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FRAMING THE ‘WAR ON DRUGS’ IN THE PHILIPPINES

Ekme! Geer
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Abstract

The Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte has gained quite a reputation in both national and international sphere due to his controversial war against drugs. Accordingly, this article aims to determine the media frames used in reporting the issue. By employing mainly content analysis, three Philippine national newspapers (namely, Manila Bulletin, Philippine Daily Inquirer, and The Philippine Star) are analyzed to observe the repeating media frames and the depictions of actors involved in the drug war. It is revealed that the *Law and Order*, *Crime and Justice Frame*, *Security and Defense frame*, *Conflict frame*, and *Responsibility frame* are mainly used by the three newspapers. The study also reveals that media narration of the anti-drug campaign is rather neutral in tone and there is no observable extreme manipulation of stories favoring one group over another.

Keywords: Media Frames, Anti-Drug Campaign, Human Rights, Filipino

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‘Uyuşturucu ile Mücadele’ Haberciliğinde Çerçeveleme: Filipinler Örneği

Öz

Filipinler devlet başkanı Rodrigo Duterte uyuşturucu ile mücadele yöntemlerindeki tartışmalar nedeniyle ulusal ve uluslararası boyutta nam kazanmıştır. Bu nedenle, elinizdeki çalışma uyuşturucu ile mücadele haberciliğinde kullanılan çerçeveleri belirlemeyi amaç edinmiştir. Genelde içerik analizi kullanılarak, Filipinler’deki üç temel gazetede (Manila Bulletin, Philippine Daily Inquirer, and The Philippine Star), uyuşturucu ile mücadele haberlerinde öne çıkan aktörlerin temsili ve haber çerçeveleri incelenmiştir. Yapılan analiz sonucunda, gazetelerin temel olarak, *kanun ve nizam, suç ve adalet, güvenlik ve savunma, çatışma* ve son olarak *sorumluluk çerçevelerini* kullandığı saptanmıştır. İncelemede, aynı zamanda, medyanın, uyuşturucu karşıtı kampanyayı hikâyeleştirirken objektif bir tutum sergilediği, gözlemlenebilir bir manipülasyona başvurmadağı ve aktör gruplarından birini diğerine üstün göstermediği de anlaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Medya çerçeveleme, uyuşturucu karşıtı kampanya, insan hakları, Filipinler

Introduction

Media significantly plays a bigger role and much tremendous influence in our lives since it helps us gather information and make sense of our world. However, reality might not be objectively and accurately presented to us by the media. The news might be manipulated and distorted when certain elements such as people, places, or events are given more emphasis than the others (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). According to *framing theory*, *framing involves selecting some aspects of the perceived reality and making it more salient* (Entman, 1993). Hence, some aspects of the story might be intentionally or unintentionally hidden from us. This leads to the formation of difference in our opinions or perceptions.

Although it will be detailed in the next section, framing news is about emphasizing certain details, presenting it in a particular way, and repeating it to send a message. This is done by using frames which highlight specific elements of the news and then directs the reader to focus on those elements. Accordingly, in identifying the frames, the content of the newspapers should be examined closely. In this way, the reader will be able to pinpoint specific cues that can trigger certain perceptions which might be different when read in another frame. This is evident, for instance, on reporting of crime events or issues. Certain frames focus on the conflict between the suspect and the law enforcers. Other frames focus on the emotion and the drama wherein the emphasized words evoke sympathy or outrage. Then, there are other frames which focus on attributing the responsibility or the blame on specific individuals or groups.

In framing the drug-related issue, most of the times, media conveys negative characteristics of drugs users and drug sellers. Moreover, they emphasize how drugs lead to the destruction of the society. In this case, media amplifies drug campaigns of government and law enforcers and draw collective support from the society against drug use and drug crimes. It depicts the society as having one common goal and that is to eliminate drugs and its harmful effects.

Meanwhile, in the Philippines, the election of Duterte as president has led to an extensive anti-drug campaign. He was quoted saying “We

will not stop until the last drug lord and the last pusher have surrendered or put behind bars or below the ground, if they so wish” (Iyengar, 2016). He also gave a “shoot-to-kill” order against the drug suspects and guaranteed the immunity of the soldiers and police from prosecution (Aljazeera, 2016). After the campaign was enacted, there was an increase of news reports regarding it. This includes the disclosure of government officials and political families involve in the drug trade, the number of suspects being arrested, and the human rights violation said to be committed by the law enforcers.

