilary, which were proposed to voters. It also exposes the unique framing techniques and angles used by the CNN and FOX in order to cover the US Presidential Elections-2016. That is why it will be helpful for future researchers to understand better the techniques of conducting multiple comparative studies and prospects of content analysis through this study. The study will also be helpful to gain a better insight into the current emerging media landscape and its framing during the US presidential elections.

Time and finance were significant constraints for this study. The researcher was unable to conduct the study profoundly and broadly. Only two news channels i.e., CNN and FOX were examined. The analysis of other channels could modify the results of the study. The analysis of this study is based on only ninety news stories of each news channel, i.e., The FOX News and CNN. The increase in the number of stories for this study could give different results than the present study.

Literature Review

The Cable News Network (CNN) started its official transmission in the US on June 1, 1980. It was the first cable news network which started its transmission in the US. This initiative brought a change to convert the notion of all radio news into the TV (Television). However, some years later, the sister station of CNN such as CNN Headline News started transmission. Its function was to repeat stories a whole day and update the content. During the early days of the 1980s, CNN could not get attention from the country's mainstream media. It became famous in the 1990s, and its ratings improved because of its active role in the coverage of the 1991 Gulf War (Auletta, 2003).

Rupert Murdoch founded The FOX News 1996. The cable news channel played a competitive role against CNN as the principal provider of important cable news. In comparison to the CNN, the FOX News cleverly got the advantage to disseminate reports about social and political events to capture the market. It actively reported the Clinton-Lewinsky Scandal, the controversy of Gary Condit, the 9/11 attack, the Presidential Elections-2000, Florida Recount, and the 2nd Gulf War. The FOX News channel frequently beat CNN in 2001, hence left it far behind in this race (Collins, 2004).

Rutenberg (2003) argued that FOX News became highly popular in a short period in comparison to other news channels during the crises mentioned above. However, the reason behind publicity was to launch several features which helped it to win the race from other news channels. These features were such as the better quality presentation of audio and visual news, e.g., scrolling *ticker* at the real TV screen's bottom for the headline updates; sound effects were introduced to start the segment of news and innovative multimedia visuals. Though the FOX News started all these features little bit late than CNN, however, it operated it in a better way and got more response than the later. If the study makes a comparison of all these factors mentioned above, CNN was the first news channel

to embrace this new approach. No doubt the FOX News launched these modern types of reporting that put aside all the features of conventional objectivity holds the very own right for dissent and rejects government's skepticism.

According to the Pew Research Center Report-2011 on the State of the News Media and Excellence in Journalism-2010, it is exposed that the FOX News had a regular viewership of 1.2 million during day-time and of 1.1 million during the night-time. It is unlike its competitors. However, from 2009, the number of audiences decreased by 11 and 9 percent, respectively. Although the total number of FOX News viewers are 41.1 million. Nevertheless, CNN had 41.7 million viewers and kept the second position. The CNN again defeated FOX News in 2010. Hence, 35.7 million unique viewers watched CNN during each month of the same year in comparison to the 15.5 million viewership of FOX News. During the same year, the FOX News invested USD 686 million. It was a significant investment in the history of cable news channels. It outspent its competitors. The channel spent 72 percent of the total money on production costs. In 2009, the investments were increased by them as 17% to USD 1.5 billion, while placing CNN at second position with USD 1.2 billion (PEW Research Center, 2004).

DellaVigna and Kaplan (2007) reported that FOX increased its interest in the US presidential election from 2000 to 2008. The channel got a more significant share of viewership through a change in its content slant as the conservative. During this period, about two-thirds of the increase could be explained by the cable news network in the size of US political polarisation. Nevertheless, the slant of partisan spread across news channels increased from 2000 to 2012.

