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The American University in Cairo  
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

**Objectivity in the Shadows of Political Turmoil:**

*A Comparative Content Analysis of News Framing in Post-Revolution Egypt's Press*

A Thesis Submitted to  
The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Arts

by Sara Farag Elkamel

under the supervision of Dr. Mohamad Elmasry

May 2013

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## ABSTRACT

This research study investigates the news frames that emerge in newspaper coverage of current affairs in the diverse post-revolution Egyptian mediascape. The study samples Al Ahram, Al Wafd, the Freedom and Justice Party paper, Al Masry Al Youm, and Al Shorouk, five major dailies that represent the three categories of ownership prevalent in Egyptian media – government owned, partisan, and independent (or privately owned) papers.

Using quantitative content analysis methodology with framing theory as a backdrop, this comparative research study aims to identify the dominant frames used across different outlets in the local press landscape to represent different political actors and issues in Egypt's post-revolutionary political scene. The sampling period is the first nine months of the term of Egypt's first-ever democratically elected president, Mohamed Morsi. The total sample yielded 290 articles.

The results show that the five newspapers employed frames that mirrored their respective affiliations and ownership. Government-run Al Ahram and the Freedom and Justice Party paper employed frames that favored the ruling regime, Al Wafd took a decidedly anti-President Morsi tone, and independent papers Al Shorouk and Al Masry Al Youm exhibited more balanced coverage. The study's findings provide a valuable post-revolution baseline for Egyptian journalism that can be used to monitor the progression of news performance as the country's transition to democracy unfolds.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In January 2011, activists and citizens sparked an 18-day long series of protests and sit-ins in downtown Cairo's Tahrir Square and across the country, ultimately succeeding in toppling former President Hosni Mubarak, who was about to embark on his thirtieth year as president of Egypt. A forced hand-over to the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF), headed by General Hussein Tantawy, led the country into a tumultuous 16-month period. During SCAF's time in power, a number of human rights violations, including virginity tests, military trials for civilians, as well as a series of bloody clashes in downtown Cairo (Amnesty International, 2012) meant that citizens were eager for a swift hand-over of power, and by proxy, a transition to democracy.

In the first parliamentary elections to be held post-revolution, which took place during November and December 2011, Islamist parties gained a majority in parliament, and the 2012 presidential elections brought to power long-time Muslim Brotherhood figure Mohamed Morsi. A nationwide referendum took place in December, and ratified Egypt's new constitution, which was drafted in the shadows of controversy over the composition of the constitutional assembly, which featured an Islamist majority.

The first 18-days of Egypt's 2011 uprising against the Hosni Mubarak regime pushed to the surface the vast disparities between the official rhetoric of Egypt's state-owned and controlled media, on the one hand, and the more critical discourses found in privately owned press and new media platforms, on the other hand (Khamis, 2011). The two-plus years that have followed the revolt that ousted former President Mubarak have witnessed previously unparalleled levels of political polarization in Egypt — with Egyptians of varying political and ideological orientations jockeying for power and



attempting to put their respective stamps on Egypt's sociopolitical future. This polarization has played out most visibly in Egypt's dynamic media environment.

The Egyptian transition to democracy has not merely been political; it has also been a communication revolution. The initial phase of media transformation predates the 2011 turmoil. Early on in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Mubarak regime's stronghold on media was weakened by the emergence of independent newspapers and a host of privately owned satellite television outlets (Sakr, 2010). Moreover, social media platforms also contributed in paving the way for dissident voices to play out in various alternative spaces of expression.

Today's new media landscape is vibrant, yet in a state of disarray; the result is a "contradictory arena; of private and state ownership, repression and resistance, and official and popular voices, characteristic for its near-chaotic mix of competing themes," (Hamdy & Gomaa, 2012, p. 196).

Despite a shift in the communication dynamics in the Arab region and Egypt, in line with significant political changes, with more citizens turning towards the Internet for news, print readership is still significant. Newspaper circulation in Egypt accounts for 43 percent of the Arab region's total circulation, and local circulation is continuing to grow (Dubai Press Club, 2012).

#### *Statement of the Problem*

A free press is a key element of democracy. As Egypt's transition towards democracy unfolds, it is important to monitor the state of the press, which is one of the indicators of the condition of the country's model of public policy. Furthermore, the degree to which objectivity, professionalism and freedom exist in the media could be

reflective of the wider political context.

Moreover, examining contemporary news content is critical to an understanding of the links between media, society and local politics during Egypt's "democratic" transition. In this spirit, the current study examines news framing across different media outlets, including governmental, opposition, and independent newspapers, through quantitative content analysis. Further, this study seeks to uncover the palpable differences and overriding similarities between diverse news organizations by paying attention to the various framing devices employed by contemporary Egyptian newspapers.

It is important to know, for example, the extent to which newspapers in Egypt are working to produce consistent or competing frames, and to what extent objectivity, balance, and neutrality are relevant in such a politically tumultuous time.

The study will shed light on larger questions of the role of journalism in democratization, journalism in transition, and the effectiveness of the media as a tool for democratic socialization in the midst of political pressure.

A focus on Egyptian newspaper content in 2012 and 2013, in the immediate aftermath of the January 25 revolution of 2011 is important for a number of reasons. The study of post-revolution news will shed light on the dynamics of press under Egypt's first democratically elected president, who also happens to be an Islamist leader, which will in turn yield useful comparisons with the content of the printed press in the Mubarak-era, as well as to his predecessors Anwar Sadat and Gamal Abdel Nasser, who each adopted a different attitude towards the press. Moreover, as Islamists take control over a number of Arab Spring countries, this content study can provide a useful model of the repercussions of political Islam over media structures and freedoms.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. The Evolution of Egypt's Print Media

Newspapers have been published in Egypt since the eighteenth century; the first paper to appear was under Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798. The earliest newspapers were government propaganda tools – under the French, and then the Ottomans. Private papers emerged in the 1860s and 1870s, during what was an era of cultural and intellectual renaissance and a turning point for the Egyptian press (Amin & Napoli; Rugh, 2004). In the years following 1882, the start of British colonial rule, party press appeared (Rugh, 2004).

The British were more willing to tolerate party press than the parties themselves, and therefore papers grew more rapidly than political parties. Even though the constitution of 1923 provided for press freedom, the government was guaranteed the right to confiscate a newspaper in the "interest of the social system, " (Amin & Napoli, 1997). Under King Farouk, despite not threatening the political system, newspapers criticized policies of the government, exposed corruption, and showcased diversity in interests and approaches, and the press enjoyed significant diversity, with 18 functioning dailies in Cairo and 14 in Alexandria (Amin & Napoli, 1997; McFadden, 1954; Rugh, 2004).

From the 1950s onwards, when many Arab countries gained independence following years of British and French colonial power, the regional press system still suffered from a clear deficiency in media freedom (Amin, 2002).

The revolution of 1952, which overtook the monarchy and replaced it with military officers, brought an end to the development of media freedom. When Gamal

Abdel Nasser was appointed Prime Minister in 1954, he attempted to lift censorship, but reinstated it merely a month later when he was met with harsh criticism from the press (Dabbous, 1993).

Nasser was president for 17 years, during which he used strict legal measures to control print media, such as revoking press licenses, imprisoning journalists, and silencing opposing voices. Former President Nasser nationalized the press in 1960, re-imposing strict press censorship and granting ownership of previously private press to the National Union (Amin, 2002). Law Number 156 gave the National Union the right to appoint boards of directors for the newspapers it owned, in turn guaranteeing compliant editorial policies (Rugh, 2004). In effect, Nasser managed to alienate independent voices in Egypt's press, transforming the media into an instrument of propaganda and national mobilization (Amin & Napoli, 1997).

Former President Nasser passed way in 1970, leaving the presidency to Anwar Sadat, who had an ambivalent attitude towards freedom of expression and the press. Sadat's government was initially tolerant of political debate, and in 1973, censorship was lifted. Yet, in the same year, the Arab Socialist Union revoked over one hundred journalist licenses. These were returned six months later, and journalists resumed writing, this time with a realization that the threat of losing their jobs was ever-present (Rugh, 2004).

Between 1974 and 1975, journalists were able to write about widespread frustrations with the lack of political pluralism, Nasserism, and student body disappointments, while a trend of investigative journalism emerged. Then in 1975, Sadat established the Supreme Press Council to own 49 percent of the press, and granted it the

power and responsibility to issue publishing licenses, and to codify ethical guidelines for the press. In 1976, political parties were given the right to own papers. In 1980, Law Number 148 granted the upper house of parliament (the Shura Council) ownership of Egypt's five chief publication houses, who also appointed the chairman and more than half of the board members (Rugh, 2004).

In 1981, Sadat abandoned his efforts for press freedom and reinstated government control of the print media. The strict measures taken against media were part of a broader crackdown on opposition. University professors and many critics were jailed. In the same year, Sadat was assassinated, leaving the country in the hands of Hosni Mubarak.

While Anwar Sadat's attitude towards the press was more lenient than Gamal Abdel Nasser's, and censorship was not as blatant as under his predecessor, he retained firm control over media. During the reign of Mubarak, restrictions on the press were lifted, and steps towards press freedom were taken (Amin, 2002).

## **2. Mubarak and the Media**

During former President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak's era — which lasted from 1981 to 2011 — private satellite television stations emerged, newspaper-publishing licenses were granted to independent businesspeople, and Internet communications began to take root (Khamis, 2011). Near the end of former President Mubarak's era, social networking platforms emerged, asserting, "the once monolithic media scene of the past became pluralistic," (Hamdy & Gomaa, 2012, p.195).

Under President Mubarak, the Supreme Press Council, established in 1975 under Sadat, and the Shura Council, established in 1980, owned the national press. Legal

political parties were granted the right to issue newspapers through which they could promote their views and agendas and even oppose the government. State control over print media endured, however. To intimidate and reprimand journalists, the Mubarak regime resorted to the Emergency Law, licensing laws, and the Penal Code, which decreed that journalists could be jailed or fined if they insult Egypt's president, the president of another country, government officials, the armed forces, or the parliament (Rugh, 2004).

Yet former President Mubarak made attempts to liberalize the press. He released journalists jailed by former President Sadat, and allowed opposition parties to publish papers. In 1983, the International Press Institute declared Egypt's press the freest it had been since the 1952 revolution (Rugh, 2004).

Still, the structure and the overall dynamics of Egypt's media system in the Mubarak era hindered media development, despite technological change that brought about a wide range of opportunities for the press landscape. The government's domination over media was made apparent during incidents of harassment and physical assault on journalists, censorship and political pressure, among other measures taken to frighten and control the local mediascape (Amin 2002).

Most significantly, the government exercised power over the press through restrictive laws and a lack of legal protection for journalists and media practitioners. The Antiterrorist Law Number 97 was passed in 1992, empowering the government to reprimand publications that disrupt "social peace". And in 1995, Press Law Number 96, which was met with uproar from the press community, put further restrictions on the press. Prominent journalists such as Ibrahim Nafie, previously chief editor of Al Ahram

Newspaper, negotiated with the government until it passed the new, more liberal Press Law Number 96 in 1996 (Rugh, 2004).

Despite the constitution and penal code stipulating that the media is free, an ambiguous provision, namely "maintaining public order" blurred the limits of freedom of expression. Furthermore, various restrictive laws, including the 1996 Press Law, the 1971 Law on the Protection of the Nation and Citizens, the 1977 Law on Security of National Unity, Publications Laws, Parties Laws, and the Emergency Law all enabled the government to censor the media in former President Mubarak's era (Freedom House, 2012).

Today's dynamic fabric of media started emerging in the decade prior to the revolution. In pre 2011 revolution Egypt, as is the case today, ownership of newspapers had been distributed among the government (which either has complete ownership or controlling interests), legalized political parties, and the private sector. Official press had been more widely circulated and left a clearer impact on public opinion; but a decade ago these dynamics were altered. Egypt's hybrid press environment in the President Mubarak era was reflective of the complex relationships between governments and the print media in the Arab world (Iskandar, 2007).

In a study that analyzed Egyptian newspaper production during the Hosni Mubarak era, particularly focusing on government-owned paper Al Ahram, independent newspaper Al Masry Al Youm, and the opposition party-owned Al Wafd, Elmasry (2011) established that journalists at the three newspapers faced a range of professional obstacles, including a difficulty in information gathering, and experienced legal and cultural hindrances while reporting.

While independent dailies such as *Al Masry Al Youm* and private weeklies such as *Al Dustour* and *Al Fagr* were blatantly critical of Mubarak's regime and the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP), the state also reserved the right to exercise force in coercing such critical papers at certain occasions (Iskandar, 2007).

A number of taboo topics, including the president, security apparatuses and dominant cultural values were not tackled by journalists. News content was filtered and screened to guarantee it conformed to political, legal and cultural standards put in place by the state (Elmasry, 2011).

Nonetheless, it was a lively media that carried undertones of tight controls in the years leading up to the Egyptian revolution. Government-controlled media was rivaled by party affiliated papers, as well as independent media including privately owned print and broadcast outlets. But a larger margin for freedom was not paralleled with structural reform in regulating the press or broadcast; it was a façade of freedom while taboo topics remained untouched (Sakr, 2010).

The habitual censorship and preemptive self-censorship that pervaded Arab news media was reflective of the political culture of the region, where a single political party typically monopolized power. Stifling free expression in Egypt and the region had often been justified by "the preservation of the state," (Amin, 2002, p.4).

Historically, in the Arab world, broadcast journalism (television and radio) has been more tightly controlled and censored than printed journalism, largely due to its powerful (and therefore dangerous) ability to bypass illiteracy (Amin, 2002). In fact, broadcast media have been utilized by Arab regimes as tools to advance their political agendas and religious, economic and cultural programs (Kamalipour & Mowlana, 1994).



The development of Arab print media has been shaped by various forces including; close affiliation with politics and political actors, a weak economic foundation, societal values and cultural norms, the emergence of political Islam, among others (Amin, 2002).

Perhaps among the most crucial forces facing Arab media towards the end of the twentieth century was globalization, which added transnational options to the Arab audiences' consumption repertoires (Amin, 2000). Carried by transnational media, global pressure flowed into the region, challenging press communities to adopt foreign concepts ranging from freedom of expression, to freedom of speech and freedom of the press (Amin, 2002).

A combination of phenomena, including the rise of bold programming on private satellite stations, particularly Al Jazeera, and a rise in the number and influence of independent and partisan papers, have challenged the stronghold of Arab regimes over their media environments (Iskandar, 2007).

Iskandar (2007) contends that in the twenty first century, the margins of public discourse expanded in many parts of the Arab world, in line with "a growing chorus of unfettered and unadulterated news content which thrives on providing critiques to the political structure, and whose immunity to state intervention is increasingly tangible," (p.13).

The transformation of Egypt's media sector in particular was signaled by a combination of changes, including the emergence of media rights advocacy groups, the amendment of press laws in 2006 to remove obstacles, and the rise of strong independent press (Hamdy, 2008).

While state television was tightly controlled by the government, a more diverse three-tier press system composed of government; party, and independent papers existed (Iskandar, 2007).

And in this shift towards a more pluralistic media scene, opposition newspapers raided the Egyptian press scene, challenging the semi-official hardliners; Al Ahram, Al Akhbar and Al Gomhoria (Khamis, 2011).

The year 2004 witnessed a number of changes that amassed to a shift towards dialogue and activism in both the political and media scene. The establishment of independent newspaper Al Masry Al Youm provided alternative news coverage, while the founding of the activist Kefaya movement and opposition leader Ayman Nour's Al Ghad party signified increased organization for the opposition.

Simultaneously, blogs gained momentum, shedding lights on protests and tackling controversial topics such as police brutality, in effect challenging the government's monopoly over information (Iskandar, 2011). The emergence of the Internet in 1993, and Web 2.0 technologies exactly a decade later meant that the opposition was not alone in expressing its views; the public now had access to an online public sphere through which it could articulate ideas and criticize socio-political, economic, cultural, or religious problems (Khamis, 2011).

Nevertheless, the Egyptian and Arab media landscapes had been stuck in an unlikely paradox in the years leading up to the so-called Arab Spring; there was a notable gulf between a vibrant, flourishing media scene brimming with dissident voices and a stagnant political arena devoid of real opposition, substantial citizen participation or reform (Khamis & Vaughn, 2011).