The controversy revolving around the anti-drug activities has made the public debate about it. A survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations (2017) reveals that public opinion regarding the war on drugs of the current government is rather divided. For the first quarter of 2017, forty-three percent (43%) of the public is satisfied, thirty-five percent (35%) are somewhat satisfied, and twelve percent (12%) are dissatisfied. In addition, there is a split opinion on police claim that drug suspects only get killed when they resist arrest. Fourteen percent (14%) says police are not telling the truth, while six percent (6%) says police are telling the truth. However, forty-two percent (42%) are still undecided. This leads us to wonder what narratives are repeatedly selected and emphasized in depicting the drug war which could induce these different opinions from the Filipinos.

The aim of this paper, therefore, is to present the dominant narratives/frames used by three widely-circulated newspapers in the Philippines (namely, *Manila Bulletin*, *The Philippine Daily Inquirer*, and *The Philippine Star*). *This study analyzes newspapers from 1 January to 31 January 2017. Accordingly, this paper also shows their discourse on both the positive and negative narratives which facilitates the formation of different opposing perceptions of the anti-drug campaign.*

The result of the study reveals that there are different frames used by the three newspapers in reporting the anti-drug campaign in the Philippines. They generally used the *Law and Order*, *Crime and Justice Frame*, *Security and Defense frame*, *Conflict frame*, and *Responsibility frame*. *Moreover, the general tone used by the three newspapers were quite neutral. Nevertheless, it can be perceived that the political*

stance of the newspapers has led to the slight difference in the usage of frames and tones. For example, the Philippine Daily Inquirer, which is connected to the opposition of the Duterte administration, used the Security and Defense frame to emphasize that the threat to the society is coming from the government and rogue police officers. On the other hand, The Philippine Star highlighted both the rogue police and drug suspects as the threats to the society. Meanwhile, the Manila Bulletin, a pro-administration broadsheet, emphasized drug abuse as a threat and featured the success of the government in battling the threat.

News Production: Framing and Processing

Reporting events is not simply stating the facts. Stories that were gathered need to be interpreted since they are not witnessed directly by the journalists but rather are taken from those who were directly involved in the event (Carter, 2013). Moreover, unprocessed and unedited stories are too complicated and too technical for people to understand (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). Besides these, news content might be influenced by other reasons such as the personal routine of journalists, the ideologies followed by media groups, the organizational structure and policies of the media group itself, or the influence of other groups and institutions (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Anyhow, these factors generate different connotation of the delivered facts and thus lead to the 'framing of reality.' According to Robert Entman (1993, p. 52), framing is *to select some aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation. Information is made more salient through placement or repetition* (Entman, 1993). So initially, framing has minimal significance. When placed in an accessible medium and repeated over time, the frame becomes embedded in the consciousness of the people. It is then treated as a referent point from which future information is compared and interpreted (Carter, 2013).

According to Gamson and Modigliani (1989), a frame is a central organizing idea to help make sense of the relevant ideas and to suggest what the issue is all about. It also establishes and creates links between concepts (Reese, 2007; Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009; Vreese, 2005).

For instance, crimes may be linked to unemployment or even immigration. It is assumed that after the audiences are exposed to news frame which associates two concepts, they are likely to accept such connections (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). A frame is also identified by its inclusion or exclusion of certain words, phrases, sentences, images or sources of information (Entman, 1993). It may also be the words used by the journalist to describe the people or the issue itself (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009). In a similar way, Gamson and Modigliani (1989) identify metaphors, exemplars, catch-phrases, depictions, and visual images as framing devices. In short, the choices of words and their organization in the news story are critical because of their capacity to define the issue and create a representation (Pan & Kosicki, 1993). In an example provided by Brian and his colleagues (2010), they stated that the presentation of the Arab Spring on the news was described as an ‘awakening’. This signifies that the movement exemplifies Western democratic values and thus seen as acceptable and favorable in the West. Hence, news framing is not about what issue is being talked rather it is concerned with how the issue is being presented.

In identifying frames, two approaches are commonly applied by researchers. There is the inductive approach. This approach analyzed news frames without having any prior, specific, and defined frames in mind (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; Vreese, 2005). Instead, as a researcher investigates the news, he or she reads the story with an open mind and then tries to categorize or label the frame used. The problem with the inductive approach is that it requires much time and it is difficult to compare with other studies. On the other hand, there is the deductive approach. It utilizes predefined frames that are commonly used by the media or referred as generic frames (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; Vreese, 2005). A researcher selects predefined frames and then examine whether the elements of those frames exist in the news being investigated. This approach is useful when analyzing a large number of samples.