Although the initial inquiries were related to the phenomenon of a particular set of frames or interpretation schemes in different cultures, the previous studies have classified framing terms along with unique dimensions and analyzing the effects of the same frame on audience responses. These generally involve the frames' sets, like episodic vs. thematic frames; gains vs. loss frames; issue vs. strategy frames, or the frames of dispute, human interest and economic consequences (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Gamson and Modigliani (1989) argued that past studies have generally identified frames' distinctive elements with every new research by understanding this inductive research and paid less attention to the identification of what few scholars have termed as master frames or more enduring cultural themes, frames' sets that could be applicable across problems.

The researchers have criticized it for the short-sighted inclination for frame reductionism. They highlighted a more systematic attempt to recognize stable, consistent sets of schemas or frames. Reese in a study claimed, "mentioning the media frames' simple description is tempting, and a frequent approach provided the convenient availability of media texts, but these risks reifying them - locking them in place, as though they were not part of a broader conversation, serving specific interests, and undergoing changes with the passage of time" (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Many scholars are on the point of agreement that this abundance in selecting how to narrate and develop news reports can be taken under analyses as certain unique features. Based on a few events or subjects, specific frames are pertinent. Such type of frames might be referred to as issue-specific frames. By other frames, limitations of thematic frames were exceeded and were able to be recognized about numerous subjects, some even over time and in different cultural contexts. These frames can be termed as generic frames (Vreese, 2003).

Further, Shah, Watts, Domke, and Fan (2002) discussed that the critical analysis of many mainstream US newspapers revealed four significant frames, i.e., fight, talk,

impasse, and crisis. These four frames depicted the chronology of the issue's development in the news. Similarly, the researcher recognized three frames during the time of elections recurrent in the news at the last stages of the presidential tenure of Clinton. These are the behavioral scandal of Clinton, the controversy of Conservative attack, and propaganda of Liberal response.

Furthermore, Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) observed five new news frames i.e., conflict, liability's attribution, morality, fascinations of human, and economic consequences. By the frame of conflict, it compels dispute between several different agencies, groups, individuals, or countries. Specifically, the face of a human, anyone's story, or a particular angle of emotions to issue or events' presentation is provided in the frame of human fascination. Any issue is depicted in the frame of liability or responsibility in such a way as to attribute the ultimate responsibility for rooting out or sorting out the issues of government or an individual/group. A particular event or problem is portrayed regarding the religious point of view and moral values in the frame of morality. Ultimately under the frame of economic consequences, an event or problem is depicted about the economic consequences it will have on the group, organization, or individuals. The frame of attribution of liability or responsibility, under the findings of the study, was believed to be the most commonly used frame while the frames of conflict and economic consequences were on the second position to be followed.

Among the three observed notions, new light on the biases has been thrown by scholars by analyzing connections that include scrutiny of a scholar level. According to the illustration of framing based on our concepts, it is the procedure of selecting certain perceived realitys elements and narration merging that highlights all the necessary linkages among them to provide enhancement to a specific interpretation. Full established frames usually conduct four functions i.e., the definition of an issue, a judgment based on morality, analysis based on casual interpretation, and the propagation of the remedy. The function of framing shapes and modifies the public priorities and interpretations via priming. In this way, the working of frames begins or raises the apparent significance of specific ideas, the mode of activation of schemas that boost up the target public to feel, consider and make a decision in a particular way (Gross & D'ambrosio, 2004).

Similarly, McCombs and Ghanem (2001) argued that agenda setting is another strategic framing that can be observed as an alternative name for conducting the first function victoriously, i.e., explaining problems which are essential to viewers and the government's attention. The agenda issues can highlight the conditions of society, events occurring in the world, or the candidates' character traits. Agenda setting's second level includes three kinds of claims principally that happen to contain the strategic framing's important business: moral judgment empowerment, highlight the cause of the problem, and promotion of favored policies. The 4th estate of US is the media, which is considered to be an appellation that suggests that the media of the USA shares equal role with the other three branches of government developed by the US Constitution. However, the US Constitution has not developed the press as an institution. Somehow, many citizens believe that it formulates the US government's branch. Numerous debates yet arise about the freedom of the press to act as a watchdog of the American government, bundles of critical cases of the court have been considered to be the landmarks in formulating the rights of the press to follow the right information. In the news, the profound literature reflects a sophisticated image on either the supportive coverage can be gained by the president for his frames. On the authentic and official source, the journalists majorly rely on the USA president, even as the advancements in technology have given a golden chance to reporters of more considerable freedom to cover the main events (Livingston & Bennett, 2003).