Notable in that period of media transformation was a non-corresponding state of stagnation in political freedom; extending the margins of press freedom was by no means an indication of similar political participation and diversity. According to Khamis (2011), "the accelerating rate of press freedom, despite its many handicaps, restrictions, and imperfections, was not equally matched by actual political reform or real democratic practice," (p.1162).

The media served as a therapy chair of sorts, allowing citizens to unleash their frustrations with the varied assortment of economic, political and social injustices, while the political dynamics allowed for no substantial remedy to their troubles. New media acted as a pseudo arena for political deliberation that had no bearing on the impermeable political landscape.

"The underlying assumption was that, if the public were offered some avenues through which to vent anger and frustration, more drastic actions, such as protesting or revolting, could be avoided or at least delayed," (Khamis, 2011, p.1162).

### **3. Media and the January 25 Revolution**

In January 2011, the energy of dissent that had been largely locked up in the media for close to a decade materialized offline. The frustration of Egyptian citizens – primarily with dictatorship, corruption, police brutality, social injustice, poverty, and stifled freedoms – led people to the streets.

Political activism and cyberactivism joined forces, enabling public frustration with the ruling regime to materialize into concrete steps towards change. At this point, new media ceased to function as dormant "safety valves," and instead facilitated

mobilization (Khamis, 2011). Further, the revolution accentuated the diverse functions of alternative media; spreading awareness, mobilizing support for a political cause, enabling civic engagement, and advancing citizen journalism.

A moment of socio-political climax, the January 25 revolution was a reflection of the turbulent political landscape in Mubarak era Egypt, and the media that covered and perhaps helped shape that moment, was in itself a reflection of that tense, fragmented political scene.

In the coverage of the initial 18-days of the uprising, the disparities between the official rhetoric present in state-run media versus the more critical and oppositional alternative media outlets such as privately owned press and satellite channels as well as new media platforms, were glaringly apparent (Khamis, 2011).

Therefore, to bypass the governmental hold on media and information, an increasingly wired society, with Internet penetration soaring from 12.6 percent in 2006 to 35.7 percent in 2011, sought a parallel communication system online (Freedom House, 2012).

The Internet can be credited for much of the organization and mobilization during, and in the years leading up to, the January 25 revolution, as social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter played the crucial role of an inclusive space that disseminated a culture of democracy to Egypt's youth, preparing them for participation in the tipping point come January 2011 (Abdulla, 2011).

A democratic model, the Internet throbbed with dissident voices that capitalized on the open medium that allowed every user an equal opportunity to publish information and debate crucial topics while safe from government censorship (Abdulla, 2011).

"Political movements and the tools of a more accessible and open media made dissent more obvious by opening up channels for its expression," (Iskandar, 2011, p. 1229).

Political blogging enabled activists to express their views online, with many blogging under pseudonyms for fear of retaliation by state security. According to Abdulla (2011), the Egyptian blogosphere developed into "a venting space" for the "voiceless," while a few blockbuster blogs such as Manal and Alaa's Bit Bucket, and Wael Abbas's blog gained popularity and worldwide recognition.

According to David Wolman (2008), social networking was in the process of altering the "dynamics of political dissent. "

Duffy (2012) says, "In pre-revolution Egypt, blogs run by amateurs performed roles usually associated with traditional media, " (p.9). For example; a cell-phone shot video depicting a vicious police attack on an Egyptian citizen was released on a local blog in 2005, resulting in the unprecedented arrest of two officers.

Abdulla (2011) suggests that the structure of social media platforms with the vibrant user-generated discussions they hosted, gave Egyptians an education in democracy. Further, the absence of censorship or containment by the authorities online and a freedom of association and expression catalyzed an understanding of pluralistic debate. The framework of social media showed Egyptian Internet users that they each have individual spaces within which they may express their views and opinions. Egyptian youth also learnt the model of horizontal, democratic communication rather than the top-down communication they had been accustomed to.

Social networks first displayed their potential ability to bring people together in April 2008, during the "April 6 Strike" which started with a Facebook group created by

activist Esraa Abdel Fattah in support of workers in the city of Al-Mahalla Al-Kobra. The outcome probed reflection over the value of the online medium as a tool to trigger collective action. The prominent "We Are All Khaled Said" Facebook page, which organized protests across the country to commemorate the young Egyptian who was beaten and killed by police in his hometown Alexandria in June, 2010 gained staggering popularity, and eventually created the Facebook event for the January 25 revolution to coincide with Police Day (Abdulla, 2011).

Similar to the emergence of political parties centered around newspapers in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, alternative media platforms with political agendas were drawing Internet users to their cause. Online mobilization challenged government hegemony over media. Because of its displayed capacity to cover events in an alternative narrative from government-loyal mainstream media, the vibrancy and diversity of independent news media and citizen journalism has been boosted by the revolution; more Egyptians are joining Facebook and more are tuning to alternative voices for news.

#### **4. Timeline: The January 25 Revolution and Two Years of Political Turmoil**

The following timeline presents the political changes and key events that unfolded starting 25 January, 2011 to 25 December, 2012 (Maher, Eskandar & Ali, 2013)

**25 January 2011:** Activists and citizens start an 18-day long series of protests and sit-ins in Tahrir Square and across the country, chanting for the departure of Mubarak and his regime, political reforms, social justice, bread, and freedom.

**11 February 2011:** Late Intelligence Chief Omar Suleiman announces that Hosni Mubarak, who was about to embark on his thirtieth year as president of Egypt, is stepping down and handing-over power to the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF), headed by General Hussein Tantawy.

**9 March 2011:** A sit-in in Tahrir Square is violently dispersed by the army. Activists are beaten, and virginity checks are performed on 19 female protestors.

**19 March 2011:** The Supreme Council of Armed Forces forms a constitutional committee that proposes nine constitutional amendments, which were passed in a national referendum with 77 percent support.

**30 March 2011:** The SCAF issues a Provisional Constitutional Declaration. This 63-Article document serves as an interim constitution until December 2013.

**9 October 2011:** A military crackdown on a protest against the burning of a Christian community center soon turns into a chaotic bloodbath, reportedly killing 27 people.

**18-25 November 2011:** After an Islamist dominated mass protest demanding a swift handover of power, the army attacks a small group of protestors with tear gas. Violence escalates on Mohamed Mahmoud Street, which branches out from Tahrir Square, leading to the death of more than 40 protestors. Prime Minister Essam Sharaf's cabinet submits its resignation. Field Marshal Tantawi pledges that SCAF would hand over power to an elected president by June 2012.

**16 December 2011:** A sit-in at the Cabinet headquarters in Al-Qasr Al-Aini Street in Downtown Cairo is attacked by the army, leaving 17 people dead.

**23 January 2012:** Egypt's Islamist-led People's Assembly (lower house of Egypt's bicameral parliament) holds inaugural session.

**1 February 2012:** Clashes in Port Said Stadium during a football match between Al Masry (Port Said based football team) and Al Ahly result in the deaths of 70 Ultras Ahlawy (hardcore Al Ahly fans).

**23-24 May 2012:** First post-revolution presidential elections held. Candidates include ex-Muslim Brotherhood figure Abdel-Moneim Abul-Fotouh, the Muslim Brotherhood's Mohammed Morsi, Mubarak-era politician Ahmed Shafiq, leftist candidate Hamdeen Sabbahi, liberal Khaled Ali, and prominent politician and former Arab League secretary-general, Amr Moussa, among others.

**14 June 2012:** The People's Assembly is suspended; the Supreme Constitutional Court rules that the 2012 parliamentary elections were unconstitutional.

**24 June 2012:** In the run-off between Ahmed Shafiq and Mohamed Morsi, which took place on 16 and 17 June, Morsi is victorious and is named Egypt's first civilian president by the Supreme Electoral Commission.

**8 July 2012:** President Morsi issues a presidential decree calling for the reinstatement of the dissolved parliament. This decree is frozen by the Supreme Constitutional Court two days later.

**5 August 2012:** In the first of a series of assaults by militants in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, 16 Egyptian border guards are killed.

**12 August 2012:** President Morsi announces reshuffle of security positions, including general intelligence chief and head of the Cairo Security Directorate, leading to



the resignation of key SCAF figures Field Marshal Tantawi and Chief-of-Staff Sami Anan.

**12 October 2012:** Revolutionaries stage "Accountability Friday" protest, marking President Morsi's first 100 days in office, expressing frustration with his failure to fulfill revolution's demands. Protesters clash with Muslim Brotherhood supporters.

**19 November 2012:** When thousands march to Mohamed Mahmoud Street to commemorate the lives lost in 2011's clashes, protestors clash with police forces. Two activists are killed.

**22 November 2012:** A presidential decree is issued by President Morsi, rendering his decisions immune to judicial review. Mass protests are organized in the following week, Muslim Brotherhood offices are torched in many governorates. The judiciary is angered by decree, deems it a breach of judicial autonomy, a group of judges organize strike.

**5 December 2012:** When hundreds of thousands of protestors march on the Presidential Palace in Cairo to demand the postponement of the constitutional referendum, which President Morsi had slated for 15 December, clashes erupt between pro-Morsi and anti-Morsi protestors, resulting in seven deaths.

**8 December 2012:** The controversial decree that granted President Morsi sweeping powers is revoked, yet the president announces that the referendum will take place as scheduled.

**25 December 2012:** Nationwide referendum ratifies Egypt's new constitution.

## 5. The Post-Revolution Media Landscape

President Mohamed Morsi's rule has, to date, been plagued by inconsistencies. President Morsi eliminated prison sentences for journalists, and most of the independent press has been left to attack the presidency, the government and Muslim Brotherhood, often with reporting that lacks balance and professionalism. On the other hand, charges have been brought against several journalists for insulting the president and religion, and anti-government newspaper editors have been sacked or censored.

According to the Freedom House Internet Freedom report of 2012, the press freedom status of Egypt is "partly free", with instances of blockage of Web 2.0 applications, arrests of bloggers and ICT users, despite a lack of notable political censorship.

Press freedom organizations have condemned the 2012 constitution for its restrictions on free expression, claiming that it imposes restrictions on press freedom in the following forms; the development of a government-affiliated regulator, the establishment of a National Media Council with the power to regulate the media, and the endurance of criminal prosecution of journalists (CPJ, 2012).

Moreover, Article 215 replaces Egypt's Higher Council for Journalism, an elected body, with the National Media Council, responsible for setting "controls and regulations that ensure the media's commitment to adhering to professional and ethical standards" and "to observe the values and constructive traditions of society," (CPJ, 2012). Press freedom organizations including the Committee to Protect Journalists believe such a provision would allow for the control of news coverage and media content.

The court is also given the power to shut down a media outlet if one of the

employees is found by a judicial review to have disrespected the "sanctity of private lives of citizens and the requirements of national security," (CPJ, 2012).

In accordance with Article 216, the National Press and Media Association will manage state-owned media. Also, the new constitution contains a blasphemy clause in Article 44, which prohibits insulting the prophets. Further, some argue that situational judicial and governmental control over the press is enshrined in the new constitution, as evident in Article 48, which states that monitoring the press is prohibited except in times of war and national mobilization (Messieh, 2012). Lax terms such as "national mobilization" could potentially unnerve the media community in Egypt and bring back less than pleasant memories, as such lax wording has been notoriously used to stifle the press in the Mubarak era.

One positive alteration to the constitution however is that publishers are not obliged to obtain a publishing permit from the National Media Council, a notification of publication would suffice (CPJ, 2012). Thus, in effect, any Egyptian citizen is free to own and publish a newspaper, a key difference from the Mubarak era.

Another ostensibly positive press-related difference between Egypt's old, 1971 constitution and the newly ratified constitution concerns the rules surrounding states of emergency. During the Mubarak era, and as stipulated in the 1971 constitution, the emergency law provided the government with authority to censor press content and jail journalists during states of emergency. Moreover, the old constitution gave the president sole authority over declarations of emergency, and states of emergency could be renewed for an indefinite number of terms. These government-friendly features allowed the Mubarak regime to keep the emergency law on the books for nearly three consecutive

decades. In the new constitution, the president must receive majority support from both houses of parliament in order for a state of emergency to take effect. Moreover, states of emergency are limited to six-month terms, and can be renewed only once with a public referendum.

Local independent and partisan papers declared a one-day strike dubbed "No To Dictatorship" on 4 December, 2012, to showcase their discontent with articles in the constitutional draft which they believed would hinder press freedom, and to protest a controversial constitutional declaration announced by President Morsi in November, which granted him temporary sweeping powers. The press syndicate, which withdrew from the constituent assembly for being dismissive of their recommendations, also joined the strike and condemned the draft.

If a society's media is typically reflective of its political dynamics and public policy orientation, then the traces of the tyrannical attitudes towards the press by oppressive Mubarak regime, which was overhauled by a movement calling for freedom, should begin to fade after the instatement of a post-revolution democracy led by a democratically elected president.

Nevertheless, President Morsi's attitude towards the press since the start of his four-year term in office has been ambivalent. Despite making public claims of the sanctioned right of journalists to free expression, he has displayed strict measures against media personnel that are reminiscent of the previous dictatorial regime (Fahim & El Sheikh, 2013) including confiscating newspapers, detaining journalists, and appointing sympathetic figures in state media organs.

The latest in a series of crackdowns on journalists has been the decision by

prosecutor general Talaat Ibrahim Abdullah (who was appointed by presidential decree in November, to popular and political uproar) to order the arrest of Bassem Youssef, popular host of El-Bernameg, or "The Program, " a political satire show that airs on Capital Broadcasting Center (CBC), a privately owned satellite channel which emerged after the January 25 revolution. Dubbed the "Egyptian Jon Stewart," Youssef has modeled his weekly political satire show on "The Daily Show." Youssef's program, which has been the subject of up to 28 legal complaints, features scathing criticism of President Morsi and his government, Islamist figures, and the opposition.

Youssef has not been alone in criticizing President Morsi's government and leadership. Privately owned media have displayed no dearth of strident criticism in the nine months since the first democratically elected president took office. Despite initial comforting assurances of press freedom by President Morsi, including a statement that "no one will touch media freedoms. There will be no pens broken, no opinions prevented, no channels or newspapers shut down in my era," (Fawzy, 2012) attacks on the press have been frequent.

In August, Islam Afifi, chief editor of independent local newspaper Al Dostour was reprimanded on charges of "insulting the president" after an editorial, which had contemptuously warned readers that the nation would witness bloodshed and conflict if the Muslim Brotherhood stayed in power, appeared on its front page. Former Al Dostour editor-in-chief Ibrahim Eissa was imprisoned for the same charge under President Mubarak. During the same month, Al Faraeen satellite channel, which featured a program by the anti-Brotherhood Tawfiq Okasha, who had been sentenced to four months in jail for defaming President Morsi, was taken off the air. In a now famous episode, Okasha

deemed Morsi's blood "permissible" and said that was prepared to unleash his "beasts" on the president.

The summer during which President Morsi took office also witnessed the replacement of editor-in-chiefs of the fifty state-run media outlets (including the widely circulated newspapers Al Ahram, Al Akhbar and Al Gomhoreya) with Muslim Brotherhood loyalists by the Islamist-dominated upper house of parliament, the Shura Council (Fawzy, 2012), following in the legacy of government-domination of state media that has endured since the Nasser era.

In November, 22-year old satellite network "Dream TV" was taken off the air for a week. Famed presenter Amr Adeeb, who is always vocally critical of the Brotherhood, went into forced hiatus after he called President Morsi and the Brotherhood "failures" on an episode of his show. Mahmoud Saad, another popular talk-show host, was also questioned for "insulting the president."

The Media Production City has also been attacked and enclosed by Islamist protestors and Salafist preacher Hazem Abu Ismail aficionados dubbed "Hazemoum," united in their view that the media must be "cleansed."

Independent newspapers such as Al Masry Al-Youm and Al Watan have reported receiving threats from Islamist supporters (Fawzy, 2012).

In a statement released Monday 26 March, the Press Syndicate said that there was a campaign to intimidate and threaten the media, and condemned the harassment and persecution of journalists under legislation enduring from the pre-revolution era.

In late March, prominent blogger Alaa Abdel Fattah was questioned for "inciting aggression" against members of the Muslim Brotherhood, and Al Ahram reported that

three of the most popular talk shows, Lamis El Hadeedy, Amr Adeeb and Youssef El Hussein would be investigated for "violating journalist's ethics in order to incite sedition and chaos and threatening national peace" (CPJ, 2013).