Earlier studies of media frames identify five common news frames, which generally attract readers’ interest and attention to the news. These are the conflict frame, the human interest frame, the economic consequences frame, the morality frame, and the responsibility frame

(Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). *Conflict frame focuses on a conflict between individuals, groups, and institutions which catch the interest of the audience. Human interest frame focuses on people and relates the story more dramatic and emotionally. Economic consequence frame relates the event or the issue in terms of the economic consequence it will have on individual, groups, institutions, region or country. Morality frame places the issue in the context of religious tenets or moral prescriptions. Finally, the Responsibility frame attributes the problem as a responsibility (cause or solution) of certain individuals, groups, government or institutions* (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

Besides the five frames mentioned earlier, there are other frames which can further specify the contents of the news. These (selected) frames were proposed by Boydston and her colleagues in their Policy Frames Codebook (2013). Some of the frames they proposed are as follow: *law and order, crime and justice frames which deals with enforcement, laws, and punishment; security and defense frames which focus on threats and actions to protect individuals or the community from the perceived threats; health and safety frames which deals with health care access and other issues related to health; and external regulation and reputation frames which focus on state's relations with other nations.* (Boydston, Gross, Resnik, & Smith, 2013).

These different types of frames emphasize certain parts or elements of the news story. The element (phrase, statement, or image) that is highlighted can lead to a powerful suggestion of a certain meaning or interpretation (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009). For this reason, it is conceived that framing has effects on individuals and the society. According to Vreese (2005), exposure to certain frames can alter individual attitudes on an issue. This is exemplified in a study conducted by Foreman and colleagues (2016), which showed that when the audiences were exposed to a *scrutinizing frame, they have more negative perception towards the suspect of the crime. The study further showed that audiences who were exposed to such frame tend to have more negative attitudes towards the entire racial group of the suspect* (Foreman, Arteaga, & Collins, 2016). In the societal level consequences of frames, it is assumed that frames can set discussion or debates in the society due to the competing perceptions and opinions that are gener-

ated (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009). Besides contributing to social decision-making, frames can also contribute to the formation of political ideas and values, and collective social actions (Vreese, 2005). For instance, in the depictions of crime news, media can also rally public support around government crime prevention policy and can set the standards of morality and ethics which the society must follow and conform (Lee, 2015). But it can also lead the public to reject and protest certain government actions.

With such effects, framing theory is relevant in understanding media depictions of drugs and anti-drugs activities of law enforcers. This is because media has somewhat shaped public opinion on illegal drugs and its usage. Normally, news and other forms of the media presents illegal drugs as harmful and immoral (Lee, 2015). Drugs users and sellers are usually depicted as outsiders who threaten the society (Taylor, 2008). Illicit drug use is also linked to crime and other deviant behaviors. Moreover, journalists associate drugs with words which have negative connotation such as crisis, and violence (Lee, 2015). News media, thereby, reinforce criminal justice policy on what is right and wrong with regards to illegal drugs (Taylor, 2008). In this way, media serves as an agent for the government and other institutions to promote moral conformity and to seek support for their policy in the society (Chermak, 1997).

The study of media depictions of drugs and anti-drug campaign using the framing theory is particularly relevant in the context of the Philippines. Recently, there was a surge of news report related to crimes and the anti-drug campaign in the country. Since it is a critical issue, it is possible that frames are used by the Philippine media in reporting stories about the anti-drug campaign. This can be inferred from the contrasting public opinion regarding how the media has depicted the 'war on drugs' of the government.

The Philippine Media and the Anti-Drug Campaign

According to Coronel (2001), the Philippines is said to have dynamic media outlets which are the freest in the Southeast Asian region. This could be attributed to its tradition of not being owned by the state or political parties. It is technically free as there are no government branches

that direct and manage it. There are also no bureaucratic procedures impeding its growth and vibrancy as they do not need to acquire licenses or permits to publish newspapers or magazines. There is also no system of censorship. Thus, they can report whatever they want, bounded only by sedition, slander and libel laws (Coronel, 2001).

Despite its status of not being connected to political powers, there are some instances wherein the Philippine media has been accused of being partial and inconsiderate of the media ethics. It is said that the primary reason for this might be the economic structure of the media organization. Newspapers, radio, and television are in the hands of a small circle of business elites. For this reason, Philippine media is largely driven by profits and political influence which heavily influenced the commercialization of reporting in the country. The competition for profits and political influence also results in homogeneous reporting wherein newspapers, television, and radio broadcast stations tend to create the same news stories that certainly catch the interest of the public. These interests also drive the press to be easily bribed by corrupt politicians who want the news to be narrated in their favor or against their opponents. In the same way, the press proprietors utilize their newspapers to write stories that advance their ideas and sentiments regarding the politically-charged issue. However, they also avoid expressing excessive negative comments so that the government or a political party will not retract their support (Coronel, 2001).

