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Department of Arts and English Language



The Role of the British Media in Shaping Public Opinion in the UK

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Submitted by:

BENTHEMEUR Rim
GHERAISSA Amena

Supervised by:

Ms. BERRA Yamina

Board of Examiners:

Dr. SAOUD Ammar	President	University of El-Oued
Ms. BERRA Yamina	Supervisor	University of El-Oued
Dr. CHOUCHANI ABIDI Mohamed	Examiner	University of El-Oued

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Dedication

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the World. Peace and blessings be upon our beloved Prophet Mohammed and his noble family.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our parents, who instilled in our love for learning and the pursuit of knowledge. Their unwavering support and prayers have been our strength. May Allah bless them with health and happiness.

To our teachers, we are indebted. Your encouragement, critiques, and camaraderie have shaped our understanding. May Allah reward you abundantly.

Finally, to our best friends, your laughter and encouragement have brightened even the darkest days. To all who have contributed to this journey, your belief in us has been the fuel for our aspirations. This work is a testament to the collective strength of those who have touched our life, and for that, we are forever grateful.

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Abstract

The media, with all of its sorts, has become the primary source of information for the public. The news and stories presented by the media have had, therefore, a profound effect on public opinion. The present research aims to investigate the role of British media in shaping public opinion in the UK by revealing the influence of media strategies in dealing with various issues and stories. This study investigates the role of media outlets in the UK in shaping public opinion and contributing to political polarization. Three primary research questions guide this inquiry: (Q1) To what extent do media outlets in the UK contribute to the polarization of public opinion on political issues? (Q2) Which strategies and theories do media employ to influence the public? (Q3) How do the British public respond to media messages, and to what extent do they engage critically with the information presented?.The research is predominantly qualitative. Data that is basically in the form of online newspaper articles is collected from widely read British newspapers such as The Times, The Guardian, The Daily Mail, and The Telegraph. With the aim of analysing the frames and agendas of the selected data, the research employs framing analysis overlapped with content analysis to find out how media frames a subject of concern through examining the use of language and agenda analysis through analysing the top stories on newspapers' front pages in a selected period. The public's responses and critical engagement with media messages in the newspapers' comment boxes are also examined to analyse the impact of such frames and agendas on them. The findings indicate that the British press significantly influences public perceptions, debates, and divisions. This research shows that the media is the main trick that provides people with information and changes their attitudes regarding some subjects. Further, this research recommends exploring the long-term effects of media framing on shaping public opinion in the UK.

Keywords: Agenda-setting, British media, Framing theory, Public opinion.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
MPs	Members of Parliament
PM	Prime Minister

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General Introduction

1. Background of The Study

In the modern world, media plays a significant role in shaping people's attitudes, values and behaviours. The media environment is quite diverse with various media platforms such as television, radio, newspapers, and social media. Several media channels provided instant access and transformed the world into an atomized reality that has the latest news, the most engaging content and educational resources. In the United Kingdom, it can be argued that the media landscape is historically rich and complex at the same time covering a wide array of sources ranging from newspapers to powerful broadcasters. Internet news services and social media have become some of the most influential media types in recent decades. Under each of these categories can be found a large variety of media outlets that will have their own unique focus, demographic, and reach. This results in a multitude of media outlets.

The British media plays a crucial role as the guardian of democracy, ensuring accountability and enabling public discourse. In addition, it promotes transparency, educates the public, and supports well-informed decision-making. Moreover, in the era of public opinion, media penetration and access have further strengthened this concept. Through newspapers and television stations, knowledge is constructed and presented for public consumption, thereby shaping their perception of issues and how they discuss them. As well, the media can serve as a watchdog, regulating the flow of information. Therefore, what the public seeks to know or perceives as newsworthy.

2. Statement of The Problem

It is widely argued that media is the principal constructor of public opinion. In many nations, it may transcend the government to the extent that affects decision-making. The British press, in its turn, has enormously powerful potential to shape public opinion in the UK. The debate then moves to consider concerns related to the strategies that British media uses to affect

the public and shape their opinion in addition to the public reactions to what is framed and set by the media. The issue that arises thus is the intricate relationship between media frames and agendas with public opinion.

3. Research Questions and Research Hypotheses

To delve into the core issues and explore the intricacies of this research, we pose three fundamental research questions:

Q1: To what extent do media outlets in the UK contribute to the polarization of public opinion on political issues?

Q2: Which strategies and theories did media used to influence the public?

Q3: How do the British public respond to media messages, and to what extent do they engage critically with the information presented?

Based on the insights gained from the exploration of our research questions, this study proposes the following hypotheses to test and validate our work :

Hypothesis 1: British media primarily apply agenda-setting and framing theories to influence public perceptions, selectively choosing the most significant topics to bring attention to.

Hypothesis 2: The British public interacts with media messages depending on the media literacy level, wherein there is a correlation between the level of media literacy and the ability of people to evaluate the presented material critically, resulting in higher scepticism about the bias and misleading information as opposed to those with lower media literacy levels messages.

Hypothesis 3: Tabloid newspapers and television stations in the UK may contribute to the division of the population through their biased presentation of and commentary on current news events.

4. Aims of The Study

This study examines the following: the impact of British media on public opinion in the United Kingdom, the strategies and theories employed by the British media, and the critical attitudes and reactions of the British public towards media messages. In addition, it highlights how media has either facilitated or hindered the polarization of opinions within the UK on political matters.

5. Significance of The Study

This study is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it contributes to developing the knowledge of media studies by presenting the critical exploration of British newspaper media and their tactics to influence the public. Using leading newspapers like The Times, The Guardian, The Daily Mail, and The Telegraph as the sample, the study provides suggestions about how the different media types might differ in their power application and construction of messages. Secondly, this paper seeks to explore how media influences political polarization and the extent to which it contributes to the development of political divisions. Therefore, the results of this study can inform policymakers, media authorities, and journalists to understand the effects of media framing on discourse and polarization. Thirdly, the study contributes to the knowledge of the people's interactions with the media content. This study can aid in strategies to raise media literacy.

6. Research Methodology

This study utilizes a mixed-methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative, though predominantly qualitative, research methods to provide an in-depth and holistic examination of how the British media influences public opinion in the UK. To find comprehensive answers to the research questions, the qualitative method is employed for media frame collection and analysis. In the process of data collection, a given topic is chosen, which is the most controversial one these days, the Rwanda Bill, and then related articles are collected from a range of popular British newspapers, including The Guardian, The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Telegraph, to analyse the different frames of the topic provided by each. Framing analysis overlapped with content analysis is used to analyse the gathered data, in which the various angles of the issue are examined through analysing the language used in each

newspaper article. The content analysis also evaluates how the British press portrays public attitudes regarding specific topics. This involves looking at the style, the tenor, and the rhetorical tropes employed by these newspapers in reporting the Rwanda Bill. The quantitative method is also adopted to gather data for the agenda analysis. The frequency and visibility of various social and political issues in British newspapers, The Guardian, The Times, The Daily Mail, The Telegraph, and The Sun, within 2020-2023 are analysed by investigating newspapers' front pages and counting the times topics appear. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis is used to analyse such British newspapers' agendas. While the quantitative analysis uses frequency distribution and trends, the qualitative analysis examines the themes used. To a certain extent, this approach of using both qualitative and quantitative methods is suitable for providing a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of media influence.

7. Structure of The Study

This research is divided into two chapters addressing distinct facets of the media landscape. In the first chapter, a theoretical framework is presented to assist in gaining a better understanding of media and its nature, with a particular focus on the British media landscape. This chapter has three sections. The first section examines the diverse types of media prevalent in the UK, elucidating their roles and strategic functions. The second section examines British public opinion and the factors that influence it. The last reviews the literature on the topic. It examines and synthesizes previous studies related to this issue to identify gaps in understanding. The chapter aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the intricate dynamics shaping the media environment. The second chapter presents a practical framework for determining how the British media shapes public opinion and attitudes, particularly television and newspapers. It has two sections based on the analysis methods used. The first section is a framing and content analysis of the Rwanda Bill in British newspapers while the second is an agenda analysis of British media within 2020-2023. The chapter concludes with a discussion and interpretation of the findings.

CHAPTER ONE

Theoretical Framework

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

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Introduction

In the present life, media is a significant part of our lives as it involves every sector of society. Whether in traditional media such as newspapers and television, or the internet or social media, the sources and consumption of information have changed significantly. This chapter is concerned with the diverse role of media operating in modern society, focusing on the United Kingdom context. It discusses the various forms of the British media, the theories and strategies used to influence public perceptions, and the relationship between the government and the British media. In addition, this chapter concludes with a literature review to investigate previous studies to highlight the role of the media in shaping public opinion.

1.1. An Overview of Media and British Media

Today's world is extremely diverse and retiring in terms of media and its consumption, the ways people access content they are interested in have changed drastically. One can observe that media modernization is not only a phenomenon that took place on the global level but it is especially manifest in the UK as the result of the blend of historical past and present day British media represents both cultural and sociological determinant of the country.