Despite escalating violence against journalists and a mounting number of legal procedures attacking reporters, the opposition media in Egypt is perhaps more strident and critical than ever (International Media Support, 2012).

### III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 1. Framing Theory

With roots in psychology and sociology (Pan & Kosicki, 1993), framing is built on the concept of simplifying the social world and presenting complex issues effectively (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Framing is a mass communication theory concerned with the representation, or packaging, of messages. Research into framing points to the ways in which specific presentation devices can alter perceptions of communicated messages. Gamson and Modigliani (1987) defined a frame as "a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning" (p. 143).

Entman's (1993) classic summary of the framing phenomenon drew attention to two key concepts; selection and salience. Entman posits: "to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation," (p. 52).

Framing theory assumes, then, that choices communicators make during the communication process can significantly impact interpretations. Media framing may be a superior, broader paradigm to the "objectivity and bias" prism used to investigate if news coverage towards political actors or institutions is positive, neutral, or negative (Tankard, 2001).

Framing may surface to define specific topics or events in issue-specific frames, or alternatively, define broader topics in what may be labeled generic frames (De Vreese,



2005). Other scholars have identified categories of frames as episodic or thematic (Iyengar, 1991).

According to Entman, frames appear in four sites across the communication process: the communicator's belief system, the text, the reader's perceptions, and the larger culture, which contains pervasive and deeply ingrained social discourses (Entman, 1993).

Frames are driven by a host of textual and communicative devices. Inclusion and exclusion of facts, sourcing, keywords, and visual imagery are all key to the framing process (Entman, 1993). Tankard (2001) argues that a host of measures, namely; "headlines, subheads, photos, photo captions, leads, source selection, quotes selection, pull quotes, logos, statistics and charts, and concluding statements and paragraphs" (p. 101) – are key to the framing process.

Framing also involves elevating the importance of certain facets of a reality through repetition, placement, and association with culturally mainstream icons, which can have the effect of boosting recall (Entman, 1993).

Pan and Kosicki (1993) argued that every news story is structured in a certain way, around a certain theme. Themes act as "tools for newsmakers to use in composing or constructing news discourse as well as psychological stimuli for audiences to process," (p.59).

This theme, or central idea, embraces various semantic aspects of the news story, including quotes, background information and descriptions of events or individuals, to provide an overall meaning (Pan & Kosicki, 1993).

Pan and Kosicki (1993) have classified framing devices into four categories: syntactical structure, script structure, thematic structure, and rhetorical structure. Syntactical structure refers to sourcing, and the inverted pyramid arrangement of structural elements. The power of these structural elements correlates with their salience as framing devices; for instance, the headline is the most salient framing cue in a news story, followed by the lead, which together suggest a certain perspective for viewing the news piece.

A story's script structure is composed of the well-known five Ws (who, what, when, where, why) and the H (how). The story is further structured as having a beginning, middle (climax) and an end, complete with characters and action. "To this extent, a reporter writing a news story is not that much different from a storyteller or a novelist writing a fictional story," (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 60).

The news has a particular hypothesis-testing function, which may be described as the thematic structure of news discourse, where examples, quotes and background information presented in the news story function as empirical support for that hypothesis. Causal statements and suggestions are often put forward by the news stories (Pan and Kosicki, 1993). Thematic structure appears in the form of the summary (headline, lead, or conclusion) and the main body.

Pan and Kosicki (1993) put forward that rhetorical devices are employed by newsmakers to "invoke images, increase salience of a point, and increase vividness of a report," (p.62). Such devices include the framing devices identified by Gamson and Modigliani (1989), namely; metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions, and visual images.

Compelling frames are able to associate a specific political strategy for instance

with a universally supported value or goal, (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Framing devices such as labeling are employed by journalists to interpret the meanings of events and categorize them. In doing so, they are guided by their ideologies, journalistic professional considerations, news routines, and organizational processes and constraints (Pan & Kosicki, 1993).

## **2. Frame Building**

The structural qualities of news frames are influenced by the process of frame-building, which, occurring in the context of internal and external factors, produces frames that manifest themselves in the communication message (De Vreese, 2005).

Moreover, frame building entails interplay between journalistic norms, cultural contexts, and political actors. Professional, bureaucratic and ideological constraints influence the framing of a news item; private press and broadcast are constantly under the direct or indirect pressure of the owners, who are driven by economic interests or political affiliations, while public media institutions often reflect the interests of the politicians who appoint the editor in chief (Liebes, 2000).

Luther and Miller (2005) concluded that news media use legitimizing or delegitimizing language to influence and manipulate the order of topics on the public agenda.

"A story may be chosen for its intuitive newsworthiness, but it is likely that the reporter or editor has a frame in mind. It may be that the same story evokes several frames, even competing ones," (Luther & Miller, 2005, p.296).

The framing process involves the interplay between frame building by the

communicator and audience prior knowledge and predispositions, to achieve frame setting (De Vreese, 2005). The impact of a certain frame is mediated by a few factors, including its strength and repetition, the competitive environment in which it appears, and variable individual-level predispositions, values, and motivations (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Frame setting may have individual level consequences, such as a shift in attitudes, or societal level consequences, including collective action, mobilization, and political socialization (De Vreese, 2005).

Framing processes are multilayered, and can be described using the following intertwined elements; (a) frame competition, which emerges in the context of rivalry over meanings and interpretations of political issues; (b) frame selection, where journalists select, shape reframe the frames suggested by the political elite, (c) frame dynamics, which means that frames do not endure over time, and are subject to counterframes, and finally, (d) frame consistency, which implies that frames occur in patterns made up of similar frame elements (Matthes, 2012).

Previous research has suggested five factors that influence the way journalists frame an issue; "social norms and values, organizational pressures and constraints, pressures of interest groups, journalistic routines, and ideological or political orientations of journalists," (Scheufele, 1999).

Moreover, the news text, which is located at the center of a cyclical process of news discourse involving sources, journalists and audience members operating within a web of shared beliefs about a society, is produced by journalists guided by "(a) their working theories of the news media (i.e., journalists' mental representations of

organizational constraints); (b) rules, conventions, rituals, and structures of news discourse; and (c) anticipated audience responses," (Pan & Kosicki, 1993). Therefore, communication texts are an indication of the forces that intervene with the news production process.

"We may conceive a news media frame as a cognitive device used in information encoding, interpreting, and retrieving; it is communicable; and it is related to journalistic professional routines and conventions," (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p.57).

### **3. Framing and Political Communication**

Given its potential power as a communication framework, it is not surprising that framing has garnered a great deal of attention from media scholars. Framing theory is an integrative approach, which overlaps with political communication (Matthes, 2012). Moreover, political language and communication is one of the focus areas framing analysis. Framing is helpful in exploring discourse at different stages of the political process (Pan and Kosicki, 1993).

According to Entman (1993), framing has crucial implications for political communication; through presenting certain versions of reality and hiding others, frame-bearing communication messages may affect the audience's reactions. Frames provide alternative ways of presenting and thus understanding issues that are related to the political and social environments (De Vreese, 2005).

The central idea of news discourse regarding an issue, carried by news texts, may at times relay policy options or suggestions to the readers, while at other times; such policy preferences are plainly stated in news discourse. The latter is achieved through

blatant causal inferences and attribution of responsibility to certain actors. "News discourse is an integral part of the process of framing public policy issues and plays an important role in shaping public debate concerning these issues," (Pan & Kosicki, 1993).

Framing is considered to reflect the imprint of political power. Moreover, news texts tend to echo power struggles and parameters of discourse concerning an issue (Entman, 1993).

As an approach to analyze news discourse, framing analysis helps to investigate the interplay of public discourse with the construction and negotiation of public policy issues. Framing theory's focus on public policy issues in the news is similar to the focal point of the agenda-setting framework, (Pan and Kosicki, 1993).

Because frames in thought guide individuals' opinions, political players seek to influence voters through highlighting, or framing, their policies in terms of its effect or its relationship to important values, thus invoking a "frame in communication," or a "media frame," (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p.100).

In a way, journalists act as mediators between political actors and citizens, and democracy is dependent on political news coverage, as voters are influenced by the mass media whilst undertaking voting choices. To achieve such a role, the media are expected to cover political issues with transparency and balance, implementing neutrality, objectivity, autonomy and impartiality while framing news (Gerth & Siegert, 2012).

#### **4. Framing as a Theory of Media Effects**

Scholars contend that "the way the media frame events has meaningful consequences on people's understanding of reality and on their ability to formulate and

express ideas," (Fornaciari, 2012, p.224). Identifying and analyzing communication frames is a stepping-stone to discovering their framing effects on the attitudes and thought frames of citizens. Framing can result in calling attention to old beliefs, accentuating existing beliefs, or creating new beliefs about an issue, event or political actor (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Media discourse and public opinion interact in the process of the social construction of meaning; members of the public construct meaning in reference to media discourse, and journalists rely in part on public opinion in their creation of meaning in news discourse, (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989).

Because exposure to one version of events or issues is bound to alter the perceptions and responses of receivers, omission of interpretations by frames may have significant bearings on the audience, and on overall public opinion. Through drawing attention to one version of reality, frames implicitly direct attention away from other possible realities (Entman, 1993). The media may influence public opinion by manipulating the frames within which they present news of events and issues (De Vreese, 2005).

Dubbed the father of the concept of public opinion, Walter Lippmann (1922) discussed the constructions of reality that mediate the relationships between social beings and their environments. Societies develop certain images of individuals, to the extent that "Great men, even during their lifetime, are usually known to the public only through a fictitious personality," (Lippmann, 1922, p.12). Moreover, constructed personalities prevail over personal realities, and soon enough "great men" develop two distinct selves, the public character and the private self.

Lippmann contends that "ideas deal with events that are out of sight and hard to grasp," (p17). Moreover, as the world grows and global events start to develop local relevance, people feel a need to visualize, and think of, the world beyond their local existence. Hence, there is plenty of room for imagination. Lippmann (1922) mentions "the mind's eye," a tool through which individuals can make their way through an expanding landscape and overcome the limitations of their empirical lives.

"The only feeling that anyone can have about an event he does not experience is the feeling aroused by his mental image of that event," (Lippmann, 1922, p.18). Constructing mental images, or representation, is, according to Hall (1997), "a complex business," (p.226). Particularly in dealing with the other or "difference," it "engages feelings, attitudes, and emotions and it mobilizes fears and anxieties in the viewer, " (p.226).

Through selection, newsmakers control the audience's perception of news, and this "ability to influence the salience of topics on the public agenda has come to be called the agenda-setting role of the news media," (McCombs, 2004, p.1).

Agenda-setting is often described as the first stage in the formation of public opinion; because the news media cannot gather information about all the various happenings in the real world, or transmit them all to the audience, they depend on a set of professional codes to guide their daily choices. "The result is a limited view of the larger environment, something like the highly limited view of the outside world available through a small window," (McCombs & Reynolds, 2002, p.6).

Apart from influencing the salience of issues (or objects) on the public agenda, the media can also manipulate the salience of different attributes or characteristics of each



issue, or object, on the agenda, which is known as second level of agenda-setting, or attribute agenda-setting (McCombs & Reynolds, 2002).

Attribute agenda-setting and framing often converge; the way that the media frame an issue or a political candidate, which includes selecting particular issue attributes as central organizing ideas or highlighting them as key elements of the topic discussed, is a potent agenda-setting role, (McCombs & Reynolds, 2002).

Framing is reminiscent of attribute agenda setting in that it tackles the question of "which attributes or aspects of an issue are prominently placed" in a news story (Kim et al., 2012, p.45). Some researchers consider framing an extension of agenda setting (McCombs, 1987), while others believe the various definitions available for framing do not always align themselves with agenda setting.

A key difference between agenda setting and framing is that the former deals with a quantitative question; how frequently an issue, or its attributes, are covered in the media, while the latter investigates how the media has framed the issue in terms of one or more of its attributes. In practice, content analysis methodology reveals the distinction; in agenda setting, how often attributes appear in the story is quantified, while in framing, the key theme of the news story is investigated (Kim et al., 2012).

Moreover, the assumed effects of framing and agenda setting differ; the framing model predicts that audiences will be influenced by how the issue is described, and that the varying descriptions or interpretations of one issue will be interpreted dissimilarly by the audience, leading to a fragmented panorama of meanings and definitions. Meanwhile, in agenda setting, the salience of an issue, not the way it is framed or described, is what potentially affects the judgments and decisions of the audience (Kim et al., 2012).

While agenda setting and priming have accessibility effects, meaning that they render certain standards of judging political issues more accessible to the public as they form their opinions, framing has an applicability effect, as it focuses on the ways issues are presented more so than the assortment of topics that are selected for coverage, and thus suggests connections between phenomena or concepts for audiences to consume (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

In agenda-setting theory, by influencing the salience of issues in the public's mind, the media can also manipulate the public's considerations with regards to making judgments about political issues or candidates (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Framing, like the concept of priming, is founded on the notion that "mass media had potentially strong attitudinal effects, but that these effects also depended heavily on predispositions, schema, and other characteristics of the audience that influenced how they processed messages in the mass media," (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007, p.11).

## **5. Framing Research**

Frames in communication help to manage the complex events taking place in everyday reality, while putting forward particular interpretations of political issues. Scholars have identified and researched frames in communication to detect patterns of issue definitions, compare and contrast approaches of different media outlets towards the coverage of events, issues, or political actors, and spot differences in coverage across media types, (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Scholars have presented framing as a method by which to compare cross-national news coverage and media content (De Vreese, 2005 etc.). Chong and Druckman (2007)

have compiled procedures from previous studies; first, a communication frame relevant to an issue, event or political actor is identified; then, a coding scheme is created based on a set of inductively chosen frames, inspired by prior research, interviews, as well as "culturally available frames" projected by elite political actors from both sides of the issue at hand and disseminated in cultural discourse (Gamson & Modigliani 1987). The next step is identifying the news outlets from which a sample is to be analyzed for the presence or absence of the declared frames.

Scheufele (1999) has developed a four-cell typology based on two dimensions, research that investigates media frames versus audience frames, and researching frames as independent versus dependent variables. The typology suggests relationships and provides a common set of conceptual definitions.

The study at hand will investigate media frames as dependent variables, comparing the roles that different outlets play in influencing the materialization of news frames. With respect to media frames as dependent variables, Scheufele (1999) suggests that we ask; "What factors influence the way journalists or other societal groups frame certain issues?" and "How do these processes work and, as a result, what are the frames that journalists use?"

Frames could be analyzed in one of two ways; inductively, which implies exploring news stories without reference to prior definitions of news frames, enabling frames to emerge during analysis. Another approach is to deductively investigate frames, in reference to previously defined and operationalized frames (De Vreese, 2005).

The inductive approach is labor intensive, lacks external validity, and only analyzes a small sample, while a deductive approach entails analyzing content in relation

to a set of predefined frames. The latter approach can be replicated, can tackle a larger sample, and can be used to detect differences in frames between different media vehicles, and different media outlets within media (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). A deductive approach therefore mandates that the researcher ask questions regarding the components of news that constitute a frame (De Vreese, 2005).

Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) deductively analyzed newspaper and television content for the following five news frames; attribution of responsibility, conflict, human interest, economic consequences, and morality, in the time period surrounding the meetings of European heads of Government, held in Amsterdam in 1997, finding differences among different types of media outlets.

The conflict frame highlights tensions between individuals, groups or institutions to capture audience attention. The conflict frame presents news in terms of conflict rather than exposing layered political dynamics; the media's focus on conflict has been ridiculed, as it could provoke mistrust of leaders or cynicism (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

The human-interest frame introduces a human angle to the event or issue to personalize and dramatize the news, in effect triggering the interest of audiences (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

With the economic consequence frame, journalists present events, issues or problems in relation to the economic consequences they would have (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

The morality frame spotlights religious tenets or moral prescriptions in the presentation of news (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

Attributing responsibility for problems and suggesting a remedial actor or procedure is a prominent media frame (Iyengar, 1991). The framing of an issue may compel audiences to assign causal responsibility to individuals or groups, or to factors pervading society at large.

Iyengar (1991) suggests that a tendency towards episodic news coverage, in which individual events or individuals are the focus of the news, instead of thematic coverage, in which the news is presented within a broader historical and socio-political context, leads people to come up with individual level justifications for problems.