The Philippine media is a very important and influential sector in the country. Its role is critical in mediating between the government and the public. For politicians and elites, media is a venue to present themselves to the Filipinos. This means that good media image assists politicians to garner support and maintain their hegemony. Meanwhile, bad media images can arouse collective criticism from the public. In addition, media is utilized by politicians to attack their opponents and discredit them in the eyes of the Filipinos (Pertierra, 2012). For this reason, rich and important families ensure that they have access to and control of the media (Pertierra, 2012). Besides being of use to the elites, the Philippine media also serves to express and promote the ideas of the masses. Moreover, they provide entertainment and stimulation to the people, leading to negative consequences like resorting to deliver-

ing news about scandals, rumors, and violence (Pertierra, 2012). All these factors may contribute to the motivation of the Philippine media in following closely the government's anti-drug campaign and presenting a lot of news stories about it to the public. Media depictions of the campaign have led to a discursive battle between the government, the media, and the opposition.

Politics and Drugs: Fight for Power?

Media is a power-legitimizing tool. By framing an issue and disseminating the framed information, the media plays a role in the exertion of power between competing actors or interests (Entman, 1993). For instance, on the issue of drugs, the government generally would want the media to represent illegal drugs and its usage negatively. Most of the times, the media coverage of drugs reflects the agenda and the policy of the government; hence, drug users are typically depicted as dangerous outsiders that could cause havoc in the society (Taylor, 2008). This reiteration of the government's agenda does not necessarily translate to the support of the media on the policy nor does it mean that the media and the government have the same opinions and views on drugs. Rather there are certain journalistic practices which lead to this. According to the study conducted by Steven M. Chermak (1997), journalists most often cite police and court sources (government institutions) in all types of crime, drug, and policy news because they considered them as official sources and reliable ones. Moreover, new reporters are less likely to criticize them because they can deny access to official information (Chermak, 1997). Consequently, the media's reliance on government institutions as sources of crime news leads to the framing of events in particular ways, limiting the scope of discourse, and affirming the standard approaches to crime. Furthermore, the information that is produced is said to be consistent with the goals and image of the government institution or law enforcers (Chermak, 1997). Through this process, the media acts as a reinforcing agent of the government ideologies and agenda (Lee, 2015) and hereby, legitimizing its power and hegemony.

The study of Chermak presents the media favoring the government institutions as sources of crime news. Despite this, media also seek

alternative sources such as the victims, witnesses, interest groups, etc. Ordinary people, however, is said not to have a direct influence on the content of the news (Van Dijk, 1996). Nevertheless, collectively, they create a counter-hegemonic discourse that may lead to the destabilization of government's authority. When it comes to the effects of news framing, some media scholars also argue that the public is not a passive audience and therefore cannot be easily affected by frames. The reason for this is that individuals have pre-existing ideas and beliefs. When they interact with the news, they also use their pre-conceived notions (based on prior experience) to assess the stories. Framing, then, has different effects on individuals and can be considered strong and effective when it is consistent with the individual schema (Shen, 2002). Therefore, it can be inferred that some individuals might be sensitive to frames supporting government policies while others are not.

In the same way, media itself is a power on its own. Most often, they see themselves as the watchdog of the people as they claim to serve and protect them from the abusive conduct of the authorities (Watson, 2007). This is especially true when the media is free from political or state regulation (Curran, 2002). Journalists can put pressure on the government and manufacture public opinion (Van Dijk, 1996). This is somewhat evident when journalists reveal corruption and other scandals. On the issue of drugs, media does also provide alternative discourse regarding drug use and question overrated representation of drug users and the exaggerated government actions against drugs. Inevitably, they are defining new perceptions on drugs. In a study conducted by Blakely and Nahm (2011), they reached several interesting findings regarding the depictions of war on drugs and war on terror in popular U.S. prime-time television programs. For example, drug suspects are depicted as morally ambiguous and government campaigns against drugs are often shown as ineffective. Although television shows are fictional, there is sometimes a link between these shows and the news coverage which creates a compelling picture of the war waged by the government (Blakley & Nahm, 2011). Hence, in some ways, media can independently redirect public opinion away from government policies.