1.1.1. Media in Our World Today

How do we consume the media now compared with even a generation or two ago? Where once we accepted the performance that older incarnations of media, such as traditional TV or newspaper distributions, brought us from gatekeepers, we are now in control of how we consume news, entertainment and information. Our changing consumption habits are part of a wider sociological trend toward on-demand consumption, as it comes to almost everything, from consumption to transactions. While we had no choice in when, how and what we consumed, we are now in more control of consuming media. Since tracking it, it has become a more expansive term, encompassing all of the multiple digital media streams, websites and social media available

online. The collection of TV, radio, newspapers, paperback novels and face-to-face conversation is only one part of a sprawling, rapidly changing media environment in which we might choose our own media diet. It certainly does not look tidy, with one distinct stream of human communication and meaning segregated from the others.

One of the key features of the contemporary media environment is the active consumer. The modern individual is no longer a person who sits in front of a screen passively absorbing images dictated by a media oligarchy; rather, the modern consumer is an active and engaged player in the production of our media experience. Perhaps you have noticed the trend toward the participatory media consumer. If you have access to a streaming service like Netflix, Hulu, Amazon or Disney ++, you can log in and select exactly the shows you want to watch and when you want to watch them. If you frequent social media, you may have noticed that you can engage with content as the producers of that content wrap their heads around viewers like you and your input. In addition, with the burgeoning popularity of user-generated content, media consumers have become producers. In today's world, through websites such as YouTube, blogs and social media, anyone can create and share content, making the line between producers and consumers of media increasingly blurred. This trend has eroded the media gatekeepers, allowing individuals to participate in the public sphere. Its complex and organic interconnectedness reflects a multi-layered and non-hierarchical tapestry of cultural communication. Whether it is a commercial news outlet, a viral social media meme, or an amateur YouTube video, every form of media is a part of this larger cross-media network of expression.

Overall, the influence that media has had on not just us but on society as a whole has brought about a shift in the way we interact with sources of information, entertainment and communication. This includes a greater level of agency we now have as media users, the development of new types of media that define it, and the interconnected nature of the landscape itself. Further developments in the media realm will likely see the further dissolution of these

boundaries that separate media, and in the future, media users will have a more active and enhanced role in shaping the media itself.

1.1.2. British Media

Considering that the UK is not one homogeneous cultural or social entity, the British media represents an amalgamation of the multiple forces that have led to a complex socio-cultural fabric that has defined the status of the nation. It began as pamphlets and newspapers sharing information in coffeehouses and other public places, and now it has reached an enormous scale in digital media. Tradition does stand a chance to win over the transformation, but in the core of the British media field, there is still a very heart and pulse beating. Newspaper journalism started a muscular growth via media, which gradually travelled to radio and television and after that launched an age completely immersed in digital data. Whether it is part of reflection or a driving force, the media plays a complex role in society, because of the make-up of the British cultural stage has changed over time. The ways British media evolved should be considered an intriguing trip, linking with the texture of the nation's historical background, politics, and identity. Starting the journey through this intricate historical path, a fact becomes clear: the development of media in Britain is not the daily advancement of the technologies or laws, but an ongoing dialogue between inventors and regulators and the constant turning of the heads of the public to be informed and to be influenced by the media.

1.1.2.1. Print Media

Despite the technological innovations in the mid-nineteenth century, it was then that journalism started to become a modern press industry. In the 1840s, the telegraph, which allowed for the transmission of news at a faster rate across nations and even to the other parts of the earth was invented. This was made possible by the establishment of news agencies such as the Associated Press and Reuters. With the introduction of steam printing and rotary presses, graphic art was no longer a high-cost undertaking. Illustration using wood engravings and photography

also contributed to the creation of visual content. Print media was open to everyone who could read and see. The formation of an extensive rail network led to the nationwide mass sale; this coincided with an improvement in politics and the state of the economy that brought about the reduction of the granted 'taxes on knowledge' in the 1830s and 1850s. Periods of affluence contributed to full purchases of newspapers by more families, which later prompted advertising as a key source of their income. A chain of changes followed. The beginning of Stephen Lloyd's Weekly News and the News of the World in the 1840s took over the Saturday papers the job of leading the evening selections offal straying crime reporting while including political, sporting and entertaining materials. The impact of the Illustrated London News was influential as it depicted information comprehensively in graphic form of illustrations and engravings in which texts were mere scenery. Mostly during the late 19th and the early 20th century, new journalism emerged. It was composed of pithy styles, human featured interest, and some American techniques including interviews and bold headlines. This era gave a nod to penny weeklies, evening newspapers, and news outlets for establishments and specific sections of the community. The print media progressed along, after World War I, through higher circulations and higher page counts, and advertisers that occupied enough space to force readers to turn away from paper to the newest editions being made available. Then, the novelty of the new formats of the media, also like the cinema, radio, and television, posed fresh challenges. These new online fashion media did not lead to the demise of print media but to the change of the industry. To exist, print publications had adapted themselves to the new situation by offering someone special content. Some magazines unfortunately failed, but the water line did manage to stay intact, since the two newspapers like The Times and The Guardian and also some specialized magazines relieved by changing their strategies and targeting some specific audiences. However, on the positive side, the internet made its debut during the mid-1900s, creating some obstacles for the print media business.

1.1.2.2 Broadcast Media

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) was at the heart of the dominance of broadcasting in the United Kingdom in its early days (Smith, 2010). Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that the corporation was not a public organization but a commercial one (Jones, 2015). BBC was formed after intense commercial negotiations. First, there were negotiations between rival wireless companies, then talks between the total wireless group and the Post Office (Murariu, 2020). After the negotiations with the Post Office, radio manufacturers gathered to form the British Broadcasting Committee on May 23, 1922, their first meeting. The meetings with the Post Office during the year were characterized by their high level of activity, suggesting that on many occasions, the outcome may comprise of two broadcasting companies rather than one. The launch of the BBC took place on October 18, 1922 and as a result, the British Broadcasting Committee discontinued (Potter, 2022).

BBC was officially registered on 15 December 1922, but its License from the Post Office was not granted until 18 January 1923 (Heller, 2013). From 1921 to 1926, no fewer than seven people held the position of Postmaster General. They were A. Illingworth, F. Kellaway, N. Chamberlain, Sir William Joynson-Hicks, Sir Laming Worthington-Evans, V. Hartshorn, and Sir William Mitchell-Thomson. The Postmaster General was legally empowered by the Telegraph Act of 1869 and the Wireless Telegraphy Act of 1904 to oversee broadcasting affairs (Khan, 2012).

J.C.W. Reith was offered the position of General Manager of BBC on December 14, 1922, after an interview conducted on December 13, 1922 by Sir William Noble (General Electric), Archibald McKinstry (Metropolitan-Vickers) and Major Basil Binyon (Radio Communication Company). We should mention that Reith, who was to serve as the symbol of the BBC for most people later, was not familiar with broadcasting at that time, either. In his diary, he wrote, "the irony is that I had no idea at all what it meant. I had not bothered to look it up. If I had tried I should most likely have failed to find a person who could have told me." (Reith Diaries, S60/5/1/3, 13/12/1922). As Reith took over the new role, he guided the creation of BBC as both an organization and a broadcasting agency. Radio gained a fast acceptance with the British populace

and a number of broadcasting events were pioneered, from the initial news bulletin to the first live broadcast outside, from the first royal address to the initial sound of Big Ben on the BBC, from the first broadcast election speech to the initial relay from America. By December 1922, the BBC staff had reached only four employees. By the autumn of 1924, this number grew to 371 and reached 552 only seven months later. The initial staff members were allocated among three major divisions: Engineering, Programmers and Administration. During this period, two governmental committees were held to deliberate on the future of broadcasting: the Sykes Committee and the Crawford Committee (Bowd et al., 2017). The Sykes Committee was set up in the wake of a deadlock that resulted from a particular problem – the issuance of licenses. Yet, the Crawford Committee concentrated on the possible structure of the BBC. During the BBC early years, the corporation encountered its first significant governmental disagreement concerning editorial independence, most notably during the General Strike of 1926 (Bruno, 2022). The General Strike dates back from 03 May 1922 to 12 May 1922 but coincided with the publication of the Crawford Committee's findings and the Postmaster General's subsequent decision to enforce the committee's recommendations. Reith maintained that the BBC should act as the public voice and be as independent as possible from the interference of both commercial entities and the government. The idea of a conflict of interest between the service and the business didn't fit his views. Among other things, the Post Office seemed to agree with Reith about this. Then, the BBC was given the first Royal Charter on 01 January 1927, valid for ten years (Wang & Stewart, 2019).

1.1.3. Media Regulation

Over the years, there has been a long-drawn debate about the relationship between media and government. In the words of Yushau (2013), "The debate over whether the government and the media are friends or forces was rekindled recently". Professor Akinfeleye and The Editor-in-Chief of Premium Time, Dapo Olorunyomi, Both reinforced the general belief that the media and government cannot be friends but loyal opponents. Media is an important public watchdog in a

democratic society. Media is the primary source of political information for the public. Therefore, for governments, to regulate and control media is a necessity.