While analyzing the content of communication messages is vital in understanding how media policies are reflected in news products, empirical research delving into Egyptian news content is in short supply (Elmasry, 2012).

Studies that examine and compare the content of press content could provide a “democratic barometer” that reveals the successes and pitfalls of Egypt’s contemporary media landscape (Elmasry, 2012).

Research (Cooper, 2008; Elmasry, 2012) shows that in the Mubarak era, governmental outlets such as Al Ahram played the role of mouthpiece of the government, working towards creating a strong and stable national image, while independent and party affiliated papers were more likely to project a more balanced view, shedding light on both positive and negative government activities.

According to Elmasry (2012), newspapers in the Mubarak era have "exhibited trends in news coverage that reflect their respective affiliations and sponsorship" (p.22) be it government, opposition or independent ownership. For example, independent newspaper Al Masry Al Yom and party paper Al Wafd devoted more space to the

coverage of political opposition and the public.

Hamdy and Gomaa (2012) also found it useful to distinguish between independent, state-run, and social media, as "each medium tells different tales, making radically different news choices in terms of framing," (p.196).

In analyzing how the January 25 uprising was framed across different Egyptian media outlets, Hamdy and Gomaa (2012) found that, in the early days of the revolution, the government affiliated press upheld its biases, framing the protests as riots and denying the brewing social movement, while social media bore contrasting frames, acting as a platform for dissidents and activists to rally support for the revolution, while the mainstream independent press challenged government restrictions.

Hamdy and Gomaa (2012) found noteworthy disparities between the coverage of the "semiofficial" or government affiliated press and social media coverage of the early days of the uprising, to the extent that it could be concluded, "they were not even covering the same events," (p.208). In the meantime, independent newspapers exhibited frames similar to semiofficial press at times and social media at others, and were more objective than the two other outlet types.

Research (Hamdy & Gomaa, 2012; Fornaciari, 2012) used content analysis to explore how media framed the Egyptian 25 January, 2011 revolution, in terms of how they implemented a selection of the five frames; attribution of responsibility; conflict; human interest; economic; and morality.

Fornaciari (2012) performed a content analysis of the online platforms of Al Jazeera English and the BBC to investigate how each outlet framed the 2011 protests in Cairo, in terms of the previously stated frames.

Framing research shows that "coverage of events reflects the policies and political and social structures of each country" (AlMaskati, 2012, p.345). Yet the media in most countries today, including Egypt, operate within a complex socio-political framework. So, what exactly does it reflect? A study of a broad range of news media outlets would not only provide a panoramic look into the differences in media content, but would also reflect the varying political orientations that manifest as news content.

### *Research Question*

The purpose of this study is to examine the similarities and differences in contemporary news coverage within five important daily papers in Egypt's mediascape. The research questions is:

**How do governmental, partisan, and independent newspapers compare in their framing of Egyptian current affairs and political actors in post-revolution Egypt?**

## **IV. METHOD**

### **1. Content Analysis**

Content analysis is a quantitative research method used to systematically examine the content of media messages. Content analysis is appropriate for examining large quantities of content, and can be used to describe communication content, test hypotheses of message characteristics, compare media content to the "real world," assess the image of particular groups in society, and establish a starting point for studies of media effects (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006).

This study seeks to empirically examine framing and news coverage across articles in governmental, oppositional, and independent Egyptian newspapers, which renders content analysis an appropriate methodology. Moreover, the study aims to identify, compare and contrast the dominant frames that emerge in key newspapers representing the varying editorial styles extant in the Egyptian press landscape.

Five newspapers were chosen; Al Ahram (government), Freedom and Justice (ruling party –Muslim Brotherhood- paper), Al Wafd (opposition party paper), Al Masry Al Youm (independent), and Al-Shorouk (independent).

To measure the consistent and competing frames that emerged in the newspaper articles, the researcher developed a set of coding categories inspired by previous studies (Elmasry, 2012; Fornaciari, 2011; Hamdy and Gomaa, 2012; Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000) alongside deductively constructed questions.

The sampling period is President Mohamed Morsi's first nine months in office. News coverage during this timeframe is intended to provide insight into journalistic



practice in the aftermath of Egypt's revolution. In the aftermath of a revolution demanding freedom, it is important to analyze to what extent Egypt's news content has been freed from government control. Coverage of President Mohamed Morsi – Egypt's post-revolution president and first democratically elected leader – is important because his tenure in office represents arguably the first real opportunity for Egypt's independent press to be genuinely critical of an Egyptian president.

Two composite weeks were selected at random. A composite week involves randomly selecting each of the days of the week – one Sunday, one Monday, one Tuesday, etc – over a specified time period (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006). Research shows that two composite weeks represents a full year of news coverage (Riffe et al., 2005). Since the sampling period in this study is nine months, two constructed weeks of content have been selected. The final sample consisted of the following days:

#### **Week 1**

Sunday, 12 August 2012; Monday, 3 December 2012; Tuesday, 9 October 2012;  
Wednesday, 26 February 2013; Thursday, 14 February, 2013; Friday, 11 January 2013;  
Saturday, 10 November 2012.

#### **Week 2**

Sunday, 19 August 2012; Monday, 24 December 2012; Tuesday, 5 March 2013;  
Wednesday, 13 March 2013; Thursday, 27 December 2012; Friday, 19 October 2012;  
Saturday, 2 March 2013.

The researcher randomly chose a sample of articles that were relevant to Egyptian current affairs from each issue's front-page, after eliminating stories that pertained to international news, weather, and sports, among other pieces that would not serve the

purpose of this study.

The total sample yielded 290 articles; 58 articles from Al Ahram, 58 articles from the Freedom and Justice Party, 50 articles from Al Wafd, 58 articles from Al Masry Al Youm, and 64 articles from Al Shorouk.

The unit of analysis is the news story as it appears on the front-page. While this meant that there was a disparity in the size of the articles sampled, as some articles on the front-page are cropped and continued on inside pages, the researcher chose to measure the overall topic selection, coverage tone and direction, and framing devices implemented on the front-page of the five newspapers as an indication of overall newspaper content. Moreover, the front-page is arguably the most read page of the entire newspaper by the average reader, and it thus a salient platform for framing devices to unfold and in turn, to be measured as is.

The coding sheet tackles various aspects of the news story to analyze the different ways journalists construct frames. Scholars have suggested that the salience of a news story's structural elements as framing devices correlates with their power in attracting audiences; the headline and the lead are the most salient framing cues (Pan and Kosicki, 1993). Still, the researcher chose to analyze the news story as it appears on the front-page in order to measure other important elements including the frequency with which different sources are cited, the different keywords and labels used to describe different political actors, among other variables to be discussed further below.

### *Rationale for Choosing Newspapers*

The sample consists of the front pages of five national daily newspapers: one governmental paper, Al Ahram; two party newspapers, Al Wafd (opposition party paper), and Freedom and Justice (the ruling party paper); and two independent papers, Al Masry Al Youm, and Al Shorouk. The group of newspaper selected reflects the various types of ownership in Egypt's contemporary press landscape.

Furthermore, Al Ahram, the most prominent government affiliated newspaper, was deemed sufficient by the researcher to represent the state ownership category of Egypt's press. Two party affiliated papers were included in the sample; Al Wafd, an opposition paper and the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) paper, which belongs to the ruling FJP, the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood. Those reflect party papers with different political orientations, providing insight into their respective coverage of local news. To examine the coverage of independent press, which is a growing sector in the country, two major private papers were selected, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk. Choosing two independent papers reflects the proportional size of this ownership type in the press landscape at large.

Al Ahram is Egypt's oldest daily newspaper, and the leading government paper. In spite of some occasional critical reporting during the Mubarak era, the paper has historically played the role of government mouthpiece. In 2010, Al Ahram distributed between 300,000 and 900,000 copies on weekdays and more than one million on Fridays.

Since its inception in 2004, Al Masry Al Youm has grown to be the largest independent newspaper in Egypt. According to a report entitled "Arab Media Outlook" released by the Dubai Press Club in 2012, Al-Masry Al-Youm has the highest readership

among Egyptian dailies.

Al Shorouk is another independent paper that withstood government restrictions in the years leading up to the January 25 revolution. Published by the prominent 40-year-old publishing house Dar El Shorouk, the independent paper has adopted a less controversial tone than its contemporaries, such as Al Masry Al Youm and Al Dustour, and has shied away from relentless negative coverage of the government, pursuing a more mature approach instead.

Al Wafd (the Delegation) is a daily paper published by the opposition party of the same name. Meanwhile, The Freedom and Justice Paper is published by the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood, the ruling Freedom and Justice Party.

Studying five newspapers representing varying degrees of loyalty to the government and principles of fairness and balance, this study should offer key insights into the relative health of Egypt's post-revolution news environment.

## **2. Coding**

This study investigates media frames as dependent variables, comparing the roles that different outlets play in influencing the manifestation of news frames.

After basic questions that inquire about the name of the outlet, the date the issue was published, and the source identified in the byline, one coding category asks about the story's primary topic, with options ranging from elections to strikes to government diplomacy, among others. This coding category aims to uncover the topics that are spotlighted on the front pages of the six different outlets, in effect investigating the inclusion and exclusion of events in the media agenda (Entman, 1993). Topic selection is

a major element in frame building, and will reflect the choices made by editors and reporters across the six newspapers.

Next, eight coding categories inquire about the frequency with which different types of sources – government, liberal opposition, Islamist opposition, youth activists, ordinary citizens, social networking platforms (such as Twitter or Facebook), foreign media, and foreign leaders – are cited in front page stories. Sources are important elements in the process of news discourse (Pan and Kosicki, 1993), and according to Entman (1993), one of the ways by which frames are manifested in communication messages.

The coding sheet also pays attention to the photos used in the news story, asking about the individuals represented in the dominant photograph. Tankard (2001) lists photos among other framing mechanisms that help define news frames.

The next cluster of questions in the coding sheet seeks to evaluate coverage direction toward different Egyptian political factions and one key political issue. Research has shown that frames tend to have either implicitly or explicitly positive or negative evaluations (Matthes, 2012). To capture direction, questions ask if the president and government, Muslim Brotherhood members, liberal opposition, Islamist opposition, and the constitution are represented favorably, unfavorably, or neutrally in the news story.

Another coding category tackles the rhetoric that emerges in the article, with the options being; opposition, activist, observer, or government-mouthpiece rhetoric. The category aims to capture the various "interpretive packages" (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989) or themes (Pan and Kosicki, 1993) that prevail in the sampled news stories. Such

themes are made up of quotes, background information, descriptions, as well as symbolic devices including metaphors and catch-phases that together collaborate to construct a "central organizing idea," (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989) or frame.

The coding sheet also addresses the character impressions and actual framing devices (labels, keywords, metaphors) used to frame the president, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Egyptian opposition. The identity or character impression conveyed through news stories will be analyzed, with variables ranging from "Morsi is a hero," to "Morsi is passive," to "Morsi is a Muslim Brotherhood puppet," among others. A close pre-reading of news articles helped the researcher develop lists of keywords or labels that are frequently used to describe the president (for example; incompetent, dictator, savior), the liberal opposition (including; infidels, democratic, remnants of Mubarak regime), and the Islamist opposition (such as; radical, terrorist, pious). Such semantic aspects of the story work to produce frames.

Another coding category seeks to find out what impression about the state of the country is conveyed through the news text, and the options include "Egypt is regressing to Mubarak era politics," "Egypt is not safe," and "Egypt is stable," among others. For the more general questions that seek to capture the "impressions," coders were trained to spot techniques such as repetition, moral appeals, and choice of vocabulary.

Compelling frames are able to associate a specific political strategy with a universally supported value or goal, (Chong and Druckman, 2007). The coding sheet, hence, also asks if the news story associates a political strategy by the president or government with a universally supported goal or value (such as; freedom, social justice, democracy) or a universally refuted concept (for example; dictatorship, oppression,

poverty).

This study will also attempt to uncover which of the following frames – attribution of responsibility frame, economic consequence frame, and conflict frame – identified in previous studies (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000) are most dominant in each daily newspaper, and if such frames have endured across the sample.

Attributing responsibility for problems and suggesting a remedial actor or procedure is a prominent media frame (Iyengar, 1991). To uncover the presence of an attribution of responsibility frame, the coders will answer, "Does the article discuss a problem in Egypt?" and will decide if the news story suggests a cause for the problem and a solution to that problem. Options are government, liberal opposition, Islamist opposition, revolutionary youth, civil society, foreign leader, and international organization. Furthermore, whether or not the impact of the problem or solution on citizens is mentioned will be measured. According to Entman (1993), defining problems, diagnosing causes, suggesting remedies, and making moral judgments, are the four functions of frames.

The economic consequence frame is also evaluated. The presentation of financial losses or gains, and the association of governmental political action with an economic outcome will be important to analyze. Finally, whether the outlets present the news in terms of conflict, such as portraying disagreements within the government or between the government and the opposition, will also be measured by the coding sheet.

## *Operationalizing Political Actors*

**Government:** In this study, the government refers to the executive branch (the president, the cabinet and the prime minister, and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces), the legislative branch (the upper and lower houses of parliament), and the judicial branch of government (including the Supreme Constitutional Court, Court of Cassation, Court of Appeal, Court of First Instance, Court of Limited Jurisdiction, and Family Court). The ruling Freedom and Justice party will also be considered government.

**Liberal Opposition:** In this study, the liberal opposition refers to political parties, individuals and movements that adopt liberal or leftist orientations, and do not belong to the Islamist opposition. The liberal opposition parties and blocs include; the Al-Doustour part, Al-Wafd party, Al-Masreyeen Al-Ahrar, Al-Wasat, Ghad Al-Thawra, Al-Adl, and the National Salvation Front, among others. Liberal opposition personalities include Mohamed El-Baradei, Hamdeen Sabbahi, among others. Activist movements include the April 6th Movement, The Popular Current.

**Islamist Opposition:** The Islamist opposition in this study includes the range of active Islamist, non-Muslim Brotherhood parties and movements, including Al-Jamaah Al-Islamiyya and the Nour Party, as well as prominent Islamist figures such as Hazem Salah Abu-Ismaïl, among others.



### *Intercoder Reliability Testing*

Intercoder reliability, which is defined as "the extent to which independent coders evaluate a characteristic of a message or artifact and reach the same conclusion" (Lombard, Synder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002, p. 589) is a key element for validating data that is subjectively coded. It assesses the degree of agreement of two or more coders or judges on their evaluations of messages (Freelon, 2010).

Two coders, the researcher and a graduate student in Education, independently coded the total sample of 290 articles from the five different newspapers.

Following multiple training sessions intended to update and fine-tune the coding sheet and create precise coding rules, intercoder reliability testing was carried out on ten percent of the sample (29 articles) to ensure that the coders were in agreement regarding coding choices.

Intercoder reliability was tested using two measures; percentage agreement and Scott's Pi, since individual measures of reliability may not be sufficient, and content analysts are advised to use multiple supplementary measures (Riffe et al., 2005). An online intercoder reliability Web service conceived by researcher Deen Freelon was used to calculate inter-coder reliability (Freelon, 2011).

Overall, the inter-coder reliability testing yielded valid results. The two coders identified a similar source for stories in 97% (0.901 for Scott's Pi) of the sample and similar primary topics for 90% of the inter coder reliability sample (0.616 for Scott's Pi). The coders agreed on coding decisions for citing sources in 96% of the intercoder reliability sample; 0.786 for Scott's Pi. As for the main photo represented with the story, the coders agreed in 100% of the total sample. For the coverage direction variable, the

coders agreed 97% of the time, which was equal to 0.951 for Scott's Pi, 100% for article rhetoric, 95% (0.935 for Scott's Pi) for framing of political actors, 98% (0.969 for Scott's Pi) on the association of presidential or governmental political strategies with universally supported or universally condemned values, 76% (0.672 for Scott's Pi) for impressions relayed on the status of Egypt, 83% (0.785 for Scott's Pi) on the attribution of responsibility frame variable, 93% (0.887 for Scott's Pi) for the economic consequence frame variable, and finally, 92% (0.89 Scott's Pi) for the conflict frame. The coding guide was updated after reviewing the results of the inter-reliability testing to fine-tune variables that scored relatively lower than others.

## V. FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of a content analysis of five daily Egyptian newspapers: Al Ahram, Al Wafd, the Freedom and Justice Party paper, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk. Manifest news content is the result of a process meditated by political, economic, social and organizational influences and constraints. Therefore, by revealing how governmental, partisan, and independent newspapers compare in their framing of Egyptian current affairs during the first nine months of the Morsi era, these results will show the outcome of the interaction of journalists within a context of influences and constraints.