This interplay of the government, media, and other groups is manifested in the context of the anti-drug activities in the Philippines. The current

government and the opposition use the anti-drug campaign discourse to discredit each other in the public and accordingly, the Philippine media plays a role in reproducing their propaganda. In this struggle for power, the opposition group presents the president as an authoritarian power who incites the killing of thousands of people. In addition, the president's leading critic urged the public to question the administration and its policies and condemn them (Quismundo, 2017). Besides this, the president's opponents called the anti-drug campaign as a war on the poor because it is said to be targeting the poverty-stricken community (Panti, 2017). On the other hand, the government accuses the opposition of creating false information regarding the law enforcement activities. Also, the government blames the media for focusing on the numbers of people killed and linking them all on the anti-drug campaign of the government (Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2017). Between this feud is the media which delivers the news to the public. Their roles are crucial when it comes to reproducing the statements of both parties and the way they frame the stories since they can influence how the Filipinos perceive the activities of the government.

Method

The study employs content analysis in identifying the dominant frames and the general tone of the news presented by the three leading national newspapers in the Philippines. This study analyzes news articles in three Philippine national newspapers from 1 January 2017 to 31 January 2017. This time frame is chosen because it is the sixth month after the President was inaugurated. During his campaign, the president promised that he would solve the drug problems in the country within six months in his office.

Data Collection

Three newspapers were selected for analysis: *Manila Bulletin*, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, and the *Philippine Star*. According to a 2015 survey conducted by The Nielsen Co., the Philippine Daily Inquirer remains the top choice for readers with 52% readership. It is followed by Manila Bulletin in second place with 34.3% readership and the Philippine Star in third place with 16.6% readership (Labog & Javellana, 2016). This survey indicates that they are the leading broadsheets in

the Philippines. For this reason, they are selected for the study. For a brief background of the three newspapers, they are described below.

Philippine Daily Inquirer: It is said to be the biggest and most influential newspaper in the Philippines which began in 1985 (Coronel, 2013). It boasts of giving balanced and credible news (Philippine Daily Inquirer, n.d.). However, the Rufino-Prieto clan, who are the owners of the broadsheet, are said to be politically connected to the Liberal party (Kritz, 2017). This party is the main rival of president Duterte in the government. Ever since the president took his position, he has been in a discursive battle against the broadsheet company, accusing them of being unfair and rude (Salaverria, 2017).

Manila Bulletin: Established during the American colonial period (1900), this broadsheet is the oldest newspaper in the Philippines and the second largest broadsheet in the country. The broadsheet is said to avoid controversy (Coronel, 2013). This newspaper company is known to be supportive of any administration (Serafica, 2018). Moreover, the newspaper article tends to avoid sensationalizing controversial events involving government officials and revealing its position regarding issues (Dayag, 2010).

The Philippine Star: This broadsheet was established in 1986 by veteran journalists and ranks third among the national newspapers. It is said to adopt a sober reporting tone (Coronel, 2013). The newspaper is recognized to remain objective and concise in reporting regardless whether the issue is controversial or not (Reyes et. al, 2012). Regarding the political affiliation of the broadsheet owners, two of its family members are politicians and are also part of the Liberal party. Nevertheless, the chief executive officer of the newspaper claims that they support the Duterte administration (Media Ownership Monitor Philippines, n.d.).

These three newspapers are privately owned. They published their news in English. Each of them has their own website wherein readers can also access the digital version of their daily printed newspapers.

In acquiring the news, the online version of the news was accessed by the researchers as it was found that there was no significant difference

in the news content between the digital and printed version. Moreover, it was easier to access their previous articles through their digital web-sites than the printed ones. After the digital version was accessed, each news item was manually selected and filtered based on the chosen date period (January 1st to 31st 2017) and the topic (anti-drug campaign). Specifically, this means that the articles which report anti-drug operations of police, arrest and prosecution of drug users and sellers, crime or death cases related to the anti-drug activities, and investigation of human rights violation were selected for content analysis. Moreover, articles which mention debates between the government and social institutions regarding the anti-drug policy, success and problem of the campaign, and public opinion surveys were chosen.