During elections, the choice of the vote and selective media exposure is believed to be very significant. According to the explanation, selective exposure defines the notion that news outlets selected by the public are based on their preferences in politics. According to the case of presidential elections of the USA, those individuals who like one nominee better than others would also give priority to those media contents that give favor to their preferred candidate. The news organizations usually tend to indicate less strong and factual biases for one or the other presidential candidate (Esser & Hemmer, 2008).

Framing Theory

The Framing theory has been considered to be a significant concern of this study. By the theory of framing, a case or situation is portrayed in a manner of a particular image, article, or storyline. However, media has the power to frame every issue of social, political, and cultural importance (Arif & Hayat, 2018). The Framing theory explains that the distinctive appeals of framing the news reports, TV dramas, and films have several different effects on the readership/viewership of social problems. For effectively communicating the issues, the comprehension of social matters covered by the unique frames of media and their impacts are believed to be significant. The episodic frame highly mentions the coverage of public (Iyengar, 1994). The coverage of the problem thoroughly and keeping the focus on the studies based on individuality is all part of episodic frames.

Alternatively, thematic frames cover the issues by using the method of the wide-angle lens, as time passes; keeping the focus on developments and explaining the relevant contexts by large. Usually, a portrait is demonstrated in the frame of episodic, and the frame of thematic grabs the camera back to indicate a picture of the landscape (Iyengar, 1994).

This study precisely explained the distinction between thematic and episodic frames. The thematic frames can be different in many ways from the episodic frames. The primary focus of the thematic frame is on the individual; however, the frame of episodic focuses on the issue. The episodic frame generally focuses on a single event; on the other hand, a thematic frame keeps its focus on trends with time. The episodic frame revolves around the psychology and behavior of individuals, while the thematic frame typically keeps its emphasis on the public, surrounding environment or institutions of the public. The episodic frame explains the way through which issue of the individual could be sorted out, while the thematic frame circulates on the fixing of the causes of the issue. Iyengar (1994) reported that in the thematic frame, the audiences are approached as citizens, whereas episodic frame approaches the audiences as a customer. By using episodic frames, better and detailed information can be gained. Alternatively, the thematic frame plays with many precise policies. The episodic frames reduce the life to detached episodes' series whereas the thematic categorizes the deficiency at the level of community that could help out the issues. In the episodic frames, problems are reflected with an accurate case study or the learning report of events.

On the other hand, the thematic frames put entire problems into a significant degree of understanding. Journalists can use both for the coverage of news. The episodic frames are used by the reporters often as they think it to be more convincing and indulge the viewer in the particular news story (Iyengar, 1994).

The analysis of an individualistic approach is instructed in the coverage of the episodic frame. Whereas, the coverage of the thematic frame produces societal analysis. According to Iyengar (1991), in systemic modes, the attributions of causality were associated with views on policy. Although, the effects of episodic and thematic frames were not tested

by the Iyengar on the emotional reactions straightly. Nor did he investigate the role of emotion that is played in the determination of the frames' effects on the attributions or policy views. Additionally, he did not observe the coverage of news by media to be persuasive political communication. This contemporary study has thrown light on the crucial roles of episodic frames and thematic frames that are highly played in maximizing the study's appeal and the emotional role that is played in illustrating those impacts.

Methodology

The methodology of the research is the procedure of relevant data's accumulation, its precise interpretation, proper investigation, and authentic analysis to establish bonding or relationship between various variables. Content analysis was the selected method for this study. Relevant information about US Presidential Election-2016 has been obtained from the Lexis Nexis. The Lexis Nexis is a kind of database software which is very helpful in retrieving data from distinctive sources. This study has also collected data through keywords, i.e., Hilary Clinton, Donald Trump, and the Presidential Election-2016 through this specific software.