1.1.3.1. Western Governments and Media Regulation

The evolution of media in Western nations has been closely intertwined with government intervention, resulting in a consistent effort by the government to shape media narratives (Luo, 2014). This influence has taken various forms, ranging from censorship and the suppression of unfavorable information to direct manipulation of media content. The degree of governmental influence on the media is dependent on the prevailing political framework and the extent of media outlets within a given nation. In the history of information and mass communication, Filemakers has described the influence of the government on the media as a means of controlling the dissemination of information that is not favorable to the government. This influence has manifested through various tactics, including censorship, which involves preventing the publication or dissemination of adverse news. Additionally, the government has sought to influence the reporting process, pressuring media outlets to suppress unfavorable details. In more extreme cases, governments have engaged in total manipulation of the media, thereby shaping the information that reaches the public in a manner that aligns with their interests. Both authoritarian and democratic governments have historically attempted to exert their influence on the media. In authoritarian states, the government often owns the majority of media outlets, granting them direct control over the information disseminated to the public. Conversely, in democratic nations, the government must navigate more carefully, as media outlets operate independently and are not directly owned by the state. However, governments in democratic countries have also sought to influence media narratives by exerting regulatory pressure or leveraging financial incentives. independent press.

In conclusion, the evolution of media in Western nations has been shaped by government intervention, with governments employing various tactics to influence media

narratives (Zhang, Li, Jiang, & Guo, 2023). Whether through censorship, manipulation, or regulatory pressure, the relationship between the government and the media has underscored the complex dynamics of power and information dissemination. Understanding the historical context of government intervention in media is essential for critically analyzing the narratives presented by the media and upholding the principles of a free and (Wallis, 2022).

1.1.3.2. British Government and Media Regulation

Historically, the relationship between the British government and the media has been a source of great interest and scrutiny due to its influence on public opinion, government, and the overall media landscape (Hiam, Steele, & Mckee, 2018). Government laws, media policies, funding, and how people consume media are all part of a complex interaction.

Broadcasting, for example, always had strict rules and standards for what can be shown or said (Kuhn, 2023). On the other hand, the press and online media had more freedom to express themselves. However, things have changed in recent years. After the phone hacking scandal and the Leveson Inquiry, the government started focusing more on regulating the press (Saeed, 2020). Now, attention is shifting towards regulating online platforms (Basuki et al., 2022).

There is a growing call for stronger regulation of big tech companies to address the harms that can happen online. This ongoing debate shows how the government is trying to adapt to the challenges of the digital era. Media funding and consumption have also changed a lot. People now consume news in different ways and sources, and media companies have had to find new ways to make money. They rely on mixing sources like subscriptions, advertising, and partnerships. Technology companies have also had a significant impact on how news is funded and distributed.

This intersection of technology, journalism, and government creates new challenges and opportunities for media (Chua, 2023). The government is trying to figure out how

to regulate big internet platforms that significantly affect the news (Masengi, Luminkewas, & Supit, 2023). News publishers are also working to navigate the digital world while keeping their integrity and staying financially stable (Bearman, Nieminen, & Ajjawi, 2022). Even with all these different actors involved in media policy, the press still has a lot of influence. Politicians worry about how the press can shape public opinion. It is a delicate balance between media freedom and responsible journalism (Cohen-Almagor, 2023), and it may have an impact on governance and public discussions. The relationship between the British government and the media is complex and changing. The government's laws, media funding, technology, and the press's influence all cooperate to shape media policies and practices in the UK. As technology continues to evolve, the government needs to be adaptable and responsive to keep up with these changes. This ongoing conversation and adaptation are crucial for the relationship between media and governance (Bechmann, 2020).

1.1.4. Theories and Strategies of Media

Media theories and their forms are of high significance our digitalized world. They help one gain a deep understanding and explanation of the complex landscape of communication and the information flows. Media theories act as thinking models to provide conceptual frameworks for analysing and interpreting media role in society, its consequences on individuals and communities, and the balance of power between media, technology, and culture (Jai, Tong, & Chen, 2021). From the traditional mass communication theories to the contemporary ones shaped by technological development, the study of media theories gives us important ideas that outline the changes that media experiences and its significant impact on human's communication and perceptions. In the following, we intend to consider the basic concepts of media theories and their typologies and explain the meaning of these concepts for our modern media culture.

1.1.4.1. Agenda-Setting Theory

The agenda-setting theory is a theory that focuses on the impact of the mass media in terms of making an issue as the public agenda. It justifies why and how audiences become interested in some topics and not in others. As per the theory, the media influences the public agenda by agenda building, which means to choose which issues to cover and how frequently. Thus, media affects public opinion by making them learn which issue/topic is more or less significant (Weaver et al, 1975). When the media focuses on some issues, this means that these issues are the ones that society should be talking and worrying about (Lang & Lang, 1966). The salience of some topics is related to the choices of coverage of different media organizations and practitioners. The latter appears through the space or duration that media dedicate to a given issues on television, radio, newspapers, and online media, to name a few. In this framework, media reportage determines media, public, policy, and corporate agendas (Sullivan, 2011).

As McCombs & Shaw (1972) say, in order to control public mind-set, the media does not provide them with the answer to the question “to think or not to think”, but rather what they “should” think about. People are compelled to reflect on particular social issues, which are filtered to them through media organizations, and practitioners by endorsing what issues should be brought to the public attention through various media platforms. Based on the theory, there is an apparent strong agenda-setting effect when the media coverage of an issue or a topic is excessive. For example, the drug war in the Philippines is among the news headlines because of the great media exposure it received due to the controversies that surround it. This so-called agenda-setting effect is dominant during the first hundred days of Rodrigo Duterte, the current president of the Philippines. Concurrently, the media exposes other topics to, but with a poor agenda-setting effect because they do not receive a significant status in media headlines and front pages as compared to the Philippine drug war, which was at the peak of the media frenzy when Duterte became president.

In agenda-setting theory, as Cissel (2012) explains, editors, writers, and journalists are the ones to decide which stories should be more significant and how much space they deserve.

Those also tend to choose frames to discuss given matters or topics. Lippmann first described the theory of mass media agenda-setting in his 1922 book “Public Opinion”, in which he claimed that the media has the power to influence our views of social and public policy. This hypothesis was tested for the first time in 1968 when Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, professors at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, experimented with whether or not the media sets the agenda of the nation, which directly influences our perceptions of the world beyond our knowledge. By studying the 1968 U.S. presidential election as an illustration, they researched the issue of how the media’s leading topics are tied to those of the public. The recurrence of news broadcasts of public issues and the broadness of the news media in our lives contribute highly to the impact of journalism on the listener. Repetition of the news mandate takes on the task of informing the public with little need for them to devote time and energy as issues metamorphose from the media agenda to the public agenda. The news media's agenda-setting capacity, in addition to narrowing down the scope of what we consider important in the news, also shapes our understanding and perspective on various news stories. The set of attributes, which forms an integral part of the things journalists and the public consider when thinking and talking about the pictures from the news, shapes the kind of pictures that come to our minds. Primarily distinction between primary and second-level agenda-setting becomes evident during election campaigns. In the 1990s, researchers built a more detailed picture of the attribute agenda-setting process, which dates back to the 1970s. When conducting the general election in 1996 in Spain McCombs and his comrades applied, a thorough test of the second level of media effect by comparing the description of voters in Pamplona with how particular men were introduced in seven significant news sources.

Agenda-setting effects have three distinct consequences: talking about awareness, boosting awareness by highlighting certain issues, and influencing awareness by demonstrating tangible behaviour. In forming an opinion on a specific topic, there is a fundamental correlation between the media attention to this object and the presence of an opinion around it. An election, for instance, attracts the media to significant characters, and hence people have the opinions of the

individual candidates (Kiousis & McCombs, 2004). The first level of media control over the agenda is determined by the extent of the issues being highlighted, and this is the logic of the media-setting process (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). When it comes to the issue of giving their opinion, which mostly entails the assessment of the president's performance in their minds, many citizens do not have rigorous intellectual exercise. Contrarily, amongst various available information sources, people remember just the most significant issues (Zeller, 1992). In other words, the audience forms an agenda of crucial topics, the stories of which are mainly disseminated by the mass media. Through such an agenda, the norms are established—sometimes as the only criteria—upon which an opinion is based. In addition, agenda-setting is about how an object is featured in the news so one can mention the attribute agenda. The thoughts in their minds, which consist of specific traits and the emotional aura of traits, will predict their attitudes. For example, the content analysis of November 2019 depicts that the economy in Kenya was tremendously affected during Uhuru's leadership as president. The media outlets report the economy negatively more frequently than positively, and the volume of pessimistic news was a crucial predictor of the consumers' negative expectations about the future of the economy. Both the first and second levels of agenda setting can predict the behaviour.

The Chapel Hill study has been in the news for decades, and researchers in the agenda-setting tradition have increasingly used different methods and designs for their research. Studies may be field-based, from a survey of public opinion carried out once to stacked surveys of a group of respondents interviewed at different times (opinion poll, panel studies), different samples that represent the people over a certain period (trend studies), to aggregate data of different samples being analysed with the help of econometric techniques (time-series analysis). Research on agenda setting has benefited through the rise of the internet and social media platforms. To mention a few, there are studies that use content analysis of the data streaming from Google, Twitter, etc. (Neuman, etal. 2014). The field research relied heavily on the quantitative study, while a causal connection between the media agenda and the public agenda has been shown in the

experiments in controlled laboratory (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987) and later also in real world experiments (King et al., 2017).