Coding Procedure

For identifying the news frames used in the news reports, two measures were adopted. First one is the frames developed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) which include the following:

- conflict frame – focuses on a dispute between government of officials, or between the government and the church/interest groups
- economic consequences frame – focuses on the increase/decrease in the government budget for law enforcement/health; focuses on the growth or stagnation of the Philippine economy
- human interest frame – focuses on the individual story of drug suspects or users and their family, and public opinion regarding the anti-drug campaign
- morality frame – focuses on the moral prescriptions of the church, interest groups, and/or government officials with regards to the anti-drug campaign
- responsibility frame – focuses on the exposition of responsibilities of the government, the community, and/or social institutions regarding the implementation and consequences of the anti-drug campaign

The other frames adopted were developed by Boydston and her colleagues (2013) which include the following:

- law and order, crime and justice frames – focuses on the law enforcement activities of the police, and the prosecution and trial of drug suspects and government officials involved in the drug trade
- security and defense frames – focuses on the assertion made by law enforcers and pro-Duterte officials that illegal drug is the threat to the community, and the counter-assertion made by the opposition that the Duterte administration is the real threat to the society
- health and safety frames – focuses on healthcare access and drug rehabilitation program for drug users
- external regulation and reputation frames – focuses on the censure or promotion made by foreign states regarding the anti-drug campaign of Duterte

In accordance with the frames, questions were developed to pinpoint specific elements in the newspapers that convey the specific frames used. The questions were applied to the news reports to be answered by yes (1) or no (0).

Meanwhile, in knowing the positive, negative, or neutral tone of the news articles, questions were also developed to be answered by yes or no.

- Positive tone: The anti-drug campaign or the President and his supporters in the government are portrayed in a positive light. The anti-drug campaign is shown to be supported by individuals, groups or other nations and is depicted as a success and achievement.
- Negative tone: The anti-drug campaign or the President and his supporters are portrayed in a negative light. More emphasis is given to the criticism on the anti-drug campaign made by the government opposition, individuals, groups or other nations.
- Neutral tone: The anti-drug campaign or the President and his supporters are portrayed using both negative and positive tone. The news story is written with the balance between negative and positive tone. It could also be that the news article seems not to discuss the issue either negatively or positively.

Findings and Discussion

In total, there were 402 newspaper articles encoded. From 1 January to 31 January 2017, *Manila Bulletin* produced 147 articles. It is followed by the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* with 141 articles. The *Philippine Star* produced 114 articles regarding the ‘war on drugs’.

After analysing the selected articles of the three daily newspapers, the following data were acquired.

Table 1. Total number of frames adopted by the newspapers

Frame	Manila Bulletin		Philippine Daily Inquirer		The Philippine Star	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Conflict Frame	17	12%	27	19%	16	14%
Human Interest Frame	5	3%	8	6%	10	9%
Economic Frame	3	2%	1	1%	3	3%
Morality Frame	5	3%	7	5%	2	2%
Responsibility Frame	13	9%	8	6%	15	13%
Law and Order, Crime and Justice Frame	71	48%	72	51%	54	47%
Security and Defense Frame	21	14%	14	10%	6	5%
Health and Safety Frame	7	5%	1	1%	4	4%
External Regulation and Reputation Frame	5	3%	3	2%	4	4%
	147	100%	141	100%	114	100%

The result shows that the three newspapers have utilized all frames in reporting their news. Nevertheless, there are specific frames which stand out as the most commonly used by the three broadsheets. These frames are the following: the *Law and Order, Crime and Justice frame*, *Security and Defense frame*, *Conflict frame*, and the *Responsibility frame*.

By utilizing the *Law and Order, Crime and Justice frame*, the three newspapers more often present news stories about the anti-drug activities of the law enforcers. This includes investigation and entrapment operations of the police, leading to the arrest of the drug suspects or gunfights between the two sides. Also, there are stories about the arrest and trials of policemen or politicians who are said to be involved with drug syndicates. In addition, stories about the killings of different individuals by unidentified gunmen are frequently presented in the news and these events are often linked to the anti-drug campaign of the government. Finally, the news presents the number of casualties and the evidence (illicit drugs, drug paraphernalia or weapons) gathered by the policemen after the operations. With such presentation of the anti-drug campaign, this has somehow contributed to the formation of an image of a 'war'.

The first frame mentioned is supported by the usage of *Security and Defense frame*, wherein there is a depiction of a threat to the security of individuals, society or the nation and thus, a relentless battle against it is necessary. In the newspapers, speeches of the President and other government officials depicting illegal drugs as a menace which enslaves thousands of people in the country are emphasized. News stories also highlight the assurance of the government and law enforcers in ensuring public safety and protection and their call for action and support in the fight against drugs, crime, and violence. Accordingly, there are news reports about declarations of drug-free communities across the country which implies the neutralization of the threat. The other side of the story, however, portrays the real threat as coming from rogue policemen. Their alleged indiscriminate killing creates insecurity and fears in the society. Moreover, there are reports depicting 'scalawag' policemen as using the anti-drugs to commit crimes such as kidnapping and extortion of innocent civilians. Their involvement in the crimes as depicted in the news has, in great possibility, induced the public to question the legitimacy of the anti-drug campaign.