The population of this study was approximately three months period, i.e., 7th August to 7th November 2016 news reports of CNN and FOX News before the period of presidential elections. The purposive sampling technique was used to collect data from the population. Furthermore, every 90 stories of CNN and FOX News were merely picked out from the total 1,600 news stories which were broadcasted during the prime time, i.e., from the evening 7 PM to 8 PM. To get authentic results, the collected data was analyzed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). However, to find out the reliability of instruments, the coder coded 40 stories. The analyzed data showed 0.85 percent agreement among coders. It means the intra-coder reliability for the frame type was 0.85, and report type was 0.76.

Findings

Table 1. Frame type by TV channels

Frame type	Report by channels	
	CNN(Percent)	FOX(Percent)
Thematic	37.7	32
Episodic	62	67.7
Total stories (N)	100	100
	90	90

Table 1 demonstrates the media framing of US presidential candidates done by CNN and FOX during the election of the presidency in 2016. According to the findings, Democrat candidate, i.e., CNN was favoring Hillary Clinton. On the other hand, the Republican candidate, i.e., Donald Trump, was being supported by FOX News. The study analyzed that both the news channels were more focused on framing the episodic coverage rather than thematic coverage. Approximately 37.7 percent of CNN's news stories out of 90 were framing thematic coverage, while episodic frames of news stories were just about 62 percent. Whereas, news stories of thematic framings and episodic framings in FOX were almost 32 percent and 67.7 percent out of 90 respectively. "N" here is a symbolic representation of the sample.

Table 2. Type of report by TV channels

Report type	Report by channel	
	CNN (Percent)	FOX (Percent)
Leadership/Qualification	10	12
Character/Personality	48.8	34.4
Polls	13.3	15
Policy	27.7	35.5
Both	0	2.2
Average (N)	100	100
	90	90

Table 2 indicates that FOX and CNN have highlighted the overall personality and character of both presidential candidates, i.e., Trump and Clinton, rather than other stories. According to the analysis, only 10 percent of CNN's news stories were discussing leadership/qualification of the candidate. While the same frame for FOX's news stories was 12 percent, but, out of 90 stories, merely CNN's 48.8 percent and FOX's 34.4 percent were highlighting the character/personality of Trump and Clinton. Moreover, CNN's 13.3 percent stories and FOX's 15 percent stories were covering the polls during the presidential elections of 2016. Furthermore, CNN's 27.7 percent stories and FOX's 35.5 percent stories were covering the policy reports of Presidential Elections-2016.

Table 3. How both news channels frame Donald Trump?

Frame Type	Report by Channel	
	CNN (Percent)	FOX (Percent)
Thematic	27	12
Episodic	15	48
Average (N)	100	100
	90	90

According to Table 3, Democrat candidate, i.e., Hillary Clinton was highly boosted by CNN throughout the entire elections of presidency 2016. That is why Trump was 27 percent thematically framed by CNN in contrast to FOX news, which framed Trump only 12 percent. On the other hand, Trump was substantially supported by FOX as a Republican candidate. That is why FOX framed him more episodically as 48 percent rather than CNN, which framed Trump episodically as about 15 percent.

Table 4. How both news channels frame Hillary Clinton?

Frame Type	Report by channel	
	CNN (Percent)	FOX (Percent)
Thematic	10	23
Episodic	46	13
Average (N)	100	100
	90	90

Table 4 illustrates how CNN and FOX news have distinctly framed the presidential candidate Hillary Clinton as FOX supported Donald Trump during elections, that is why 23 percent of Clinton's new stories were thematically framed by it in contrast to CNN's news stories (10 percent). On the other hand, Hillary Clinton was being supported by CNN that is why 46 percent news stories of Clinton were episodically framed more in contrast to FOX, which framed only 13 percent.