### *Bylines*

For the variable investigating byline sources, the results show that all five papers relied most heavily on reporters, and front-page stories sampled only occasionally emerged from agencies. The second most popular byline, in four out of five newspapers, was in fact the absence of one.

Independent paper Al Shorouk was both most likely to rely on staff reporters (88%, n= 56) and the least likely to publish stories without a source in the byline (3%, n=2). The second independent newspaper, Al Masry Al Youm, was the most likely of the five papers to publish stories without a source (33%, n=19), followed by Al Wafd (31%, n=16).

The front page of the Freedom and Justice Party paper was also dominated by stories written by reporters (85%, n=49). Al Ahram's front pages featured stories written

by reporters in 76% of the sample (n=44). A Chi-Square test showed the differences across newspapers to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2 (20, N=290) = 43.989, p = .002$ .

**Table 1: Bylines**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Source</b>						
<b>Reporter</b>	44 76%	36 69%	49 85%	38 66%	56 88%	<b>223</b> <b>77%</b>
<b>MENA</b>	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>1</b> <b>0%</b>
<b>Foreign Paper</b>	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	0 0%	1 2%	<b>2</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Reporter &amp; Agencies</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	2 3%	<b>3</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>No Source</b>	14 24%	16 31%	7 12%	19 33%	2 3%	<b>58</b> <b>20%</b>
<b>Other</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 5%	<b>3</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (20, N=290) = 43.989, p = .002$

## *Topic*

The range of topics on the front-page reveals a preceding process of selection, and could therefore indicate comparable decisions of inclusion or exclusion on the part of the editors and journalists at the five newspapers.

The findings show that the five newspapers did not display significant differences ( $\chi^2$  (112, N=290) = 130.449,  $p = .112$ ) when examining the primary topic of front-page articles, yet some telling contrasts do appear.

The dominating topics in each newspaper were as follows; "economy" for Al Ahram (24%, n=14), a tie between "economy" and "crime/security" (15%, n=8) in opposition paper Al Wafd, "Morsi meetings" in the Freedom and Justice Party paper (12%, n=7), while both independent papers, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk focused more frequently on "strikes/protests" on their front pages, with 22% (n=13) and 20% (n=9) respectively.

Correspondingly, of the total sample, "protest" and "economy" news were the subjects of the lion's share of coverage, with 14% (n=41) and 16% (n=45) respectively. The Freedom and Justice Party paper also spotlighted "government diplomacy" more than any other newspaper in the sample (9%, n=5), Al Wafd covered more "health" (6%, n=3), and "constitution" (7%, n=5) stories than other sampled papers, and Al Shorouk newspaper gave more weight to "party news" than the four other papers (13%, n=8).

**Table 1: Topic**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Topic</b>						
<b>Morsi Meetings</b>	7 12%	2 4%	7 12%	7 12%	3 5%	<b>26</b> <b>9%</b>
<b>Economy</b>	14 24%	8 15%	5 9%	6 10%	8 13%	<b>41</b> <b>14%</b>
<b>Crime/ Security</b>	5 9%	8 15%	2 3%	3 5%	5 8%	<b>23</b> <b>8%</b>
<b>Elections</b>	1 2%	0 0%	1 2%	3 5%	3 5%	<b>8</b> <b>3%</b>
<b>Religion</b>	1 2%	4 8%	0 0%	0 0%	3 5%	<b>8</b> <b>3%</b>
<b>Party News</b>	0 0%	4 8%	5 9%	5 9%	8 13%	<b>22</b> <b>8%</b>
<b>Strikes/ Protests</b>	11 19%	6 12%	6 12%	13 22%	9 14%	<b>45</b> <b>16%</b>
<b>Disaster/ Accident</b>	1 2%	0 0%	2 3%	1 2%	2 3%	<b>6</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Education</b>	2 3%	0 0%	4 7%	1 2%	1 2%	<b>6</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Health</b>	1 2%	3 6%	0 0%	1 2%	1 2%	<b>6</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Transport</b>	2 3%	1 2%	1 2%	1 2%	1 2%	<b>6</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Law/ Court</b>	1 2%	1 2%	3 5%	3 5%	5 8%	<b>13</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>Government Diplomacy</b>	3 5%	1 2%	5 9%	2 3%	4 6%	<b>15</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>Constitution</b>	1 2%	5 10%	4 7%	4 7%	4 6%	<b>18</b> <b>6%</b>
<b>Media</b>	0 0%	2 4%	1 2%	2 3%	2 3%	<b>7</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Egyptian Revolution</b>	2 3%	1 2%	0 0%	1 2%	2 3%	<b>6</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Other</b>	3 5%	0 0%	6 10%	1 2%	0 0%	<b>10</b> <b>3%</b>

$\chi^2 (112, N=290) = 130.449, p = .112$

## Sourcing

### *Citing the Government*

All five newspapers relied on government sources, yet Al Ahram cited the government most frequently, while Al Wafd cited official sources sporadically.

Al Ahram was the most likely paper to rely on official sources for quotes, citing government sources in 65% (n=38) of its sample (at a mean of 3). The Freedom and Justice Party paper, Al Masry Al Youm, and Al Shorouk also heavily relied on government sources, citing officials in 59% (n=24), 64% (n=21), and 61% (n=25) of their respective samples (at means of 2.36, 2.67, and 2.72, respectively). The opposition Al Wafd paper was the least likely to rely on government sources; only 26% of the articles in its sample featured quotes or paraphrased words by officials, and at a mean of 1.

A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant  $\chi^2 (12, N=290) = 28.420, p = .005$ .

**Table 3: Government Quotes Mean**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Mean: Government Quotes</b>	3	1	2.36	2.67	2.72	<b>2.40</b>

**Table 4: Government Quotes**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Government Quotes</b>						
<b>0</b>	20 35%	38 73%	24 41%	21 36%	25 39%	<b>128</b> <b>44%</b>
<b>1-5</b>	28 48%	11 21%	27 47%	30 52%	29 45%	<b>125</b> <b>43%</b>
<b>6-10</b>	5 9%	3 6%	6 10%	6 10%	7 11%	<b>27</b> <b>9%</b>
<b>11-15</b>	5 9%	0 0%	1 2%	1 2%	3 5%	<b>10</b> <b>3%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (12, N=290) = 28.420, p = .005$

#### *Citing the Liberal Opposition*

Al Masry Al Youm was most likely to rely on the liberal opposition for quotes; 32% (n=19) of its articles featured citations of a member of the liberal opposition. By contrast, the FJP was least likely to cite the liberal opposition; only 3% (n=2) of the sample featured quotes from the group. Most of the Al Masry Al Youm articles in which the liberal opposition were cited, quotes appeared between 1 to 5 times (n=17).



**Table 5: Liberal Opposition Quotes Mean**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Mean: Liberal Opposition Quotes</b>	0.38	0.63	0.12	1.16	0.77	<b>0.61</b>

**Table 6: Liberal Opposition Quotes**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Liberal Opposition Citations</b>						
<b>0</b>	52 90%	45 87%	56 97%	39 67%	55 86%	<b>247</b> <b>85%</b>
<b>1-5</b>	5 9%	5 10%	2 3%	17 29%	4 6%	<b>33</b> <b>11%</b>
<b>6-10</b>	1 2%	1 2%	0 0%	1 2%	4 6%	<b>7</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>11-15</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	1 2%	<b>2</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>More than 15</b>	0 0%	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>1</b> <b>0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (16, N=290) = 37.753, p = .002$

*Citing the Islamist Opposition*

Generally, the Islamist opposition was cited less frequently than the liberals in this sample. Again, independent paper Al Masry Al Youm was most likely to cite the Islamist opposition, quoting them in 17% (n=10) of the sample. Al Masry Al Youm and the other independent paper Al Shorouk quoted or paraphrased Islamist figures at means of 0.60 and 0.48 respectively. Al Ahram was least likely to cite Islamist opposition sources (2%, n=1).

**Table 7: Islamist Opposition Quotes**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Mean: Islamist Opposition</b>	0.02	0.25	0.33	0.60	0.48	<b>0.34</b>

*Citing Youth Activists*

Al Ahram was most likely to cite youth activists, quoting them in 8% (n=5) of the sample, at a mean number of 0.47. Al Shorouk and Al Masry Al Youm relied minimally on youth activist sources, citing them in 8% (n=5) and 7% (n=4) and of their samples and, at means of 0.33 and 0.14 respectively. Al Wafd and the FJP's citing of youth activists were insignificant.

**Table 8: Youth Activists Quotes Mean**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Mean: Youth Activists Quotes</b>	0.47	0.00	0.02	0.14	0.33	<b>0.20</b>

*Citing Ordinary Citizens*

Ordinary citizens and activists now generate original news content, making use of social networking website and blogs to get their messages across to the online public sphere. To remain competitive, traditional mainstream media may focus on engaging ordinary citizens and act as a platform for their views and concerns. Aside from signifying awareness of the changing dynamics of media and society, citing ordinary citizens also reflects a tendency to respect the views of the public at large not merely the political elite, which points to a healthy role of the media as a democratic platform.

Overall, the five sampled newspapers did not quote ordinary citizens as much as they cited political actors. Al Masry Al Youm and Al Ahram were more likely to cite ordinary citizens; they quoted or paraphrased citizens 14% (n=8) and 10% (n=6) of their respective samples, at means of 0.48 and 0.28 respectively.

**Table 9: Ordinary Citizens Quotes Mean**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Mean: Ordinary Citizens Quotes</b>	0.28	0.12	0.02	0.48	0.00	<b>0.18</b>

*Citing Social Media*

Social media is the playground of citizen journalisms, a palpable force that has been brewing in the Egyptian mediascape for years. A link between mainstream, traditional media and micro-bloggers, citizen journalists and "cyber activists" is potent and thought provoking. However, this sample revealed that newspaper articles do not quote Facebook or Twitter posts as much as would be expected. The independent Al Shorouk newspaper cited social media at a mean of 0.3, and the FJP cited them at a mean of 0.19. The rest of the sample showcased minimal quotes from social media.

**Table 10: Social Media Quotes Mean**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Mean: Social Media Quotes</b>	0.00	0.08	0.19	0.09	0.34	<b>0.14</b>

### *Citing Foreign Media*

Citing of foreign media also did not vary significantly across the sample. The FJP, Al Wafd and Al Shorouk cited foreign media at means of 0.48 and 0.38, and 0.2 respectively.

Notably, however, the three newspapers cited foreign media rather differently, to serve different purposes. For example, on 2 March, 2013, the FJP paper reported that the New York Post wrote: "Morsi is committed to democracy and the National Salvation Front is committing political suicide." The article went on to cite the NY Post as saying that "there is no room for discussing an Islamist dictatorship in Egypt, and that since he refused to stifle political parties and independent press," among other sympathetic statements. Meanwhile, Al Shorouk published an article on 27 February 2013 with the headline: "Washington Post: Egyptians' satire of Morsi turns hobby," which chronicles how activists are mocking President Morsi on social media.

**Table 11: Foreign Media Quotes**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Mean: Foreign Media Quotes</b>	0.02	0.38	0.48	0.19	0.20	<b>0.25</b>

### *Citing Foreign Leaders*

With regards to citing foreign leaders, independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk were most likely to quote or paraphrase them, (in 12% and 9% respectively), at means of 0.28 and 0.64 respectively.

**Table 12: Foreign Leaders Quotes Mean**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Mean: Foreign Leaders Quotes</b>	0.17	0.00	0.24	0.28	0.64	<b>0.28</b>

### **Photos**

The five newspapers used photographs in contrasting ways across the sample, and such differences were statistically significant;  $\chi^2(36, N=290) = 74.443, p = .000$ .

A significant 40% (23) of all the photos that accompanied stories on the sampled Freedom and Justice Party front-pages depicted either President Morsi (9%, n=5), or government officials (31%, n=18). Independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk also placed photographs of the president or the government alongside a large share of the sampled front-page articles; in 29% (n=17) and 25% (n=16) respectively.

The newspaper most likely to use photos of citizens (including protests) to complement front-page stories was Al Masry Al Youm (19%, n= 11), followed by Al Ahram (16%, n=9). Al Masry Al Youm was also most likely to print photos of the opposition, with 9% (n=5) articles showing photos of the liberal opposition and 12% (n=7) depicting the Islamist opposition.

Notably, Al Ahram and the Freedom and Justice Part paper did not publish any picture depicting clashes, as opposed to the occasional appearance of photographs clashes in opposition paper Al Wafd and independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk, in 4% (n=2), 2% (n=1), 3% (n=2) respectively.

**Table 13: Photos**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Photo</b>						
<b>Morsi</b>	1 2%	1 2%	5 9%	4 7%	6 9%	<b>17</b> <b>6%</b>
<b>Government</b>	2 3%	7 14%	18 31%	13 22%	10 16%	<b>50</b> <b>17%</b>
<b>Muslim Brotherhood</b>	0 0%	0 0%	2 3%	0 0%	1 2%	<b>3</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Activists</b>	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	1 2%	2 3%	<b>4</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Liberal Opposition</b>	0 0%	2 4%	1 2%	5 9%	3 5%	<b>11</b> <b>4%</b>
<b>Islamist Opposition</b>	0 0%	3 6%	2 3%	7 12%	2 3%	<b>14</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>Citizens</b>	9 16%	4 8%	5 9%	11 19%	6 9%	<b>35</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>Clashes</b>	0 0%	2 4%	0 0%	1 2%	2 3%	<b>5</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Other</b>	1 2%	2 4%	2 3%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>5</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>None</b>	45 78%	31 60%	22 38%	16 28%	32 50%	<b>146</b> <b>50%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (36, N=290) = 74.443, p = .000$

## Coverage Direction

The following few variables were meant to uncover the similarities and differences in coverage direction across the sample. Moreover, whether news coverage towards political actors was positive, neutral, or negative was measured as an indication of the varying degrees of objectivity or bias in their respective representations.

### *Morsi and the Government*

In the Mubarak era, coverage of the ruling regime was always sensitive territory. While governmental outlets such as Al Ahram, Al Akhbar and Al Gomhoreya praised the president, the partisan and private press inconspicuously attacked the government, at the risk of retaliation by officials. Since the fall of the Mubarak regime in 2011, the press has been more vocal, and arguably more polarized than ever before. These results demonstrate the portrayal of Egypt's first democratically elected president.

President Morsi and the government were portrayed most positively in Al Ahram and the Freedom and Justice Party paper, most negatively in Al Wafd, and ambivalently in both independent newspapers. A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2(8, N=290) = 113.610, p = .000$ .

President Morsi or the government were mentioned in the majority of the total sample; in 255 out of 290 articles (88%). The most positive portrayal of President Mohamed Morsi or the government unsurprisingly emerged in the Freedom and Justice Party paper's coverage; 88% (n=45) of the articles in which they were presented were favorably toned, while 12% (n=6) stories were neutral towards him. Al Ahram's tone of coverage was similar to, though not as blatantly biased as, the FJP's, with 61% (n=31) of



the sample presenting President Morsi favorably, 10% (n=5) unfavorably, and 29% (15) neutrally.

By contrast, opposition paper Al Wafd was the most critical of President Morsi and government, presenting the president unfavorably in 74% (n=34) of the articles in which they were mentioned, while a scant 13% (n=6) dedicated to favorable and neutral portrayals each.

Independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk on the other hand displayed similar tones, characterized by a tendency to be more unfavorable than neutral, and to be more neutral than favorable. Al Masry Al Youm portrayed President Morsi unfavorably in 49% (n=27), neutrally in 33 % (n=18), and favorably in 18% (n=10) of the sampled articles. In a similar spirit, Al Shorouk's sampled front-paged stories portrayed the president unfavorably most frequently (44%, n=23), neutrally in 33% (n=17), and favorably in 23% (n=12) of the sample.