For the *Conflict frame*, the three broadsheets show the dispute and disagreement among the government officials, interest groups, and other institutions like the church regarding the anti-drug policy and activities. The discourse of each side which tries to promote or criticize the

anti-drug campaign is emphasized in the news. In one side, the increasing number of people killed as reported in the news has been the basis of the government opposition in attacking the president and his administration. They argue that these numbers indicate that the president has little or no regard for the due process of law or the rights of a person. On the other hand, the president reproaches the other politicians for protecting criminals instead of the innocents and condemning many of them for being involved in the drug trade. Moreover, the president criticizes the church for its hypocrisy, declaring that they too are not always the ideal model for moral behavior. Hence, the president insists that they have no rights to censure his anti-drug campaign.

In relation to the frames described above, the *Responsibility frame* has also been used to develop the anti-drug campaign stories. In the news, it is often depicted that the government and the law enforcers are in control of the war on drugs and are accountable for the consequences of their actions. Besides protecting the people from criminality, the government is urged by different groups to uphold the rule of law and to make sure that its constituents are not circumventing it. For this reason, the news often quotes different government officials urging the president and the police chief to take actions regarding the extrajudicial killings that have been said to become rampant due to the implementation of the drug war. Also, they are calling for the weeding out of the ‘bad elements’ within the police organization.

Another notable frame which the three broadsheets used is the *Human Interest frame*. Though this is not often used by the three newspapers, the frame is noteworthy concerning the development of the anti-drug campaign news. The stories under this frame focus on individuals (suspects, innocent victims, and their families) that are affected by the drug war. In one news story, it emphasizes the statements of the relatives wherein they describe the killing of the victim as being ‘slaughtered on the road like a pig’. In another news story, it described how the police are said to have mercilessly shot several young men, who were garbage collectors and were living in poverty. Their families have declared that the police were not acting out under legal anti-drug operations. Besides these, there are other stories which evoke outrage on police operatives and sympathy for the families and victims.

Table 2. The most frequent tone used by the newspapers

Tone	Manila Bulletin		Philippine Daily Inquirer		The Philippine Star	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Positive	25	17%	4	3%	13	11%
Negative	8	5%	23	16%	12	11%
Neutral	114	78%	114	81%	89	78%
	147	100%	141	100%	114	100%

Generally, the three newspapers used neutral tone when reporting the anti-drug campaign. This tells us that the newspapers are not as slanted as they are thought to be. It seems that there is no extreme manipulation of stories which present favoring the government or its opposition. Nevertheless, it is shown that *Manila Bulletin adopted more positive tone in their stories regarding the anti-drug campaign, while the Philippine Daily Inquirer adopted more negative tone towards the war on drugs, most especially towards the police. Meanwhile, the Philippine Star has equally used the positive and negative tone in their news reports.*

For Manila Bulletin, seems to present many positive aspects of the government and the anti-drug activities. For instance, there were several articles about the creation and development of drug-free cities after intensive drug campaign activities in the area. There was also news which deals with the boosting of the economies, the flow of investments, provision of livelihood assistance, and high public approval of the citizens. Nevertheless, there were few stories which focus on the criticisms of the opposition regarding the police operations. These operations have been described as ineffective and brutal since thousands of people were killed and many families were traumatized.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Daily Inquirer seems to present the news stories about the war on drugs as ruthless and inhumane. It underscores the worsening breakdown of law in the country, which causes paralyzing fear to the society. There were stories which present the

anti-drug campaign as a cover-up of politicians and law enforcers who do not want to be arrested or punished. ‘Scalawag’ or ‘rogue’ policemen were also the focus of their news stories. However, there were also stories focusing on the government officials especially the mayors and governors who proclaim that they are supporting the anti-drug campaign.

The Philippine Star, on the other hand, presents both the negative and the positive statements about the news. Like the other two newspapers, it presents news about the conflict between the government and critics of the anti-drug campaign. It highlights also quotes from the two different sides. Moreover, there are also news stories which reflect the issue of rogue policemen committing crimes.

Conclusion

The role of news media is crucial when we gather information about our environment and society. Influenced by different reasons, news media employs framing devices which emphasized certain elements of the story making it more salient and accessible to the public. Consequently, this affects the way people perceive the news and may lead to the formation of different opinions. In the case of Philippines, the news media is employing certain frame which is presenting the general issue to revolve around specific matters or arguments.