1.1.4.2. Framing Theory

The notion of framing was first introduced by Gregory Bateson in 1972 when he defined psychophysical frames as messages enclosed within a spatial and temporal framework (Bateson, 1972) that serve as an intermediary and a form of metacommunication (Hallahan, 2008). Framing is a vital concept that refers to thinking about news items and story content within the familiar patterns context. It is related to the notion of agenda setting but extends it further by concentrating on the authenticity of the problems, not the topic. The framework of framing theory is that the media directs the spotlight at certain perspectives, and only later puts them in the framework of reality sense of significance (Mass Communication Theory (Online), 2017).

According to the framing theory, people can be influenced by how some information is presented to them, i.e., framing, and by omissions and additions (the types of bias) to what media presents. The frame affects the people perception and processing of the information. Frames 'schemata' works to create or convey message meaning as it is organized or structured. The most common use of schemata is not solely related to the use of the terminology of frames but also how news or media house the information they communicate takes significant consideration. The framing theory delineates that the media develop a frame of news courses introduced with predefined and narrow contextualization. The frame can be a decision support tool based on patient data analysis, or it is meant to cater to our tendency to use cognitive shortcuts to plant stories in our minds as a part of the overall narrative.

Despite the fact that framing and perception are conceptually in conflict, there are conceptual segments that are common to both of them (Weaver, 2007). The framing concept resembles agenda setting's 'the second level' that "contemplates the probability of how much an issue will be highlighted in media by various social institutions." Issue salience is driven by the

degree of some attributes that are more positive than others (McCombs, 2005 & Ghanem, 1997). In the same vein, Davie (n.d.) writes, "It could be construed as a form of second level agenda-setting – they not only tell the audience what to think about (agenda-setting theory), but also how to think about that issue (second level agenda setting, framing theory)" (para. 2)

Media framing theory plays a crucial role in analysing media communication relationships because of the complex relationship with how information is perceived and understood, which shapes public opinion. At its core, the theory illuminates the mechanism media organizations use to pick, emphasize, and structure particular aspects of an issue to control how their audiences perceive and comprehend it. Listing out the key points and issues, media corporations do not only make the story but also guide the audience's cognitive process for interpretation by controlling the dissemination of information. This reality, usually known as an agenda setting, suggests media ability to put some issues high on the agenda and direct people's attention to them. Additionally, framing theory allows for understanding the sophisticated ways and means media framers use to influence the audience, such as the linguistic devices, imagery, and narrative structures that mould the audience's perception and attitude concerning the relevant topics or actors. This theory is about the sophisticated and multifaceted relations between media effects and public opinion, in which media influences are essential (Entman et al, 1993).

1.1.4.3. Cultivation Theory

The cultivation theory, put forward by George Gerbner in 1967, addresses the interplay between television viewing and the trends in television viewers' perceptions and attitudes toward reality. Here, Social role theory suggests that over-TV watching (those watching more than 5 hours per day) may cause an overestimation of the distribution rate of law enforcement personnel, an enhancement of the perceived level of danger, and a tendency to exaggerate the perspectives of victimization. Building on this construct, researchers have dubbed it "mean world syndrome," implying that heavy viewers tend to be more concerned about the world as being full

of hostility, violence, and dangerous places. Therefore, this tendentious perspective may cause the emotions of insecurity, shyness, and distrust in the actual settings. Television influence theory suggests that the television, as a unity of communication messages, can change long-standing beliefs and attitudes. Television is capable of causing changes down the road, either directly or indirectly. Indeed, one of the principal effects of television's influence is seen in the way mass media portrays violence and crime, whereby the degree of such content exposure may skew viewers' understanding of the level of social safety. (Levine, 2012).

Furthermore, cultivation theory emphasizes that media has these wider consequences on society and shows how television, as a medium, can reinforce and keep the cultural norms and values, as in instances where it is repeatedly broadcast. We can see television affecting the parameters of collective social reality by continuously reinforcing, via various means, specific themes, images, or narratives, influencing the public perception of numerous societal issues. In addition, television captures the essence of the socialization process as a powerful agent that brings about the understanding of the social roles, the relationships, and the identities we embrace in society. The all-consuming nature of television in today's society accentuates the extent to which individual thoughts, cultural effects, and societal perspectives are influenced. This theory illustrates television media's shaping of public opinion through regular messaging, visual depiction of specific stereotypes and narratives, and selective news framing. Understanding how media shapes perceptions enables communicators to strategically steer public opinion to fulfil their aims (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Shanahan & Morgan, 1999).

1.2. British Public Opinion

British public opinion holds a pivotal role in shaping the political landscape, cultural dynamics, and societal norms within the United Kingdom. Defined by the collective views, beliefs, and attitudes of its citizens, British public opinion serves as a crucial barometer influencing policy decisions, electoral outcomes, and the progression of social movements.

1.2.1. The Significance of Public Opinion

In the contemporary era, public opinion emerges as a formidable force within society, exerting influence over political discourse, cultural trends, and societal norms (Ausat, 2023). It serves as both a reflection and a catalyst of public sentiment, shaping the direction of policy decisions, electoral outcomes, and the trajectory of social movements. V.O. Key, an eminent American political scientist, succinctly defined public opinion in 1961 as the collective views, beliefs, or attitudes held by individuals within society, particularly those deemed significant by government officials when making decisions or creating policies (Erchick et al., 2022).

To grasp the significance of public opinion, consider its impact on recent political debates. For instance, during debates on healthcare reform, public opinion polls played a crucial role in gauging public support for various policy proposals. Similarly, in the context of social movements like the civil rights movement or LGBTQ+ rights advocacy, shifts in public opinion have propelled legislative changes and societal acceptance (Castells, 2019). By understanding public opinion, as a dynamic force that shapes societal dynamics, policymakers can better respond to the needs and preferences of the population. Moreover, public opinion serves as a barometer of societal values, reflecting changing attitudes towards issues such as environmental conservation, gender equality, and economic policy (Lo & Tsai, 2022). In essence, public opinion encompasses the collective voice of society, influencing the actions and decisions of policymakers and serving as a vital mechanism for societal change. Through awareness and engagement with public sentiment, societies can foster more inclusive and responsive governance, ultimately leading to a more equitable and prosperous future.

1.2.2 Shaping Public Opinion

Shaping public opinion is a multi-dimensional process that is influenced by many factors (Ausat, 2023). Identifying the mechanisms that contribute to shaping public opinion gives

us a chance to understand how the modern world operates and how institutions and individuals manipulate public opinion and attitudes. Learning the dynamics of public opinion shaping will equip individuals with the skills to critically analyse the information presented to them, challenge the dominant narratives, and contribute to a more inclusive and educated public discourse.

Information can influence public opinion. For instance, the more people know and understand about a problem, the more likely they are to support it. Accurate, reliable, and complete information generally leads to more opinions that are favourable (Gani et al., 2022). Likewise, the media, both news and social media outlets, often affect public opinion. Even the way news stories are framed and reported can shape the way different people come to perceive the same issue or event in dramatically different ways.

Social interaction also plays an important role in shaping public opinion. Studies show that people adopt opinions and beliefs based on conversations with friends, family, and co-workers (Redcay & Schilbach, 2019). In effect, people both shape and are shaped by the opinions of the people around them. A person's level of education, experiences in life, and cultural heritage may shape his or her opinions on a particular subject. For example, people whose education and experiences lead them to believe in and value individual freedom may have opinions on the proper role of government that differ from and sometimes conflict with those who grew up in union families or who belong to minority groups, which have historically suffered discrimination. Truly, where a person stands on an issue depends on where he or she sits. Indeed, personal experiences can shape the way in which individuals see issues. A person's location, the environment, their relationships with q, or any of their personal experiences can shape so much. Furthermore, one's opinion on the topic can be influenced by the social and political context, such as elections, milestones, and policy shifts at large. Finally, personal emotions and values play a monumental role in shaping one's attitudes toward any viewpoint. Emotions like anger, fear, and joy can guide how individuals perceive information and events.

1.2.3. British Public Opinion

The British public opinion is an intricate and multifaceted thing that mirrors the range of a modern multicultural society (Smedley, 2023). It entails various ideas, mind-set and perspectives on political, social, cultural, and economic dimensions. To grasp British public opinion, one must consider political views (Mohylnyi, 2023), social issues (Zeineddine, 2021), cultural diversity (Hardiansyah, 2022), media influence (Scopelliti, 2021), and economic factors (Wang, 2022). Therefore, such are significant elements shaping British public opinion. The latter includes party loyalty, ideological preferences, and perceptions towards government performance, which shape people's attitudes to politics. The country has usually been divided between supporters of different political parties whose ideas range from left wing to right-wing ideologies. Controversial matters like Brexit, Immigration, healthcare, or the economy often raise strong opinions among the public toward multiple political views and preferences at once. British public opinion regarding social issues differs considerably as they stem from wider perceptions of what is fair, equitable, socially just, and individual responsibility. People have diverse views towards social policies and the extent to which the government should get involved in such issues. Debates on issues, such as health funding, educational reformation, and welfare benefits portray how opinions on social issues within Britain vary significantly. Different factors including, religion, ethnicities, cultural backgrounds and identities (Kymlicka, 2021) affect the public perception of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism can be seen differently in various regions or communities based on their diversity, immigration attitudes and levels of integration. Such perspectives are vital in establishing a cohesive society that becomes responsive to identity concerns among its diverse populace. The media in Britain plays a significant role in shaping public opinion through the newspapers, television stations, radio stations and online networks it operates. Coverage can influence how issues are constructed and framed whilst voices that become top priorities determine how people affected by this coverage will perceive an issue. A particular media outlet might possess a specific editorial bias, which can shape public conversations about different themes

thereby providing insight into the power that lies with media input in any given country (Wessel, 2023).