**Table 14: Coverage Direction: Morsi**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Coverage Direction: Morsi/Government</b>						
<b>Favorably</b>	31 61%	6 13%	45 88%	10 18%	12 23%	<b>104</b> <b>41%</b>
<b>Unfavorably</b>	5 10%	34 74%	0 0%	27 49%	23 44%	<b>89</b> <b>35%</b>
<b>Neutrally</b>	15 29%	6 13%	6 12%	18 33%	17 33%	<b>62</b> <b>24%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>255</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2(8, N=290) = 113.610, p = .000$

*Muslim Brotherhood*

Previously dubbed "the outlawed group" and stifled for decades under past leaders, the Muslim Brotherhood surfaced to the forefront of Egypt's political playground following the revolution of 2011. It is interesting to observe the way in which the Islamist organization, and its popular political arm, the Freedom and Justice Party, is currently presented in the press after a sweeping power shift to their favor.

Muslim Brotherhood figures, which were only mentioned in 22% (n=64) of the total sample, were presented most favorably in the FJP (92%, n=11), and unfavorably most frequently in the independent Al Masry Al Youm (60%, n=15). Al Masry Al Youm also presented the Brotherhood neutrally in 40% (n=10) of the sample. Opposition paper

Al Wafd and the other sampled independent paper Al Shorouk were also more

negative than positive in their coverage of the Muslim Brotherhood; presenting them unfavorably in 71% (n=5) and 47% (n=7) of the sample respectively. Yet Al Shorouk was more likely than Al Wafd to portray the Brotherhood neutrally; the former presented them neutrally in 40% (n=6) while the latter featured them neutrally in 29% (n=2) of the articles in which they were mentioned.

Al Ahram articles refrained completely from representing the Brotherhood unfavorably, portrayed them favorably in one article (20%) and neutrally in 80% (n=4) of the sample. A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2(8, N=64) = 50.306, p = .000$ .

**Table 15: Coverage Direction: Muslim Brotherhood**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Coverage Direction: Muslim Brotherhood</b>						
<b>Favorably</b>	1 20%	0 0%	11 92%	0 0%	2 13%	<b>14</b> <b>22%</b>
<b>Unfavorably</b>	0 0%	5 71%	0 0%	15 60%	7 47%	<b>27</b> <b>42%</b>
<b>Neutrally</b>	4 90%	2 29%	1 8%	10 40%	6 40%	<b>23</b> <b>36%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>7</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>12</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>25</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>15</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2(8, N=64) = 50.306, p = .000$

### *Liberal Opposition*

Representation of the liberal opposition is important to measure because it indicates the extent to which the media covers the range of political actors on the scene, in turn reflecting the plurality of voices in today's political and media spheres.

The liberal opposition received coverage in merely 20% (n=61) of the sample. They were featured most heavily in independent papers, presented favorably in 25% (n=5), unfavorably in 5% (n=1) and neutrally in 70% (n=14) of the articles where they were mentioned in the Al Masry Al Youm sample, and favorably in 23% (n=3), unfavorably in 8% (n=1) and neutrally in 69% (n=9) of the Al Shorouk sample.

Al Wafd refrained from depicting the liberal opposition unfavorably altogether, presenting them favorably 56% (n=5) of the time, and neutrally in 44% (n=4) of the articles in which they were mentioned.

By contrast, the FJP presented the liberal opposition unfavorably in 73% (n=8) of the articles where they were mentioned, and neutrally 27% (n=3) of the time.

Al Ahram's coverage was more neutral, portraying the liberal opposition neutrally in 75% (n=6) of the sample and once (12.5%) favorably and unfavorably respectively.

A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2(8, N=61) = 32.959, p = .000$ .

**Table 16: Coverage Direction: Liberal Opposition**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Coverage Direction: Liberal Opposition</b>						
<b>Favorably</b>	1 13%	5 56%	0 0%	5 25%	3 23%	<b>14</b> <b>23%</b>
<b>Unfavorably</b>	1 13%	0 0%	8 73%	1 5%	1 8%	<b>11</b> <b>18%</b>
<b>Neutrally</b>	6 75%	4 44%	3 27%	14 70%	9 69%	<b>36</b> <b>24%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>9</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>11</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>20</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>13</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>61</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (8, N=61) = 32.959, p = .000$

*Islamist Opposition*

The Islamist opposition, who are potent players in today’s political scene, composed of such figures as Salafist preacher Hazem Salah Abu Ismail, movements such as Al-Gamaa Al Islamiyya, and parties such as the Salafist Nour party, were only mentioned in 15% (n=43) of the total sample.

When members of the movement were indeed mentioned in Al Ahram newspaper, they were only mentioned neutrally (100%, n=4). Of the 4 times they were mentioned in FJP, they were mentioned favorably 50% (n=2) of the time, and neutrally 50% (n=2) of the time.

By contrast, the opposition and independent papers were more negative in their framing of the Islamist opposition. In Al Wafd, the group was mentioned favorably once

(17%) and neutrally once (17%), and unfavorably the rest of the time (67%, n=4).

The Islamist opposition was mentioned most frequently in independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk, were portrayed very similarly in both papers. Al Masry Al Youm mentioned Islamist opposition figures 18 times, which amounts to 48% of the coverage of the group in the total sample. In 78% (n=14) of the Al Masry Al Youm articles in which the Islamist opposition were mentioned, they were presented favorably. In the remaining 22% (n=4), the group was portrayed negatively.

Al Shorouk articles mentioned the Islamist opposition 11 times, which amounts to 27% of the total coverage they have received. In 73% (n=8) of the articles, the Islamist opposition was framed neutrally, while they were presented unfavorably in the remaining 27% (n=3) of Al Shorouk articles. A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant  $\chi^2(8, N=43) = 23.253, p = .003$ .

**Table 17: Coverage Direction: Islamist Opposition**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Coverage Direction: Islamist Opposition</b>						
<b>Favorably</b>	0 0%	1 17%	2 50%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>3</b> <b>7%</b>
<b>Unfavorably</b>	0 0%	4 67%	0 0%	4 22%	3 27%	<b>11</b> <b>26%</b>
<b>Neutrally</b>	4 100%	1 17%	2 50%	14 78%	8 73%	<b>29</b> <b>67%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>6</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>4</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>18</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>11</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>43</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (8, N=43) = 23.253, p = .003$

*Youth Activists*

The variable measuring the differences in portraying youth activists did not yield statistically significant results. The group was only mentioned in 10% (n=30) of the sample.

*Constitution*

The process of drafting a post-revolution constitution, a crucial step towards reforming the country and transitioning towards democracy, has been long and grueling. Ultimately, an Islamist-dominated constituent assembly drafted a text challenged by liberals as non-inclusive and repressive, hailed by others as the best constitution Egypt has seen. The media has exhibited ambivalent attitudes whilst covering the drafting process, and the actual text, of the 2012 constitution.

In this sample, the constitution was only mentioned in 20% (n=59) of the articles. The constitution was framed most frequently favorably in the Freedom and Justice Party; where 55% (n=6) of the constitution-related articles in the paper framed the issue positively. By contrast, independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk were most likely to frame the constitution negatively; 71% (n=10) and 63% (n=10) of the articles where the draft was mentioned were critical or negative.

Al Wafd was also more negative than neutral or positive in its coverage of the constitution; 88% (n=7) of its articles framed the draft unfavorably. Al Ahram came out ahead in the neutral-representation race, framing the constitution neutrally in 70% (n=7) of the relevant articles. A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2(8, N=59) = 29.097, p = .000$ .



**Table 18: Coverage Direction: Constitution**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Coverage Direction: Constitution</b>						
<b>Favorably</b>	1 10%	1 13%	6 55%	0 0%	1 6%	<b>9</b> <b>15%</b>
<b>Unfavorably</b>	2 20%	7 88%	2 18%	10 71%	10 63%	<b>31</b> <b>53%</b>
<b>Neutrally</b>	7 70%	0 0%	3 27%	4 29%	5 31%	<b>19</b> <b>32%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>8</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>11</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>14</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>16</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>59</b> <b>100%</b>

$$\chi^2 (8, N=59) = 29.097, p = .000$$

### *Rhetoric*

If newspaper articles are considered as miniature stories, then the language in which the article is written represents the storyteller's voice, or their style. This voice, or rhetoric, is bound to influence the way the audience receives the story. This content analysis study set out to measure how sampled articles across the five newspapers employ the following narratives; (a) activist rhetoric (features revolutionary attitude), (b) observer rhetoric (showcases neutrality, balance, facts and figures), (c) government-mouthpiece rhetoric (exhibits bias towards government), (d) opposition rhetoric (praises or advocates for the opposition).

In this sample, the differences in rhetoric that emerged in the coverage of different

newspapers were very striking, as well as statistically significant according to a chi-square test;  $\chi^2 (12, N=290) = 127.394, p = .000$ .

Al Ahram and the Freedom and Justice Party paper displayed a significant similarity in their tone of coverage. Articles in both papers shared a tendency to carry a narrative reminiscent of being the government-mouthpiece. Moreover, 67% (n=39) of Al Ahram's sampled articles carried government mouthpiece rhetoric, while the rest (33%, n=19) were of an "observer" narrative. Similarly, FJP articles were more likely to display government mouthpiece rhetoric than any other tone; 62% (n=36) of the FJP's sampled articles carried government mouthpiece rhetoric, while the rest (38%, n=22) could be categorized as "observer" rhetoric articles.

By contrast, articles in the independent Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk newspapers were predominantly of "observer" rhetoric, alternating between the other tones of coverage. Al Masry Al Youm for instance carried observer rhetoric in 72% (n=42) of the sample, government-mouthpiece rhetoric in 16% (n=9), an activist rhetoric in 7% (n=4) and opposition rhetoric in 5% (n=3) of the sampled articles. Similarly, Al Shorouk adopted observer rhetoric in the majority of its articles, (76%, n=49), a government mouthpiece in 14% (n=14), opposition rhetoric in 6% (n=4) and an activist rhetoric in 3% (n=2) of its total sample.

Articles in the opposition paper Al Wafd were most likely to use opposition rhetoric; 29% (n=18) of the sample mimicked an opposition tone, while only 4% (n=2) carried government-mouthpiece rhetoric. A large share of the sample was of observer rhetoric (60%, n=31), and 8% (n=4) of the articles had an activist rhetoric.

**Table 19: Rhetoric**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Rhetoric</b>						
<b>Activist</b>	0 0%	4 8%	0 0%	4 7%	2 3%	<b>10</b> <b>3%</b>
<b>Observer</b>	19 33%	31 60%	22 38%	42 72%	49 77%	<b>163</b> <b>56%</b>
<b>Government Mouthpiece</b>	39 67%	2 4%	36 62%	9 16%	9 14%	<b>95</b> <b>33%</b>
<b>Opposition</b>	0 0%	15 29%	0 0%	3 5%	4 6%	<b>22</b> <b>8%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (12, N=290) = 127.394, p = .000$

### **Framing of the President and the Opposition**

The coding sheet measured the framing devices, such as labels, keywords, and metaphors used to frame the president, the Muslim Brotherhood, and the Egyptian opposition. A close pre-reading of news articles helped the researcher develop lists of keywords or labels that are frequently used to describe the political actors in question.

#### *Morsi Identity and Character Impressions*

To gauge the identity or character impression conveyed of President Morsi in different articles, coders looked for language that implied that he was; a hero, a villain, trying his best, passive, progressive, religious, old-fashioned, does not keep his word, or a

Muslim Brotherhood puppet. A clear identity or character impression was conveyed about President Morsi in 30% (n=88) of the sample.

Of the articles in which he was framed in Al Ahram, he was exclusively associated with a positive identity. In 56% (n=9) of the sample, he was represented as a "hero" and in 31% (n=5) he was shown as "trying his best." The Freedom and Justice Party also relied exclusively on relaying positive character impressions, presenting him as a "hero" in 54% (n=7) of the relevant sample, as "trying his best" in 31% (n=4), and as religious and compassionate in one article (8%) each.

By contrast, Al Wafd articles presented negative character impressions of President Morsi almost exclusively within the sample. With the exception of one article (6%) in which the president is shown as "trying his best," the rest of articles portray him as a "villain" (31% n=5), "passive" (25%, n=4), "does not keep his word" (6%, n=1) and "Muslim Brotherhood puppet" in 13% (n=2) of the sample.

On the other hand, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk articles mixed identities of the president, both led by a large number of articles suggesting that President Morsi is "trying his best," 40% (n=8) and 39% (n=9) respectively. Al Masry Al Youm articles imply that President Morsi is a hero at times (10%, n=2) and that he is a villain at others (10%, n=2), while also referring to him as "passive" (15%, n=3), "unpopular" (15%, n=3) but also as being autonomous from the Muslim Brotherhood in one article (5%) and as being different from Mubarak in another article (5%).

The Al Shorouk sample also reflects an ambivalent attitude towards the president; President Morsi was portrayed as a hero in 9% (n=2) of the sample, and as a villain in 13% (n=3), as someone who "does not keep his word" in 13% (n=3) as a "firm" leader in

9% (n=2), and then one article (4%) was dedicated to framing President Morsi in each of the following ways; as a "joke," "deceptive," and then as "not an MB puppet," and finally, as being "religious."

A chi-square test proved these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2 (56, N=88) = 103.620, p = .000$ .

**Table 20: Morsi Identity**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Morsi Identity</b>						
<b>Hero</b>	9 56%	0 0%	7 54%	2 10%	2 9%	<b>20</b> <b>23%</b>
<b>Villain</b>	0 0%	5 31%	0 0%	2 10%	3 13%	<b>10</b> <b>11%</b>
<b>Trying his best</b>	5 31%	1 6%	4 31%	8 40%	9 39%	<b>27</b> <b>31%</b>
<b>Passive</b>	0 0%	4 25%	0 0%	3 15%	0 0%	<b>7</b> <b>8%</b>
<b>Religious</b>	0 0%	0 0%	1 8%	0 0%	1 4%	<b>2</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Does not keep his word</b>	0 0%	1 6%	0 0%	0 0%	3 13%	<b>4</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>Muslim Brotherhood Puppet</b>	0 0%	2 13%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>2</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Not an MB Puppet</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 5%	1 4%	<b>2</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Firm</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 9%	<b>2</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>A Joke</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 4%	<b>1</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Unpopular</b>	0 0%	3 19%	0 0%	3 15%	0 0%	<b>6</b> <b>7%</b>
<b>Compassionate</b>	0 0%	0 0%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>1</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Deceptive</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 4%	<b>1</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Not Mubarak</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 5%	0 0%	<b>1</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Other</b>	2 13%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>2</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>16</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>13</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>20</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>23</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>88</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (56, N=88) = 103.620, p = .000$

## Keywords

### *President Morsi*

The list of keywords or labels describing President Morsi that coders were to choose from included positively charged options such as "strong leader," "democratic," and "savior," as well as negatively charged ones including "incompetent," "passive," and "dictator," among others.

Keywords or labels were used to describe President Morsi in 74 articles (25% of the sample), in similar proportions across the five newspapers. The language used to describe President Morsi ranged from suggesting he was a strong leader to a dictator, depending on the outlet.

These differences were statistically significant;  $\chi^2(32, N=74) = 73.466, p = .000$ .

In Al Ahram, President Morsi was described most often as a "strong leader" (62%, n=80) or "savior" (15%, n=2). Similarly, FJP articles used positive labels such as "strong leader" (53%, n=8) and "democratic" (40%, n=6) when describing the president. Contrastingly, Al Wafd used exclusively negative keywords and labels when describing President Morsi; he was deemed "incompetent" in 43% (n=6), a "dictator" in 29% (n=4) passive in 14% (n=2), and a "puppet" in 14% (n=2) of the sample.

When President Morsi was described in Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk, he was sometimes associated using positive labels and other times using negative labels. In Al Masry Al Youm, the president was described as "a strong leader" in 35% (n=6) of the sample, as "incompetent" in 18% (n=3) as a "Muslim Brotherhood" affiliate in another 18% (n=3), and sporadically as a "savior" (12%, n=2) and "democratic" (6%, n=1), and

then as "dictator" (6%, n=1) and "passive" (6%, n=1). Al Shorouk showed a similar tone in coverage to Al Masry Al Youm; President Morsi was described as a "strong leader" in 27% (n=4) of the sample, as a "dictator" in 20% (n=3), as "deceptive" in 20% (n=3) and then as "incompetent", "passive," "Muslim Brotherhood," "savior," and "democratic" in 7% (n=1) of the sample each.