Based on the result of the content analysis, there are different frames used to report the war on drugs in the Philippines. The most used frame by the three newspapers is the *Law and Order, Crime and Justice frame*. *This is actually not surprising as the media covers events rather than issue (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996).* It has been part of the journalistic routine to cover events especially crimes as they are faster to report, and sources are easily accessible. Moreover, it could be inferred that the operation of this frame has been utilized by the media to keep the public up-to-date regarding the anti-drug campaign and to avoid being accused of bias reporting. Then, there is the *Security and Defense frame*. *It is also often used by the three newspapers because this type of frame usually supports the Law and Order, Crime and Justice frame. Under this frame, threats to the security of the people are identified, which lead to the call for urgent action to apprehend such threats and*

restore public order and peace. Depending on which threat is being depicted and amplified by the media (threat coming from criminals or threat coming from state abuse), these might lead to actions against the criminals or against the government. Then, the next most used frame is the Conflict frame which occurred more often in the serious news (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). This supports results of previous studies which point out that conflict or controversies are often covered by the media as they are interesting and newsworthy (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). In addition, the three newspapers also made use of the Responsibility frame. Previous studies show that news media, when reporting issues which constitute a crisis, has the tendency to attribute responsibility for the crisis to certain individuals or groups (An & Gower, 2009). Moreover, the use of Responsibility frame shows the importance of political culture and context (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

Since the types of dominant frames used by the three newspapers are almost similar to each other, it could be said that their political stance might not have affected their framing of the news. However, this can be said for the *Law and Order, Crime and Justice* frame since this type compels the newspapers to write news that is brief and concise. As for the other common frame used by the three newspapers such as the *Security and Defense* frame, they can be used to support the political stance of the newspapers. For instance, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, recognized to be politically-connected to the opposition of the Duterte administration, uses the *Security and Defense* frame to point out that the threat to the society is coming from the corrupt police officers who are using the anti-drug campaign to mask their crimes. On the other hand, *The Philippine Star*, which has ties with the Liberal party and yet proclaims support to the Duterte administration, both presented the threat coming from the rogue police and from drug abuse. Meanwhile, the *Manila Bulletin*, which is said to be a pro-administration, emphasizes more the dangers of drug abuse and criminality and the success of the government in battling against these threats.

Another example which shows the relation between the frame used and the political stance of the newspapers is the usage of morality frame by the Philippine Daily Inquirer. The newspaper used this frame

more than the other two newspapers. With this frame, the Philippine Daily Inquirer has emphasized the moral standards uphold in the society and the practice of Christian faith by the people. Particularly, articles which use this frame emphasize the need for compassion and forgiveness of people who have sinned. By doing this, it seems that the newspaper is expressing the cruelty of the president due to the alleged high number of drug suspects being killed. This makes the public question whether the government is really practicing ethical and moral enforcement of the law. The decrease of trust in the government could seriously undermine the authority of president Duterte.

The use of these frames in presenting the anti-drug campaign seems to reflect the relationship among the media, the government, and the public. The frequently used frames suggest that the news media acts as an agent of the government and its law enforcers. Generally, the news regarding the anti-drug campaign is presented from the perspective of the police as they are the main source of the reports. They are supplemented by statements and speeches of higher officials who are advocating the war on drugs to the public. In the same way, the media also conveys the sentiments and opinions of the government officials who are opposed to the war on drugs. On the other hand, the less frequently used frames (human interest frame, morality frame, etc) which also act as supports to the dominant frames suggest that the media also plays an active role on being the 'watchdog' of the society. Through these frames, interest groups and the public are given the opportunity to express their views and opinions to the government. Through these dynamics, it is suggested that those which are more often highlighted in the news will become more influential and powerful than those that are not in the limelight (Entman, 2007).

Both an agent of the government and the public, the news media have the power to influence the society itself as they can manufacture consent or silence the minority. It could also be said that they are indispensable to communications as they are one of the most accessible sources of information and ideas in the society. However, the extent of media success in redefining perceptions and opinions are bounded by different factors. These include prejudices and biases of individuals, state mechanism, or the news organization itself. For instance, the

Philippine broadsheets are owned by private and wealthy businessmen. Consequently, they must consider not to openly criticized and disagree with certain individuals or groups regarding the anti-drug campaign. Otherwise, there will be repercussions from the government and the market (the public). Moreover, the opinions and perceptions of certain people do not dramatically change just because of the way the news is presented. For example, the people of Davao, the hometown of the president, still has great trust on the president despite some negativity shown in some news. Thus, it can be said that processing of news media is not always hierarchical but rather it is a continuous cycle of influencing and being influenced.

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