Table 5. Frame type

	Leadership/Qualification					Character personal life				Total	
	Related to Trump		Related to Clinton		Both	About Trump		About Clinton			Both
	Favourable	Unfavourable	Favourable	Unfavourable		Favourable	Unfavourable	Favourable	Unfavourable		
CNN	0	1	8	0	0	1	22	13	10	0	55
FOX	9	1	0	0	0	2	6	1	19	2	40
	9	2	8	0	0	3	28	11	32	2	95

Table 5 shows that both news channels FOX and CNN, owned different viewpoints related to presidential candidates of 2016. According to the above proportions, both news channels, CNN and FOX framed Trump favorably over the Leadership/Qualification category in 9 stories and unfavorably in 2 stories. Similarly, FOX and CNN framed Clinton regarding the same category in 8 stories favorably and 0 stories as unfavorably. Whereas, FOX and CNN framed Trump favorably in 3 stories in the category of character/personal life and unfavorably in 28 stories. Although, Clinton was framed as favorable in 14 stories and unfavorable in 29 stories in the similar category by both the news channels.

Discussions and Conclusion

The US presidential election campaigns have always been fascinated by news media. It has been entirely analyzed that the news agencies usually set their agendas during the elections' coverage. Many times to acquire particular goals, news agencies highlight political problems during the election campaigns. Cultivation and framing of different public perspectives are done by news media through their intrigue policies.

According to the above-detailed analysis, FOX and CNN were more interested in covering the Character and Personalities of presidential candidates 2016 rather than showing the political issues of the USA. The above proportions indicated that CNN had episodically (62 percent) framed the Clinton more in comparison to Trump. Hence, CNN thematically (37.7 percent) framed Trump more in contrast to Clinton during elections. Alternatively, Trump was episodically (67.7 percent) framed by FOX more in contrast to Clinton, which was only covered like 32 percent.

CNN and Fox News were the vital competitive giants who were interested in overall exposing the personality and character of US Presidential candidates 2016 instead of concentrating on the other subjects of interest. According to the results, news stories of character/personality about Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton showed by CNN and FOX were 34.4 percent and 48.8 percent respectively. So, the study had concluded that CNN and FOX's coverage was primarily highlighted on the controversial personal aspects of presidential candidates of US in 2016.

Although, this research also observed that both the news giants (CNN and FOX) were propagating different viewpoints about Trump and Clinton. By the findings, CNN and FOX framed Trump purposely as favorable in 3 stories and unfavorable in 28 news stories. Whereas, in 14 stories, Clinton was framed favorable and unfavorable in 29 news stories under the coverage of FOX and CNN.

FOX and CNN, both, had highly propagated distinctive viewpoints about the US Presidential candidates of 2016. Both news outlets had utilized different agendas, policies, frames, and techniques to influence voters. Although, this research had already indicated that both the news media had keenly used episodic framings to show the positive side of US

presidential candidates in contrast to the thematic framings. The most scandalizing issues of these US presidential elections 2016 were the *Women Harassment Controversy of Trump* and *Clinton's Email Scandal*. FOX and CNN profoundly neglected the crucial policy issues during these election campaigns as both news channels were keenly interested in provoking the Character and personality's aspects of Clinton and Trump.