**Table 21: Keywords Describing Morsi**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Keywords: Morsi</b>						
<b>Incompetent</b>	0 0%	6 43%	0 0%	3 18%	1 7%	<b>10</b> <b>14%</b>
<b>Passive</b>	1 8%	2 14%	0 0%	1 6%	1 7%	<b>5</b> <b>7%</b>
<b>Strong Leader</b>	8 62%	0 0%	8 53%	6 35%	4 27%	<b>26</b> <b>35%</b>
<b>Dictator</b>	1 8%	4 29%	0 0%	1 6%	3 20%	<b>9</b> <b>12%</b>
<b>Democratic</b>	1 8%	0 0%	6 40%	1 6%	1 7%	<b>9</b> <b>12%</b>
<b>Muslim Brotherhood</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 18%	1 7%	<b>4</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>Puppet</b>	0 0%	2 14%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>2</b> <b>3%</b>
<b>Savior</b>	2 15%	0 0%	1 7%	2 12%	1 7%	<b>6</b> <b>8%</b>
<b>Deceptive</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	3 20%	<b>3</b> <b>4%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>14</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>15</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>17</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>15</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>74</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (32, N=74) = 73.466, p = .000$



### *Liberal Opposition*

Members of the liberal opposition were described using keywords or labels in 42 articles (38%) within the total sample.

Al Shorouk presented them as "democratic" in 36% (n=4), while Al Masry Al Youm referred to them most often as "organized" (46%, n=5). Al Wafd also describes the group most frequently as "democratic" (30%, n=2).

By contrast, both Al Ahram and the FJP resorted to the more negative adjectives; the recurring label used to portray the liberal opposition in Al Ahram was "fragmented" (60%, n=3). In FJP, the liberal opposition was also described using negative labels, exclusively, such as "un-democratic," "trouble-makers," "passive," "remnants of Mubarak's regime," and "reckless," (once each, 13%) and finally, as "infidels" in two articles (25%).

A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2 (72, N=42) = 93.829, p = .043$ .

It is important to note that coding sheet took into account quotes that appeared in the article, not merely the reporters' words.

**Table 22: Keywords Describing Liberal Opposition**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Keywords: Liberal Opposition</b>						
<b>Trouble-makers</b>	1 20%	0 0%	1 13%	0 0%	1 9%	3 7%
<b>Passive</b>	0 0%	0 0%	1 13%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%
<b>Democratic</b>	0 0%	2 29%	0 0%	0 0%	4 36%	6 14%
<b>Remnants of Mubarak Regime</b>	0 0%	0 0%	1 13%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%
<b>Infidels</b>	0 0%	1 14%	2 25%	0 0%	0 0%	3 7%
<b>Savior</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 9%	1 2%
<b>Self-Serving/ Elitist</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 9%	1 9%	2 5%
<b>Disorganized/ Fragmented</b>	3 60%	0 0%	1 13%	1 9%	1 9%	6 14%
<b>Patriotic</b>	0 0%	1 14%	0 0%	0 0%	1 9%	2 5%
<b>Organized</b>	0 0%	1 14%	0 0%	5 46%	0 0%	5 14%
<b>Fighters</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 18%	0 0%	2 5%
<b>Religious</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 9%	0 0%	1 2%
<b>Strong</b>	0 0%	1 14%	0 0%	0 0%	2 18%	3 7%
<b>Popular</b>	0 0%	1 14%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%
<b>Reckless</b>	0 0%	0 0%	1 13%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%
<b>Un-democratic</b>	0 0%	0 0%	1 13%	0 0%	1 9%	1 2%
<b>Other</b>	1 20%	0 0%	0 0%	1 9%	0 0%	2 5%
<b>Total</b>	5 100%	7 100%	8 100%	11 100%	11 100%	42 100%

$\chi^2 (72, N=42) = 93.829, p = .043$

## **Association Between a Political Strategy by the President/Government With a Universally Supported Goal or Value**

Compelling frames in communication messages include those that associate a political strategy by the president or government with a universally supported goal or value. Results of this study show that Al Ahram and the FJP were more likely to make associations between a political strategy by the president/government and a universally supported goal or value, but that the opposition Al Wafd and the two independent papers also occasionally gave credit to President Morsi. A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2(40, N=290) = 104.660, p = .000$ .

Moreover, both Al Ahram and the FJP highlighted "economic development" in association with a presidential or governmental political strategy, in 12% (n=7) and 19% (n=11) of the total sample.

Al Ahram also associated the following universally supported goals with strategies or decision by President Morsi/government often; "safety" (16%, n=9), "better living conditions" (12%, n=7), as well as "renaissance" and "democracy" (5%, n=3 each). Less frequently, Al Ahram mentioned "freedom," "social justice," "dignity," and "justice" in reference to government strategies.

In a similar spirit, the Freedom and Justice Paper associated the universally supported notion of "democracy" with political strategies by President Morsi or the government in 21% (n=12) of its sampled article. Other prominent enshrined goals that emerged in relation to the regime were "renaissance" (10%, n=6), "better living conditions" (7%, n=4), and less frequently, "safety," "social justice," and "freedom."

Only 10% (n=5) of the total Al Wafd sample associated President Morsi with a universally supported goal or concept, compared with 74% (n=37) and 75% (n= 38) of

articles in Al Ahram and the FJP respectively. "Safety" (6%, n=3), "renaissance (2%, n=1) and "democracy" (2%, n=1) were the only concepts referred to in relation to the president or his government.

Independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk again displayed similar coverage patterns. They linked President Morsi or the government with a universally supported goal or concept in 32% (n=13) and 38% (n=18) of their samples, respectively.

Both independent papers associated "economic development" and "safety" with President Morsi/government strategies more than any other goal or concept.

**Table 23: Associating Governmental Strategy With Supported Value**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Association</b>						
<b>Freedom</b>	1 2%	0 0%	1 2%	1 2%	0 0%	<b>3</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Social Justice</b>	2 3%	0 0%	2 3%	0 0%	1 2%	<b>5</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Democracy</b>	3 5%	1 2%	12 21%	1 2%	3 5%	<b>10</b> <b>7%</b>
<b>Better Living Conditions</b>	7 12%	0 0%	4 7%	2 3%	2 3%	<b>15</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>Dignity</b>	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>1</b> <b>0%</b>
<b>Renaissance</b>	3 5%	1 2%	6 10%	1 2%	1 2%	<b>12</b> <b>4%</b>
<b>Safety</b>	9 16%	3 6%	2 3%	5 9%	5 8%	<b>24</b> <b>8%</b>
<b>Justice</b>	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	<b>2</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	7 12%	0 0%	11 19%	3 5%	5 8%	<b>26</b> <b>9%</b>
<b>Other</b>	3 5%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>3</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>NA</b>	21 36%	47 90%	20 35%	45 78%	46 72%	<b>179</b> <b>62%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2(40, N=290) = 104.660, p = .000$

## **Association Between a Political Strategy by the President/Government With a Universally Condemned Concept**

Associating governmental political strategies with universally condemned concepts is a way by which communication texts can negatively frame issues and actors. The results here reflect asymmetry to the previous variable, namely associating a presidential/governmental political strategy with a universally supported goal. Al Wafd was the most critical; most frequently associating a political strategy by the president/government with universally condemned concepts such as "dictatorship" and "bankruptcy" in 14% (n=7) of the sample each. The opposition paper also mentioned "violence" (6%, n=3), "lack of services for citizens" (4%, n=2), "corruption" (4%, n=2), "Brotherhood-ization of Egypt" (2%, n=1), and "violence" (2%, n=1). By contrast, the FJP refrained completely from making any associations between condemned concepts and governmental political strategies. Al Ahram made such an association in merely 9% (n=5) of the sample.

Independent newspaper Al Masry Al Youm associated a political strategy by President Morsi/government with a universally condemned concept in 43% (n=35) of the sample. Most frequently, such condemned concepts were "Brotherhood-ization of Egypt" (10%, n=6), "oppression" (10%, n=6), "dictatorship" (9%, n=5), and "bankruptcy" (7%, n=4).

Al Shorouk was less critical than the other independent paper; it associated a political strategy by President Morsi/government with a universally condemned concept in 30% (n=19) of the sampled articles. "Dictatorship" claimed the lion's share of the negative associations, with 13% (n=8), followed by "oppression" (5%, n=3), then "Brotherhood-ization of Egypt" (3%, n=2).

These differences were statistically significant, according to a chi-square test;  $\chi^2$  (40, N=290) = 89.913,  $p= .000$ .

**Table 24: Associating Governmental Strategy with Condemned Concept**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Association</b>						
<b>Dictatorship</b>	1 2%	7 14%	0 0%	5 9%	8 13%	<b>21</b> <b>7%</b>
<b>Brotherhood-ization</b>	1 2%	1 2%	0 0%	6 10%	2 3%	<b>10</b> <b>3%</b>
<b>Poverty</b>	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	0 0%	<b>2</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Corruption</b>	0 0%	2 4%	0 0%	1 2%	1 2%	<b>4</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Oppression</b>	0 0%	3 6%	0 0%	6 10%	3 5%	<b>12</b> <b>4%</b>
<b>Bankruptcy</b>	2 3%	7 14%	0 0%	1 2%	1 2%	<b>14</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>Violence</b>	0 0%	3 6%	0 0%	1 2%	1 2%	<b>5</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Lawlessness</b>	0 0%	1 2%	0 0%	1 2%	1 2%	<b>3</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Lack of services for citizens</b>	0 0%	2 4%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	<b>3</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Other</b>	0 0%	2 4%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	<b>3</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>NA</b>	53 91%	24 46%	58 100%	33 57%	45 70%	<b>213</b> <b>73%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2$  (40, N=290) = 89.913,  $p= .000$

## **Impressions About the Status of Egypt**

Aside from its primary role to “inform” audiences, during periods of political turmoil the media could serve to instill comfort or to trigger panic, to unite citizens or to divide them, among other possible functions. This variable gauges the impressions relayed through the press regarding the status of Egypt, with options ranging from positive impressions such as "Egypt is taking steps towards development," to unsettling ones including "Egypt is divided" or "Egypt is unsafe."

Results from this coding variable were particularly interesting. All five papers emphasized the polarization/division in Egypt, to varying degrees. In independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk, the implication was that "Egypt is divided/polarized" in 47% (n=27) and 45% (n=29) respectively. Al Wafd portrayed polarization in 40% (n=20) of its sample. Meanwhile, Al Ahram and FJP also shed light on the socio-political polarization but to a lesser extent, in 16% (n=9) and 21% (n=12) respectively.

Unsurprisingly, Al Ahram and the FJP were both more likely to provide positive impressions about the state of the country than negative ones. Egypt was framed as "taking steps towards development" in 38% (n=22) in each of those papers. The impression that the country was "taking steps towards democracy" was also left in 26% (n=15) of the FJP sample and 17% (n=10) of the Al Ahram sample. Ten percent (n=6) of the sample of each paper implied that "Egypt is not safe," and Al Ahram suggested that "Egypt is going bankrupt" in four articles (7%).

Articles in independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk occasionally left positive impressions about the state of the country; Egypt is shown to be "taking steps



towards development in 12% (n=7) and 9% (n=6) of the sample respectively. A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2(40, N=290) = 98.294, p = .000$ .

**Table 25: Impression About Status of Egypt**

	Al Ahram	Al Wafd	FJP	Al Masry Al Youm	Al Shorouk	Total
<b>Impression: Status of Egypt</b>						
<b>Steps towards democracy</b>	10 17%	3 6%	15 26%	3 5%	6 9%	37 13%
<b>Steps towards development</b>	22 38%	0 0%	22 38%	7 12%	6 9%	57 20%
<b>Regressing to Mubarak era politics</b>	0 0%	2 4%	0 0%	3 5%	1 2%	6 2%
<b>Becoming a religious state</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	1 0%
<b>Not safe</b>	6 10%	14 27%	6 10%	8 14%	11 17%	45 16%
<b>Going bankrupt</b>	4 7%	8 15%	0 0%	4 7%	2 3%	18 6%
<b>Divided/ Polarized</b>	9 16%	20 39%	12 21%	27 47%	29 45%	97 33%
<b>Stable</b>	3 5%	1 2%	1 2%	2 3%	2 3%	9 3%
<b>Not stable/ in trouble</b>	1 2%	1 2%	0 0%	2 3%	2 3%	6 2%
<b>Other</b>	2 3%	1 2%	1 2%	2 3%	4 5%	9 3%
<b>NA</b>	1 2%	2 4%	1 2%	0 0%	1 2%	5 2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2(40, N=290) = 98.294, p = .000$

## **Attribution of Responsibility Frame**

Previous literature shows that attributing responsibility for problems and suggesting a remedial actor or procedure is a prominent media as it has the potential to compel audience to assign causal responsibility or hold certain political actors accountable. Measuring the use of the attribution of responsibility frame in this study entailed coding for the following; whether or not problems were discussed, the diagnosis of problems, the suggested solutions, and whether or not the impact of problems and solutions on citizens were mentioned.

### *Discussion of Problems*

While the total sample featured frequent mentioning of problems (56%, n=161), the Freedom and Justice Party paper was the least likely to discuss problems (36%, n=21) while the opposition Al Wafd was most likely to discuss them (71%, n=37). The second most likely paper to discuss problems was Al Ahram (64%, n=37). Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk discussed problems at a comparable rate, 59% (n=34) and 50% (n=32) respectively. A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2(4, N=290) = 16.530, p = .002$ .

**Table 26: Discussion of Problems**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Discuss Problem</b>						
<b>Yes</b>	37 64%	37 71%	21 36%	34 59%	32 50%	<b>161</b> <b>56%</b>
<b>No</b>	21 36%	15 29%	37 64%	24 42%	32 50%	<b>129</b> <b>45%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (4, N=290) = 16.530, p = .002$

*Suggested Cause*

The results show clear disparities in the diagnosis of discussed problems among the five papers;  $\chi^2 (32, N=290) = 101.786, p = .000$ . While FJP did not deem the government responsible for any of the 21 (36%) articles in which problems were discussed, Al Wafd suggested the government was responsible in 17 out of the 37 articles in which problems were discussed. Independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk also held the government responsible for a large share of the problems identified; in 28% (n=16) and 20% (n=13) of the relevant sample respectively. Al Ahram articles did not refrain completely from blaming the government for problems, stating it as responsible in 9% (n=5) of the sample. It also suggested that protestors were responsible for problems on a few occasions (5%). Similarly, the FJP suggested that protestors were responsible for problems in 5% (n=3) of the sample.

**Table 27: Suggested Cause for Problems**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Suggested Cause</b>						
<b>Government</b>	5 9%	17 33%	0 0%	16 28%	12 20%	<b>51</b> <b>18%</b>
<b>Protestors</b>	3 5%	0 0%	3 5%	0 0%	1 2%	<b>7</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Islamist Opposition</b>	0 0%	1 2%	0 0%	3 5%	1 2%	<b>5</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Liberal Opposition</b>	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>1</b> <b>0%</b>
<b>Civil Society</b>	2 3%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>2</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Combination</b>	6 10%	2 4%	0 0%	4 7%	3 5%	<b>15</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>Other</b>	13 22%	2 4%	0 0%	1 2%	2 3%	<b>18</b> <b>6%</b>
<b>No Cause</b>	7 12%	15 29%	18 31%	10 17%	12 19%	<b>62</b> <b>21%</b>
<b>No Problem</b>	21 36%	15 29%	37 64%	24 41%	32 50%	<b>129</b> <b>45%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (32, N=290) = 101.786, p = .000$

### *Suggested Solution*

The majority of suggested remedies were government solutions, at a larger frequency in the governmental Al Ahram (43%, n=25) and the ruling party affiliated FJP (29%, n=17). Al Wafd was least likely to suggest the government as a remedy (17%, n=9), while the independent papers were again very similar in their coverage, naming the government as a solution in 24% (n=14) and 20% (n=13) of the sample respectively. The opposition and independent papers occasionally suggested the liberal opposition as a solution, but all three were more likely to suggest "no solution" than the other papers. These differences were statistically significant;  $\chi^2 (28, N=290) = 58.955, p = .001$

**Table 28: Suggested Solution**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Suggested Solution</b>						
<b>Government</b>	25 43%	9 17%	17 19%	14 24%	13 20%	<b>78</b> <b>27%</b>
<b>Islamist Opposition</b>	1 2%	2 4%	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>4</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Liberal Opposition</b>	0 0%	4 8%	0 0%	3 5%	2 3%	<b>9</b> <b>3%</b>
<b>Civil Society</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	<b>1</b> <b>0%</b>
<b>Foreign Leader</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	2 3%	<b>3</b> <b>1%</b>
<b>Other</b>	0 0%	1 2%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	<b>1</b> <b>0%</b>
<b>No Solution</b>	11 19%	21 40%	3 5%	16 28%	14 22%	<b>56</b> <b>22%</b>
<b>NA</b>	21 36%	15 29%	37 64%	24 41%	32 50%	<b>129</b> <b>45%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (28, N=290) = 58.955, p = .001$

*Descriptions of how Egyptian Citizens are Affected by Problem*

Al Wafd and Al Masry Al Youm were most likely to reveal how citizens are affected by the problem, using statistics and descriptions to do so in 25% (n=13) and 24% (n=14) of their total samples respectively, while the Freedom and Justice Party paper was least likely to describe the plights of citizens (7%, n=4).