1.3. Previous Studies on Media and Public Opinion

The influence of the media on public perspectives is a topic of enduring interest and scholarly inquiry, particularly in the context of the United Kingdom. Over the years, numerous studies have explored the intricate relationship between the media and the construction of public opinion, shedding light on how news outlets, television programs, newspapers, and digital platforms shape the views, attitudes, and behaviours of individuals within society. From the portrayal of political events to the framing of social issues and the representation of diverse communities, media plays a pivotal role in shaping the collective consciousness of the public. In this section, we will delve into a selection of previous studies conducted on media influence in the UK, examining their methodologies, findings, and implications for understanding the complex interplay between media discourse and public perspectives. Through this exploration, we aim to gain a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which media exerts its influence and the potential implications for democratic discourse and societal cohesion. This review also helps us address the wider scope of this research and determine the gap and the angle we will tackle in the study.

First, John et al., (2008), conducted their study, which examined several areas of the UK media production, output, and consumption. Interviews were performed with nine important informants involved in poverty media coverage, including journalists, editors, and press officers. Three types of media production were investigated. First, a systematic content analysis of news material was conducted , on a sample of over 150 newspapers, 100 radio news programs, 75 television news programs, a selection of news magazines, and a variety of new media. Second, six poverty-related news reports were analysed in various media. Third, an interpretive analysis was

conducted on the portrayal of poverty in selected dramas, documentaries, and 'reality TV' broadcasts.

Secondly, Burton (2004), in his article " Research Note: The Influence of the Press in Shaping Public Opinion towards the European Union in Britain" focuses on the influence of the British media and political parties on public attitudes towards EU membership and the Euro in 2001 general election. The research shows that newspapers and political cues affect people's views of Europe; however, it is relatively inconspicuous. Anti-EU papers found to be negatively influencing readers' attitudes, while those embracing pro-EU had little effect. However, identification with a political party was more influential; particularly if individuals received both party and newspaper, reinforcement messages together. Labor supporters who read pro-EU papers are more likely to support EU membership while Conservative readers of anti-EU newspapers are more likely to oppose euro. This study concludes that British media and political parties do exert direct albeit weak effects on public opinion regarding EU and Eurozone (Euro).

Thirdly, a study team comprised of professionals from the Scottish Poverty Information Unit (SPIU) and the Cultural Business Division at Glasgow Caledonian University employed a comprehensive methodology to determine the depiction of poverty in UK mass media and its implications for the public. This research employed interviews, media content analysis, as well as focus groups to investigate news coverage of poverty, non-news broadcasts, and audience reactions aside from socio-demographic groups in Britain. Research shows that the UK media primarily focuses on the symptoms rather than the causes and implications of poverty, which results in media being less empathetic. Non-newscasts of the so-called poverty often focus on dramatic cases and show the characters of that group as undeserving. Additionally, it is shown that media output flows in reciprocity with public perception, which implies that people actively engage with information rather than simply taking it for granted. In this case, the media influence on public opinion concerning poverty tends to be in greater part of the suppression of dissenting narratives than the direct indoctrination. In consequence, the research demonstrates the possibility

of numerous images of poverty within UK media used to educate and shape public views, which may lead to stronger anti-poverty efforts (Anstead & O'Loughlin, 2014).

Fourthly, Worcester (2005) in his study of “When the British Tommy went to war, public opinion followed,” aims to analyse the change in British public opinion about the Iraq War, where the role of government communications strategies in generating such views is placed at its core. Taking advantage of a bricolage approach, it combines national-level qualitative information from polls with qualitative data from journalists' and Ministry of Defense (MOD) planners' interviews. The study has shown that there was a change in the level of public support in keeping with the story of the Iraq threat told in Downing Street with exaggerated claims in it. Apart from that, the research emphasizes the effectiveness of the British Prime Minister's intentional placing of his words in the relevant channels of communication and engaging the media in convincing people who, at the beginning, were not involved in the conflict. Furthermore, the research underlines that the 9/11 incident has continued to exert a significant effect on the British national consciousness, more so because its influence would last for years to come on the global scene.

Finally, Foos and Bischof (2021) examined how the boycott of The Sun newspaper affected people's views on the European Union in Merseyside. Using data from 1983 to 2004, the research found that the boycott led to fewer people reading The Sun and more favourable opinions about the EU in Merseyside. This shows that long-term media campaigns can significantly shape public opinion over time. The media's coverage plays a significant role in influencing societal attitudes and beliefs. Specifically, the boycott after The Sun's reporting on the Hillsborough disaster had lasting effects on how people in the region perceived the EU.

Conclusion

This chapter presents a theoretical framework and a literature review to provide a conceptual framework for analysing the role of the British media in shaping public opinion in the UK. The introduction focused on the role of media in the modern world and then proceeded to

describe the types of British media: television and radio. Afterward, the chapter described how government regulation affects media organizations and how it affects media and opinion. To understand how media can influence people's perceptions, agenda-setting, framing, and cultivation theory were discussed. In addition, the chapter contained a more elaborate discussion of the UK media regulation model and the government's interference with the media. It was this that served as the basis for the research undertaken to comprehend the complex role that the media plays in the UK.

CHAPTER TWO

Practical Framework

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Introduction

This chapter constitutes the practical side of the dissertation. It includes two sections, each of which provides analysis of media articles from different corners. The first section presents the framing and content analysis of media frames of the Rwanda bill. This analysis highlights the views and attitudes towards the Bill that British newspapers aim to convey to the public. The second section focuses on the agenda set by British newspapers in a time range (2020-2023). It provides an agenda analysis based on the frequency of topics appearing on newspapers' front pages.

2.1. The Framing of The Rwanda Bill by The British Press

On April 25, 2024, after several rounds of debate and consideration of amendments to the Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Act by the UK parliament, the bill passed both Houses of Parliament and received royal assent. The act aim is to deter unlawful migration, particularly by unsafe and illegal routes, by allowing some migrants to be sent to the Republic of Rwanda. The bill faced significant debate and disagreement between the Commons and the Lords. Prime Minister (PM) Rishi Sunak vowed that Parliament would sit day and night until the Lords backed down. During this event, the British press devoted a great deal of attention to the PM's speech and the Act. Among the newspapers with a high coverage of this event were The Guardian, The Times, and The Telegraph, in addition to BBC channels. The British press undoubtedly played a pivotal role in the framing of news.

2.1.1. Framing Analysis of The Telegraph's Coverage of The Rwanda Deportation Scheme

The Telegraph tackles the issue of the Rwanda deportation scheme on both the UK and the other parties involved and reveals the resources and views of the people concerned with the violation of human rights. The framework of these short stories reported in The Telegraph appears from different dimensions, for instance, effective rating of the plan, financial impacts, and the responses of the various parties.

In the first article " Rwanda bill has caused migrants to pour into Ireland, says deputy PM" is specifically is specifically based on the viewpoint of Ireland's Deputy Prime Minister, Micheál Martin (Deputy Prime Minister of Ireland), who pulls the Rwanda Bill into criticism, which has resulted in an increased number of migrants flowing from the UK into Ireland. The article draws attention not only to the policy question of deportation but also touches upon the implications of such policy for the migration situation in Ireland, given the country's severe housing shortage. Moreover, Martin's words raise a certain doubt about the efficiency of the mentioned policy since he sees it as a hasty reaction, which does not resolve the question of why immigration takes place. The articles also show a contradicting view, that is, the support for Rwanda policy of the Tory MPs, and this policy is seen to work as a deterrent to stop illegal / illegal migration attempts. Here, the policy's goal of equality of opportunities and the aspirations to deliver on its promise for needed positive change amid the European leaders' criticism led by Emmanuel Macron are highlighted. Finally, this article portrays the Rwanda deportation scheme in all its dimensions, as some people look at it as an optimum response to migration while others treat it as a violation of refugees' rights.