References

- Arif, M., & Hayat, N. (2018). International Media Framing of China's Domestic Politics: An Analysis of Aljazeera English and BBC News. *Media Watch* 9 (1) 89-105, 2018
- Auletta, K. (2003). Vox Fox: how Roger Ailes and Fox News are changing cable news. *The New Yorker*, 26. Retrieved from <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2003/05/26/vox-fox>
- Collins, S. (2004). *Crazy like a fox: The inside story of how Fox News beat CNN*: Portfolio.
- DellaVigna, S., & Kaplan, E. (2007). The Fox News effect: Media bias and voting. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 122(3), 1187-1234.
- Esser, F., & Hemmer, K. (2008). Characteristics and dynamics of election news coverage in Germany. *The handbook of election news coverage around the world*, 289-307.
- Francia, P. L. (2018). Free media and Twitter in the 2016 presidential election: The unconventional campaign of Donald Trump. *Social Science Computer Review*, 36(4), 440-455. doi: 10.1177/0894439317730302
- Gamson, W. A., & Modigliani, A. (1989). Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A constructionist approach. *American Journal of Sociology*, 95(1), 1-37.
- Gopalkrishnan, S. (2017). The Trump Campaign Computational Propaganda Challenge for the Indian Parliamentary Elections 2019. *Media Watch*, 9(1), 79-88.
- Gross, K., & D'ambrosio, L. (2004). Framing emotional response. *Political Psychology*, 25(1), 1-29.
- Iyengar, S. (1994). *Is Anyone Responsible?: How television frames political issues*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Khan, M. H., Adnan, H. M., Kaur, S., Khuhro, R. A., Asghar, R., & Jabeen, S. (2019). Muslims' Representation in Donald Trump's Anti-Muslim-Islam Statement: A Critical Discourse Analysis. *Religions*, 10(2), 115.
- Leubsdorf, C. P. (1976). The Reporter and the Presidential Candidate. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 427(1), 1-11.
- Livingston, S., & Bennett, W. L. (2003). Gatekeeping, indexing, and live-event news: Is technology altering the construction of news? *Political Communication*, 20(4), 363-380.
- Matheny, T., Poe, P., Fisher, M., & Warren, S. (2018). Chaos and stability in Donald Trump's acceptance speech. *Media Watch*, 9(3), 260-266.
- McCombs, M., & Ghanem, S. I. (2001). The convergence of agenda setting and framing. In *Framing public life* (pp. 83-98): Routledge.
- Patterson, T. E. (2016). News coverage of the 2016 general election: how the press failed the voters. Retrieved from <https://shorensteincenter.org/news-coverage-2016-general-election/>
- Patterson, T. E. (2017). News Coverage of Donald Trump's First 100 Days. Retrieved from <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/publications/news-coverage-donald-trumps-first-100-days>
- PEW Research Center. (2004). *News Audiences Increasingly Politicized: Choice of president matters more in 2004*. Retrieved from <https://www.people-press.org/2004/06/08/news-audiences-increasingly-politicized/>

- Rutenberg, J. (2003). War or No, News on Cable Already Provides the Drama. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/15/business/media-business-advertising-war-no-cable-already-provides-drama.html?mtrref=www.google.com.pk&gwh=971B2CAA5F2EF59224974AF8B3868F92&gwt=pay>
- Scheufele, D. A., & Tewksbury, D. (2007). Framing, agenda setting, and priming: The evolution of three media effects models. *Journal of communication*, 57(1), 9-20. doi:10.1111/j.0021-9916.2007.00326.x
- Semetko, H. A., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2000). Framing European politics: A content analysis of press and television news. *Journal of communication*, 50(2), 93-109.
- Shah, D. V., Watts, M. D., Domke, D., & Fan, D. P. (2002). News framing and cueing of issue regimes: Explaining Clinton's public approval in spite of scandal. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 66(3), 339-370.

Hamed Mohd Adnan (Ph.D., University of Malaya, Malaysia, 2001) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Media and Communication Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia.

Rohail Asghar is a lecturer in the Department of Media and Communication Studies, Superior University, Lahore, Pakistan.

Mohsin Hassan Khan is a doctorate candidate in the Department of Media and Communication Studies, University of Malaya, Malaysia.

Rashid Ali Khuhro is a lecturer in the Center for Rural Development Communication (CRDC), University of Sindh, Pakistan. Currently, he is pursuing his PhD in the Department of Media and Communication Studies, University of Malaya.

Sara Hamad Alqurainy is a doctorate candidate in the Department of Media and Communication Studies, University of Malaya.