Alternatively, the latter article "Rwanda scheme could coast UK nearly £5bn in first five years for 30.000 migrants", canters on the financial side of the Rwanda deal, revealing emerging documents that may be burdensome for the UK government. This example talks about the substantial financial expenditures that will be incurred because of the deportation plan. The estimates show that the cost will be more than 5 billion pounds over a period of 5 years. This approach mainly focuses on the fiscal pressures of the idea and ignites issues relating to price efficiency. In addition, the text addresses the logistical challenges as well as uncertainties associated with the Rwanda scheme of implementation, including the lack of information on how many migrants have to be deported and how transportation should be arranged. Handling these details aims at creating a story that highlights the complexity, unpredictability and the negative consequences of this deportation policy .Distinguishing how The Telegraph covered the events

from how the Guardian did shows a difference in the focus and viewpoint. The Telegraph's articles usually promote conservative values, which means they focus on issues such as border security and financial accountability, while The Guardian might present a more critical analysis of social and political aspects of the matter.

Based on the Telegraph newspaper contributors' comments, it is hard to miss that public opinion on the Rwanda Bill is highly sceptical and critical. In the meantime, the policy is under constant scrutiny by various groups of people. Human rights lawyers say that the policy is unconstitutional and that the real problem is the government's inability to physically stop and turn back boats carrying illegal immigrants. Some critics think that the government's attention to Rwanda is a distraction from the implementation of more practical steps, including the visa issuance procedure. Moreover, there is the feeling that the exposure of the policy's costs could be malicious plots by the civil service to end the policy. For instance, Jonathan Forrest commented on April 26, 2024, that the "Rwanda Bill has caused migrants to pour into Ireland," suggesting it is becoming the deterrent it was intended to be. R. Morris on the same day viewed it as a "useful benefit from the bill already." On the other hand, a comment by MMA Colclough on April 27, 2024, highlighted frustration with the lack of effective action from France, despite substantial financial support from Britain, pointing out that only recently did they see the French take a more tangible action by slashing a rubber dinghy on the beach. Colclough cynically remarked on the timing of this action, suspecting a connection to the Irish criticism of Britain's immigration policies. To sum up, there is generally a sense of annoyance and a need for more detailed and applicable immigration control programs.

2.1.2. Framing Analysis of The Guardian's Coverage on UK's Rwanda Deportation Scheme

The Guardian, in its articles, explored the legal lens, the human rights impact and practical considerations of the proposed Rwanda deportation scheme by the UK. Whether it

emphasizes scepticism and condemnation toward the policy or stresses that it is incompatible with international law and human rights standards- the framing is quite evident in these articles.

The first article "UK passes bill to send asylum seekers to Rwanda ", is about the passage of the deportation bill for the Rwanda case, even though it was strongly opposed by various groups and faced legal issues. The framing highlights that the bill is hugely controversial and would likely produce serious problems because critics maintain that it contradicts the UK international law. The article focuses on the parliamentary setback on the bill with the fears being raised by the MPs and the legal experts that the bill is unlawful and morally unacceptable. Finally, the article highlights the financial liabilities joined with it and raises the question whether it is an effective measure to deal with illegal migration. In the same vein, the second article "Rishi Sunak's Rwanda bill to become law after late-night showdown" shares the same stance and refers to the deportation plan as “extortionately expensive” and it, therefore, does not gel well with its human rights obligations.

A brief of the parliament audit that was strongly critical of the bill as it weakened the standards set up by the Human Rights Act and some parts of the European Convention on Human Rights is also disseminated. Besides that, the article provides views of legal experts and human rights organizations that emphasize the general position against the Rwanda plan from legal and ethical perspectives. Besides, the third article "UK's Rwanda bill 'incompatible with human rights obligations", uncovers a more serious impact, stressing that the Bill sets the UK human rights and the rule of law in danger. Such action may lead the UK to join the club of rulers who do not value human rights. The article also mentions the worries about the unchecked power of the government and the lack of court scrutiny in the occurrence of persecution and human rights abuses. Analysing The Guardian's and The Telegraph's both cover the same event shows that they frame it differently. While The Guardian allows itself to criticize the Rwanda deportation policy, pinpointing its legal and ethical complications, The Telegraph has a milder view that focuses on border security and financial issues. Generally, The Guardian's framing of the Rwanda deportation

plan emphasizes the complications that come with the plan as well as the reservations people have regarding it while stressing the need to adhere to universal human rights and international law.

The analysis of the view expressed by the Rwanda bill in the Guardian newspaper shows that the public opinion is pretty much against the bill, because of strong moral and ethical appeals. The policy was criticized as shameful, emphasizing the heartache and the negative publicity confronting the removal flights. Heather Lyons, on April 23, commented, "Shameful. Absolutely disgraceful policies by this Government." When the government does that, the general feeling is that the government is being hypocritical, caring more about the financial gain than the humanitarian values of its citizens. Jake, also on April 23, remarked, "So there's money for this but not the NHS, or public services, or cost of living crisis or..." The policy is considered utterly immoral and does not represent a moral standard across the United Kingdom, which leads some people to feel embarrassed about their country. It's against the natives' human rights to not deport foreign criminals, rapists, murderers, etc. Meanwhile, the prominent narrative of condemnation and disillusionment around the topic eclipses the view that has a hint of a reduction in asylum numbers and attracting global talent.

2.1.3 Framing Analysis of The BBC's Coverage of Rwanda Bill

The UK government's controversial Rwanda bill has sparked debates in political, legal and humanitarian circles worldwide. The BBC's coverage of this issue is subtle because it reflects different frames that shape how the public sees and understands the bill. By analysing these frames, we can explore the various perspectives presented through BBC reports on this issue and consider how stakeholders frame it themselves, as well as what such framing does for public conversation about it. According to one frame presented in BBC's coverage of the Rwanda Bill –the government frames it as a radical shift in the global migration equation. They argue that this legislation is just a part of wider problems faced by the UK and other countries concerning migrations, thus making them appear necessary. In order to justify their policies, this view seeks support from the people

they lead. On top of situating the bill within context, the report also underscores efforts made by authorities to deal with migration pressures practically as more detention centres spaces or caseworkers among others (BBC). Another frame that the BBC takes in their coverage is the view of migrants who are directly affected by the Rwanda bill. This perspective is presented when migrants in Dunkirk express doubt and resistance towards propositions made by governments fearing what will happen if they are sent to Rwanda. What this broadcasting corporation does best is representing peoples' emotions, such as fear or uncertainty; in this case, it was no different as people saw these measures as cruel only for them still wanting to go to the UK despite its dangers. The BBC also exposes how migration policies affect individuals while at the same time challenging governments' narratives by giving voice to those who have been disadvantaged by such policies.

The legalities and parliamentary wrangling around the Rwanda Bill are also looked at with input from MPs, lawyers, judges, etc., providing an understanding of how complicated legislation can be created or rejected based on political motives. Legislators' refusal of amendments, Lords' resistance, and ongoing lawsuits indicate how divisive this law has become alongside governments' determination for its speedy adoption regardless of any opposition shown against it. This news outlet, therefore, covers various facets involved during debates within Parliament itself and outside among the different key players like politicians, legal minds, rights organizations, etc., thus enabling citizens to understand better what might be going on behind closed doors .

BBC's coverage of the Rwanda bill offers a comprehensive analysis of the issue, presenting multiple frames that shape public discourse and understanding. From the government's framing of the bill as a response to global migration challenges to the perspectives of migrants and stakeholders involved in legal and parliamentary debates, BBC's reporting provides valuable insight into the complexities of migration policy in the UK. By examining these frames, we gain

a deeper understanding of the issues at stake and the implications of the Rwanda bill on various stakeholders.

The Rwanda Migration Bill has kindled a vigorous debate inside the UK society, exposing deep rifts in a number of public opinion. On one side, the bill supporters say that it is an inevitable step towards tackling the problem of asylum seeker numbers, and on the other side, the opponents' pair by proclaiming the bill to be a dreadfully immoral policy. This conflict in the viewpoints is symptomatic of a challenging and intricate terrain of point of view, shaped by divergent opinions, which shape the further course of the debate. The other side of the debate stated that the Rwanda Bill might shrink the number of asylum seekers getting to the UK, hence reducing the burden on its resources. Meanwhile, supporters argue that the plan will pull in bright people from around the world since it is a chance for these people to contribute directly to the UK's economy. This pragmatic approach is the one that the bill is based on, as it presumes that the bill will eventually improve the UK's economic and social situation. This opinion assumes that the policy is the first option to secure the country's stability and prosperity. However, opponents of the Rwanda program believe that this measure is a shameful breach of humanitarian values. They, however, argue that the government does not look after the interests of the poor who have no power in society. The price that the deportation bill will exact is very perceptively shown through real-life examples, like the depressing episodes of why people can endure deportation flights. These personal stories celebrate an intensely human and emotive angle of the debate, which focuses on the terrible consequences that the policy has for individuals and their families. The British disrepute is also a matter of concern with the implication that the move is inhumane and unjust. At the top of the controversy, there is a fundamental conflict related to UK's moral commitments to asylum seekers. The opponents will say that the government is morally bound to provide shelter to those who are suffering persecution and conflict. Whereas supporters of the bill argue that, the UK national interest is of more importance than humanitarian concerns. This mismatch shows a

graver rift in British society, as the country runs out of a consensus on its role in the world and responsibilities for refugees.

Rwanda Bill has ignited a much-needed, hitherto postponed dialogue on the UK policy with regard to asylum and its humanitarian duties. Advocates maintain that the policy is vital for the country in order to preserve its stability and prosperity, but critics disagree, as they claim that this is an abandonment of the UK's moral values. As debate goes on, it remains to be seen, whether the government will reassess its position, or it will show firm stand against the criticism. One thing is certain, however: the Rwanda bill has revealed the long-established schism in the United Kingdom and the consequences of it, which will have a significant impact on the nation's development.

In conclusion, the portrayal of the Rwanda Deportation Scheme and many other events are evidence of the resilience of the British media as a determining force in matters concerning the public and society. Thus, media performs a vital role by giving information in different forms and encouraging a view of the argument from various angles alongside different attributes that occur in policy proposal debates. The examination of the media coverage of the Rwanda deportation scheme and other key events shows how and why the role of media is diverse and rather nuanced in the context of the UK, which brings a crucial lesson that the critical analysis of how media covers the action is necessary in order to understand the consequences of such decisions.

2.2. British Media's Agendas During The Last Three Years (2020-2023).

Agenda-Setting was evident in the British media's coverage of key issues throughout 2020-2023, as news organizations played a central role in shaping public perceptions, influencing political debates, and defining the narrative surrounding significant events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit negotiations and climate change . Through a combination of selection, framing, and repetition, the media influenced public understanding and responses to these transformative events, highlighting the enduring power of agenda setting within the British media landscape.

Table 2.1

Frequency of COVID-19 and Brexit Mentions on Front Pages of British Newspapers During 2020

<i>The British newspaper</i>	<i>COVID-19 Mentions</i>	<i>Brexit Mentions</i>
The Guardian	6	5
The Times	3	5
The Daily Mail	7	6
The Telegraph	3	5
The Sun	4	4

Note. Actual numbers may vary over time and are subject to change

The COVID-19 pandemic dominated news coverage in 2020, with British media outlets providing extensive reporting on infection rates, government responses, healthcare challenges, economic impacts, and developments related to vaccines and treatments. Through a process of selection, emphasis, and repetition, media organizations influenced public perceptions of the severity of the pandemic, government policies, and individual behaviours. The media's agenda setting shaped public understanding and responses to the evolving crisis. Despite the pandemic, Brexit negotiations remained a focal point for the British media in 2020. Media outlets closely followed developments in trade talks between the UK and the EU, covering issues such as fishing rights, border arrangements, regulatory alignment, and the future relationship between the UK and the EU. The media's coverage of Brexit negotiations influenced public perceptions of the

progress, challenges, and potential outcomes of the process, shaping public attitudes towards the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

Table.2.2

Frequency of COVID-19, Brexit, and Climate Change Mentions on Front Pages of British Newspapers During 2021

<i>The British newspaper</i>	<i>COVID-19 Mentions</i>	<i>Brexit Mentions</i>	<i>Climate change Mentions</i>
The Guardian	5	7	3
The Times	3	5	2
The Daily Mail	3	5	2
The Telegraph	2	6	3
The Sun	4	5	4

All through 2021, the novel coronavirus still occupied the headlines in British media. They reported widely on vaccination campaigns, official reactions, healthcare system strains, economic consequences and virus mutations plus public health interventions. Media establishments shaped what people perceived as the seriousness of the pandemic, effectiveness of different vaccines, government decisions about lockdowns or restrictions and personal conduct during this crisis through setting these issues on their agendas which in turn affected how they were understood and responded to by the public. In 2021, the British media still concentrated on what happened following Brexit talks that ended in late 2020. What this means is that they covered such things as regulatory changes, trade disruptions and border issues among others. However,

most of these developments were presented by different media houses as events whose interpretation could affect how people look at their economic well-being in terms of sovereignty or immigration into Britain while dealing with other nations around the world; thereby creating arguments over whether it was good or bad for them to leave the EU.

Climate change discourse also received increased attention in the British media throughout 2021, reflecting growing public awareness and activism. Media outlets covered topics such as environmental policies, climate summits, extreme weather events, and the transition to renewable energy. Through agenda setting, media organizations highlighted the urgency of addressing climate change, amplified scientific evidence, and framed debates about mitigation strategies, influencing public perceptions and political agendas on environmental issues.

Table 2.3

Frequency of Brexit, and Ukrainian-Russian war Mentions on Front Pages of British Newspapers During 2022

The British newspapers	Ukrainian-Russian War Mentions	Brexit Mentions
The Guardian	11	4
The Daily Mail	6	3
The Times	6	2
The Telegraph	8	3
The Sun	7	3

Note. These numbers present only the articles we have seen.

In the year 2022, British media had never before seen such momentous change. It was a year where media continued to shape public conversations and set the national agenda. This happened despite significant events happening around us and persisting societal problems that need addressing; in which case they served as a mirror reflecting the pulse of our nation while also acting as guides for discourse towards important policy changes.

One theme that seemed to dominate British journalistic coverage all through last year had been fallout from Brexit. After the UK officially left the European Union at the close of 2021, many people might have thought that this decision would be forgotten with time. However, its effects were felt throughout every corner of Britain. Media houses gave wide airtime to trade disruptions, border controls and post-Brexit agreement negotiations, among others; thereby informing citizens about their country's new relationship with Europe and shaping their opinion towards the issue. The media continued to focus on the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2022. They reported infection rates, vaccination campaigns and government reactions daily. Public worry about new strains, including Delta showed that people needed precise up-to-date information as they dealt with changing public health situations. Throughout the year, political disputes also grabbed headlines from British journalists working in an environment of extreme polarization. Scandals in government, leadership struggles in opposition parties, and policy disagreements ignited conversations among citizens about democracy health. Beyond politics or economics, societal challenges like climate change and racial justice received significant attention from different forms of media outlets during 2022. The importance of environmental events coverage appears through activism-related discussions that aimed at finding solutions for climate change since they conveyed a sense of urgency. On the other hand, debates about racial inequality illuminated systemic problems; thereby prompting calls for radical change based on social justice movements such as Black Lives Matter. The British media was not only preoccupied with these issues, but also concerned about national celebrations and moments of reflection, such as the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The media covered commemorative events, royal engagements, and

public celebrations, among other things, which gave them an idea of how long the monarchy has been established in Britain and what people find important about it. It is important to note, however, in addition to the jubilee itself, there were a number of other occasions surrounding royalty that continued to capture public attention as well as media attention, as they served to fascinate people while continually being scrutinized. Press agencies can make everything from a member's public wedding to an appearance together into big news stories if they work diligently enough.

In general, what characterized the British media's power to set agendas in 2022 was an interaction between various social, cultural and political elements. Brexit fallouts, COVID-19 updates, political controversies vis-a-vis societal challenges; all these events informed different parts of the country. Nevertheless, were driven by media houses whose responsibility was to inform as well as entertain their audiences thereby creating awareness among them so that they could take part actively in shaping discussions around those issues affecting their lives most closely at any given point. During this calendar year, while still stirring up feelings nationwide even further than before through whatever means necessary something, changed somewhere else too because nobody knew where anything would lead next till everything changed once again somewhere else entirely.

In 2023, the British media demonstrated its ability to set the agenda by providing extensive coverage of events and issues that influenced public opinion and shaped social attitudes. Based on the given summaries, it is clear that newspapers like the Daily Mail and Mail on Sunday took charge in defining what matters most and should be prioritized, which led to the general populace's attention. Dubbed as "Britain's worst baby killer", Lucy Letby story unveils how media can make things significant by exposing failures within healthcare systems. The negligence of hospital bosses, who were said not to have acted upon warnings about her deeds, was brought into the limelight thanks to the Daily Mail article; this not only raised awareness about a serious problem but also sparked off anger among members of the public who demanded government

inquiry into the matter. By concentrating on these parts when reporting such cases, newspapers successfully shape people's views on them because they start talking more about responsibility than anything else does. Hence, they make everyone think that there should be some reformations to be done in the health sectors. The Mail on Sunday is one such media outlet that has the power to shape public perception of international conflicts, as demonstrated by its coverage of Hamas attacking Israel. They started off showing solidarity with Israel but ended up criticizing Israeli actions, which were based on changing public opinion about what had happened there and this also affected how people talked about it too. The paper selected certain facts about events, giving them specific context or framing so that others would see things from their own perspective only; thus leading everyone else's ideas around those areas into another direction altogether – toward Palestinians' suffering during these times.

Overall, in 2023, the British media was successful in setting its agenda because it highlighted important global, political and social matters; therefore, directing public debate and shaping public opinion about them. This is a result of newspapers strategically selecting what to include or exclude from their pages; giving some matters more prominence over others; choosing which aspects should receive greater attention among various facets related to single events – all aimed at provoking public thought on national or global questions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the portrayal of the Rwanda deportation scheme and many other events are evidence of the resilience of the British media as a determining force in matters concerning the public and society. Thus, social media perform a vital role in the ability by giving information in different forms and encouraging a view of the argument from various angles alongside different attributes that occur in policy proposal debates. The examination of the media coverage of the Rwanda deportation scheme and other key events shows how and why the role of media is diverse and rather nuanced in the context of the UK, which brings a crucial lesson

that the critical analysis of how media covers the action is necessary in order to understand the consequences of such decisions.

2.3. Findings and Discussion

This section deals with the results of our research work and provides a comprehensive report on empirical data that was derived from our study. We have tried to understand the intricacies behind our research questions and shed light on this through careful examination of qualitative methodologies employed in such kind of research. These findings are fruit of long time investigation, which included the use of qualitative methods that serve to give a fuller understanding about the matter at hand. The objective is to not only present plain information but also to extract meaningful ideas, reveal important trends, and identify hidden patterns that contribute to knowledge development in our field.

In analyzing the framing of Rwanda deportation issues depicted in The Telegraph, The Guardian, and the BBC, it can be shown that media influence public opinion on this controversial matter. As part of its coverage of the plan's effectiveness and financial impact, the Telegraph also offered a variety of responses, highlighting the discrepancies and the increasing flow of funds. Financially, the newspaper estimates a \$5 billion expenditure over the next five years. In examining the bill, The Guardian emphasizes its controversial nature, potential violations of international law, ethical concerns, and practical challenges, raising questions concerning its effectiveness and capital expenditure. The BBC presents a balanced view by broadcasting the government's justifications, the migrants' fears, and the systematic legislative process, allowing viewers to see the big picture. Despite The Telegraph's fiscal and border security orientation, The Guardian's legal and ethical opposing views are very different from the BBC's balanced reporting that encompasses many perspectives. The results of this study indicate that the media play a significant role in forming public opinion, as well as showing a significant divide within the UK regarding immigration policy, law standards, and ethical responsibility, especially in relation to

the Rwanda law, which has the potential to affect its future. Analysis of British newspapers' agenda within 2020-2023 also shows a tendency of the British press to highlight some issues and assign them a decisive position on front pages to draw the public attention to them. Such a strategy makes these issues public opinion talk. The media sets the agenda and then provides the frames in order to agitate public opinion over some issues.

The analysis of the framing of the Rwanda bill scheme and agenda setting of media coverage between 2020 and 2023 indicates that the British press contributes to forming public opinion as well as policymaking discussions. These narratives are framed in distinct ways by media outlets such as The Telegraph and The Guardian, which ultimately influence the public's perception.

The Telegraph's attention to the Rwanda deportation plan consequently manifests the applicability and financial perspectives. Through making a \$ 5 billion budget commitment for the next five years and highlighting the plan as an instrument that may serve to stem illegal immigration, The Telegraph promotes a storyline that depicts border control and economic performance as the top priorities. Presenting this information in this manner, it anticipates that readers who are interested in fiscal responsibility and national security will be more likely to support government policies in the future. Meanwhile, The Guardian emphasizes the controversy surrounding Rwanda deportations, with ethical dilemmas at stake, and compares it with its legality under international law. Meanwhile, The Guardian accentuates the fact that there is some controversy surrounding Rwanda deportations, with ethical dilemmas on the table, and makes a comparison with its legality under international law. Accordingly, this argument contributes to undermining the existing policy legitimacy by highlighting possible cases of violation of human rights and shows various practical challenges. The Guardian captures this type of reader by focusing on them. They connect with people who consider ethical issues rather than just legal standards as a way to evoke public disapproval of the project. In its balanced report, the BBC

provides a detailed perspective, covering the government's justifications, fears of migrants, and immigration legislation. With this perspective, the audience will have a tool to see beyond the obvious aspects of the problem, thus enhancing the levels of sophistication of public discussions. Because of its inclusion of a variety of opinions, the BBC acts as a counterweight to polarizing framings of issues, thus encouraging thinking and discussion among viewers.

Analyzing how the British Press has controlled the agenda from 2020 to 2023 highlights the authority of the media to induce public discourse about different problems such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit, and climate change. In this era, news channels constructed storylines in election news by choosing, framing, and repeating matters, which shapes public opinion, thinking, and reactions. In public view, the transmission of the Brexit negotiations and their effects resulted in a change in the UK's relations with Europe. Various media outlets promoted discussions regarding trade flows, monetary effects, and political priorities. Media debate constructed the consequences of Brexit that are reflected in political narratives. The media also played a crucial role in this case, fully reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic by using advanced reporting to spread information regarding the severity of the disease, the importance of vaccination, and the government's response. Apart from that, this coverage helped the community become aware of safety measures and adhere to them to end up with policies and behaviors of the government and public related to the pandemic. In addition, the media coverage of climate change at this time produced a significant impact on public awareness levels and activism. Through their attention to the environmental issues and their appreciation for the intervention measures, the media coverage has influenced consumers, called for advocacy, and made policymakers reckon with climate-related and similar problems. The media may set the agenda by focusing on topics such as healthcare systems and international conflicts, given the fact that they possess the ability to set agendas. The mainstream media has also played a significant role in exposing the flaws in the system and exposing unfair practices. Because of these revelations, a significant amount of

debate has taken place, and reforms have been implemented at various levels of government to ensure that future policies are implemented effectively.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the practical part of the study was discussed, including the methods of analysis, the results, and the discussion. The study revealed that the British media especially the newspapers has a pivotal role in shape, effect, and direct the public opinion. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion section that addresses the study's main question. Based on the findings, this section presents an analysis and interpretation of the results, which demonstrated British media role in framing different issues and address its messages to the public.

General conclusion

The present study was designed to determine the role of the British media in shaping public opinion, focusing on three main research questions: the strategies media uses to affect public opinion, the public's response to media messages and the extent of critical engagement with the information presented, and the role of media outlets in the polarization of political opinions. The theoretical part of the dissertation provided a review of the related variables, the media and public opinion, to acquire a good knowledge of both and pave the way for practical work. It also reviewed the previous studies on the effects of media on public opinion to limit the scope of the present study and address the corner to be tackled.

Significantly, we examined the strategies and theories employed by the media to shape public opinion. Data were collected through mixed methods, in which a qualitative method was used to gather data on newspapers' frames and a quantitative method was employed to quantify the frequency of topics mentioned on newspapers' front pages to determine their agendas within a time range. The data were analyzed qualitatively using a framing and content analysis of the selected articles found in leading online British newspapers, including The Guardian, The Telegraph, The Daily Mail, and The Sun, in addition to BBC.

The framing and content analysis of the different frames of the Rwanda bill, that was selected as case study in the research, found The Telegraph, The Guardian and BBC revealed results that may be generalized to some extent. The results showed that the media deliberately chose to tackle an issue from a specific angle and framed it with the relevant language and tone to direct the public to the target point of view. This was shown in the different frames provided for the Rwanda Bill and the public reactions to them. As such, the media does not only tell the public what to talk about but also how to think about a given topic.

Newspapers' agendas coincided with media frames to affect the opinions of the public. This was shown through analyzing and discussing the agenda set by British newspapers within 2020-2023, which showed Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, the Ukrainian-Russian war, and healthcare systems were the top issues media sought the public to think and talk about. The stated issues were only an example of how the British newspapers set the agenda for the public. The media generally changes the agenda with the changing situations of the country and the world, and it sometimes does this to distract the public attention from some issues and direct them to others. However, the generalization of these results is subject to certain limitations. For example, the analysis is based on a selected sample of articles from The Telegraph, The Guardian, and the BBC, which may not fully represent the breadth of media coverage on the Rwanda deportation scheme and other significant issues. Furthermore, while the analysis highlighted the media's role in shaping public discourse, it didn't explore the broader socio-political context or the influence of other factors, such as political ideologies, economic interests, or public opinion dynamics, which may also impact media framing and agenda-setting processes.

Despite these limitations, the analysis provided valuable insights into the complex interplay between media, public opinion, and policy discourse, offering a foundation for further research and critical inquiry into media influence in democratic societies. It is critical to recognize that our findings might be valid for a limited period. Hence, several recommendations for further research can be made based on the study's findings and considering its limitations. More generally, it is also necessary to investigate the role of other British media forms in shaping public opinion.

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تتناول هذه الدراسة دور الإعلام البريطاني في تشكيل الرأي العام في المملكة المتحدة، مع التركيز على الصحف البريطانية. أثناء عملية جمع البيانات، تم استخدام منهجية نوعية، بالإضافة إلى تحليلات المحتوى وتحليلات التأطير التي تم تطبيقها على مقالات مختارة من الصحف البريطانية واسعة الانتشار مثل The Times و The Guardian و The Daily Mail و The Telegraph. تتناول هذه الدراسة ثلاثة أسئلة رئيسية: الأساليب والاستراتيجيات التي يستخدمها الإعلام للتأثير على الرأي العام، استجابة الجمهور والتفاعل النقدي مع رسائل الإعلام، وما إذا كانت وسائل الإعلام تسهم في استقطاب الرأي العام حول القضايا السياسية. تشير النتائج إلى أن الصحافة البريطانية تؤثر بشكل كبير على التصورات العامة والمناقشات والانقسامات. تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على أن الإعلام هو العامل الرئيسي في تزويد الناس بالمعلومات وتغيير مواقفهم تجاه موضوع معين. كما توصي هذه الدراسة باستكشاف التأثيرات طويلة الأمد لتأطير الإعلام في تشكيل الرأي العام في المملكة المتحدة.

كلمات مفتاحية: نظرية ترتيب الأولويات، الاعلام البريطاني، نظرية التأطير، الرأي العام،