A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2 (8, N=290) = 22.574, p = .004$ .

**Table 29: Descriptions: How Citizens are Affected by Problem**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Descriptions: How Citizens are Affected by Problem</b>						
<b>Yes</b>	8 14%	13 25%	4 7%	14 24%	7 11%	<b>46</b> <b>16%</b>
<b>No</b>	29 50%	24 46%	17 29%	20 35%	25 39%	<b>115</b> <b>40%</b>
<b>No Problem</b>	21 36%	15 29%	37 64%	24 41%	32 50%	<b>129</b> <b>45%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (8, N=290) = 22.574, p = .004$

### *Descriptions of how Egyptian Citizens are Affected by Solution*

All newspapers did not significantly describe how citizens would be affected by the suggested solution, yet Al Ahram and the FJP were more likely than the other papers to use statistics or descriptions to describe how citizens would benefit from the suggested solution, doing so in 10%, n=6, and 7% (n=4) of the sample respectively.

### **Economic Consequence Frame**

In the economic consequence frame, journalists present news in terms of its financial significance; either loss or gain.

#### *Focus on Financial Losses*

The newspaper most likely to mention financial losses was Al Ahram (24%, n=14), while the newspaper least likely to draw attention to financial losses was the FJP (2%, n=1).

Al Masry Al Youm was more likely than either Al Wafd or Al Shorouk to mention financial losses, drawing attention to economic problems in 17% (n=10) of the sample, compared with 15% (n=8) and 9% (n=6) in the other papers respectively.

**Table 30: Mention of Financial Losses**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Financial Losses</b>						
<b>Yes</b>	14 24%	8 15%	1 2%	10 17%	6 9%	<b>39</b> <b>13%</b>
<b>No</b>	44 76%	44 85%	57 98%	48 83%	58 91%	<b>251</b> <b>87%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (4, N=290) = 14.340, p = .006$

*Focus on Financial Gains*

The Freedom and Justice Party paper and Al Ahram were most likely to mention economic success, drawing attention to financial gains in 26% (n=15) and 24% (n=14) of their respective samples.

Opposition paper Al Wafd and the two independent papers were much less likely to mention financial gains, none of them exceeding an 8% (n=5) attention to the issue.

A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2 (4, N=290) = 24.980, p = .000$ .



**Table 31: Financial Gains**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Financial Gains</b>						
<b>Yes</b>	14 24%	1 2%	15 26%	3 5%	5 8%	38 13%
<b>No</b>	44 76%	51 98%	43 74%	55 95%	59 92%	252 87%
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (4, N=290) = 24.980, p = .000$

*Government Power to Affect Economy*

Al Ahram and the Freedom and Justice Party paper were more likely than the other three papers to suggest that the government has the power to alleviate economic or financial problems, emphasizing its potential role in enhancing the economic standing of the country in 28% (n=16) and 26% (n=15) of their respective samples.

## **Conflict Frame**

News texts that can be categorized under the conflict frame are those that highlight tensions between individuals, groups or institutions to capture audience attention.

### *Dynamics of Disagreement*

The newspapers least likely to emphasize a conflict frame were Al Ahram and the FJP: 74% (n=43) and 73% (n=42) of the articles in their respective samples did not reflect disagreement among or within parties. By contrast, the newspaper most likely to reflect conflict was Al Masry Al Youm; 65% (n=34) of its sample reflected disagreement. Al Wafd and Al Shorouk articles also emphasized conflict, in 62% (n=36) and 55% (n=35) of their samples respectively.

The dynamics of disagreement that emerged most across the five papers was "disagreement between government and opposition." Yet while Al Masry Al Youm drew attention to such conflict in 31% (n=18) of its sample, Al Ahram only mentioned it in a scant 14% (n=8) of the sample.

Al Shorouk was the paper more likely to shed light on disagreement within the government (14%, n=9) and disagreement between the government and activists (9%, n=9), while Al Masry Al Youm emphasized conflict among different opposition parties (9%, n=5), and Al Wafd paid exposed conflict between the government and the citizens (8%, n=4).

A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2(24, N=290) = 60.868, p = .000$ .

**Table 32: Dynamics of Disagreement**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Disagreement</b>						
<b>Within Government</b>	0 0%	6 12%	3 5%	6 10%	0 14%	<b>24</b> <b>8%</b>
<b>Between Government &amp; Opposition</b>	8 14%	11 21%	9 16%	18 31%	14 22%	<b>60</b> <b>21%</b>
<b>Between Opposition &amp; Opposition</b>	2 3%	2 4%	0 0%	5 9%	3 5%	<b>12</b> <b>4%</b>
<b>Between Government &amp; Activists</b>	3 5%	5 6%	2 3%	3 5%	6 9%	<b>17</b> <b>6%</b>
<b>Between Government &amp; Citizens</b>	0 0%	4 8%	0 0%	3 5%	0 0%	<b>7</b> <b>2%</b>
<b>Other</b>	2 3%	8 15%	2 3%	1 2%	3 5%	<b>16</b> <b>6%</b>
<b>None</b>	43 74%	18 35%	42 72%	22 38%	29 45%	<b>154</b> <b>53%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2 (24, N=290) = 60.868, p = .000$

*Type of Conflict*

Al Wafd, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk were more likely than either Al Ahram or the Freedom and Justice Party paper to emphasize clashes, protests, legal disputes, and conflict surrounding the constitution. Al Wafd articles drew attention to clashes more than any other type of conflict, (14%, n=7), while Al Masry Al Youm and

Al Shorouk paid most of their attention to protests or strikes in 19% (n=11) and 9% (n=6) of their respective samples. A chi-square test showed these differences to be statistically significant;  $\chi^2(36, N=290) = 66.584, p = .001$ .

**Table 33: Type of Conflict**

	<b>Al Ahram</b>	<b>Al Wafd</b>	<b>FJP</b>	<b>Al Masry Al Youm</b>	<b>Al Shorouk</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Type of Conflict</b>						
<b>Dispute Over Elections</b>	2 3%	2 4%	2 3%	5 9%	4 6%	<b>15</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>Clashes</b>	2 3%	7 14%	1 2%	4 7%	5 8%	<b>19</b> <b>7%</b>
<b>Protests/Strike</b>	0 0%	6 12%	4 7%	11 19%	6 9%	<b>27</b> <b>9%</b>
<b>International Conflict</b>	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 2%	<b>1</b> <b>0%</b>
<b>Terrorist Attack</b>	2 3%	5 10%	1 2%	1 2%	4 6%	<b>13</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>Legal Dispute</b>	1 2%	4 8%	2 3%	5 9%	4 6%	<b>16</b> <b>6%</b>
<b>Constitution</b>	3 5%	5 10%	2 3%	6 10%	4 6%	<b>20</b> <b>7%</b>
<b>Combination</b>	2 3%	0 0%	0 0%	2 3%	6 9%	<b>10</b> <b>3%</b>
<b>Other</b>	3 5%	5 10%	4 7%	2 3%	1 2%	<b>15</b> <b>5%</b>
<b>NA</b>	43 74%	18 35%	42 72%	22 38%	29 45%	<b>154</b> <b>53%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>52</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>58</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>64</b> <b>100%</b>	<b>290</b> <b>100%</b>

$\chi^2(36, N=290) = 66.584, p = .001$

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The complex socio-political dynamics that have unfolded in Egypt in the aftermath of the January 25 revolution have been mediated by the country's multi-layered media scene. The rifts and enduring conflict within Egypt's political arena have notably materialized on newspaper pages, online platforms, and broadcast channels since January 2011. A snapshot into the newspaper coverage of five major local newspapers in a critical period in Egypt's transition to democracy, namely the first nine months of President Morsi's four-year presidential term, provides a telling insight to the role played by print media in covering, and framing, different political actors and issues in post-revolution Egypt.

In this content analysis study, which explored the content of five major daily newspapers, a coding sheet that included 40 questions adapted from previous studies (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000) was employed to gauge the use, in the five selected national papers, of three of the most common news frames identified in previous literature, namely; attribution of responsibility, conflict, and economic consequence. Coding categories were also used to measure the different topics exposed in the sample of 290 articles, and the coverage tone and direction that emerged across the five different daily papers.

It is vital to consider the time frame of the sampled articles; Muslim Brotherhood figure Mohamed Morsi assumed the role of president of Egypt in June 2012, starting his term with a promise of “renaissance,” against the backdrop of a hopeful public. But as the months rolled on, disputes over the drafting process and text of the country’s first post-revolution constitution, a controversial power grab by the president, attacks on Sinai, a

financial drive and clashes among protestors were all factors that contributed to convoluted social, economic, and political dynamics. This period, packed with flammable issues, was a suitable test for the status of local media.

### *Summary of Findings*

This content analysis of Al Ahram, Al Wafd, the Freedom and Justice Party paper, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk news coverage and framing of current affairs in the first nine months of President Morsi's term in office revealed key differences and similarities manifested in the content of these five newspapers, which can be categorized into three different ownership categories; governmental, partisan, and independent.

Generally, the five newspapers were evidenced as showcasing patterns of news coverage and framing that mirror their respective affiliations and ownership. Moreover, the government owned and controlled Al Ahram and the ruling party affiliated Freedom and Justice Party's paper were both partial towards President Morsi and the government, were most likely to associate a political strategy by the president/government with universally supported goals or values such as "economic development," "safety," and "democracy."

Meanwhile, Al Wafd articles were by and large opposed to the government, and were most likely to associate a political strategy by the president/government with universally condemned concepts such as "dictatorship" and "bankruptcy." Independent newspapers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk were both ambivalent in their reporting, at times ridiculing the president, at others offering favorable coverage.

The front-page stories on each of the five papers were dominated by different

topics. While economy news pervaded the government-owned and controlled Al Ahram sample, and President Morsi news was the number one topic appearing on FJP, the ruling party paper, independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk focused more frequently on strikes/protests, and Al Wafd spotlighted crime/security and economy news.

Al Ahram was most likely to rely on governmental sources in its front-page articles, while the independent Al Masry Al Youm paper devoted more space than the other papers to citing ordinary citizens and members of opposition; both liberal and Islamist.

Independent paper Al Masry Al Youm was also most likely to print photos of the opposition, citizens or clashes. Meanwhile, the Freedom and Justice Party paper's front-pages exhibited the largest share of photos of President Morsi or government officials.

All five papers paid significant attention to news concerning President Morsi and the government; they were mentioned in 88% (n=255) of the total sample. However, not all the papers were similar in their portrayal of the regime. The most positive coverage of President Morsi and the government appeared in the FJP and Al Ahram samples, while Al Wafd was blatantly negative in its coverage. Privately owned papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk could be located somewhere in the middle, as they adopted varying tones in framing the president and the government, with a tendency to be more unfavorable than either neutral or favorable.

Asymmetrically, the liberal opposition received scant coverage compared with the president/government, as they were mentioned in merely 20% (n=61) of the sample. They were presented neutrally most often in Al Ahram and the two independent papers, more

positively than neutrally in Al Wafd, and unfavorably in the FJP. When they were mentioned, the liberal opposition were presented using negative keywords and labels in Al Ahram and FJP, and using more positive labels in Al Wafd, Al Masry Al Youm, and Al Shorouk.

With regards to the framing of President Morsi, the findings reveal that the president was exclusively associated with positive identities such as "hero" and "trying his best" and described using favorable labels or keywords in Al Ahram and the Freedom and Justice Party paper, while Al Wafd articles featured negative character impressions and keywords almost exclusively. Again, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk articles were more balanced, attributing a mix of positive and negative keywords and identities with the president.

With regards to the rhetoric that emerged in the coverage of different newspapers, the differences were very striking. Al Ahram and the Freedom and Justice Party articles shared a tendency to carry a government-mouthpiece rhetoric, while Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk articles were predominantly of "observer" rhetoric, and the Al Wafd sample unsurprisingly carried an "opposition" rhetoric most often.

Again, in line with the running trend, results show that Al Ahram and the FJP were more likely to associate a political strategy by the president/government with universally supported goals or values such as "economic development," "safety," and "democracy" among others. Opposition paper Al Wafd and the two independent papers were more likely to associate a presidential or governmental political strategy with a universally condemned concept however, such as "dictatorship" and "bankruptcy."

Regarding the impressions that articles gave about the state of the country, all five



papers emphasized the polarization/division in Egypt, yet Al Ahram and FJP were both more likely to provide positive impressions, such as "Egypt is taking steps towards development" and "Egypt is taking steps towards democracy," while in Al Wafd and independent papers Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk, the country was portrayed as being at risk of "bankruptcy" and being unsafe.

Fifty-six of the articles in the total sample mentioned problems; yet the FJP was least likely to mention problems and Al Wafd was, in keeping with the pattern, at the other end of the spectrum. Al Ahram was more likely than the two independent papers to discuss problems.

Al Wafd and Al Masry Al Youm both attributed responsibility for problems to the government in a third of their sample each.

The five newspapers were more likely to suggest a government solution to the problem at hand than any other option, yet Al Ahram was the most likely to do so; 43% of its sample suggests an official remedy. The opposition paper and the two independent newspapers were the only three outlets to suggest liberal opposition as solutions, but in 8% or under throughout the sample.

Al Wafd and Al Masry Al Youm were most likely to reveal how citizens are affected by the problem, using statistics and descriptions to do so in 25% (n=13) and 24% (n=14) of their total samples respectively.

With regards to the economic consequence frame, the findings show that the newspaper most likely to mention financial losses and financial gains was Al Ahram. By contrast the FJP almost exclusively mentioned financial gains, while Al Wafd almost exclusively mentioned financial losses. Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk were more

likely to refer to financial losses than gains, but mentioned both.

Al Ahram and the Freedom and Justice Party paper were more likely than the other three papers to suggest that the government has the power to alleviate economic or financial problems.

Al Wafd was most likely to adopt a conflict frame, followed by Al Masry Al Youm and then Al Shorouk; all three shed light on disagreement or clashes in over fifty percent of their samples. Al Ahram and FJP contrastingly portrayed conflict in under a third of their samples each. The majority of conflict stories in the total sample reflected disagreement between the government and the opposition.

Al Shorouk was the paper most likely to shed light on disagreement within the government and disagreement between the government and activists, while Al Masry Al Youm emphasized conflict among different opposition parties, and Al Wafd exposed conflict between the government and the citizens.

Regarding the type of conflict emphasized, Al Wafd, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk were more likely than either Al Ahram or the Freedom and Justice Party paper to emphasize clashes, protests, legal disputes, and conflict surrounding the constitution.

The five newspapers showcase patterns of news coverage that mirror their respective affiliations and ownership. Therefore, these findings represent the relationship that exists between ownership types, political orientations, news production and content.

## *Conclusion*

This study set out to compare and contrast framing and news coverage of prominent political actors that emerged in governmental, opposition and independent newspapers, during the first nine months of President Mohamed Morsi's term in office. The study's findings provide an important post-revolution baseline for Egyptian journalism that can be used to monitor the progression of news performance.

A free, responsible press— a key feature for any democracy – was one of the 25 January revolution's aspirations. Tight control over media and intimidation of journalists had been hallmarks of the Mubarak regime. The findings reflect that the ceiling for freedom is significantly higher in the post-revolution era than under Mubarak. Moreover, while former President Mubarak, his government, his family or the Armed Forces were taboos in pre-2011 press, newspapers today boldly attack President Morsi, ridicule his policies, and negatively portray the government. The press is not as tightly controlled as in Mubarak's era, this study reveals.

However, a glance at the relationship between press and politics in contemporary Egypt reveals a few similarities with the media scene under previous rulers, which is a source of concern. Moreover, the attitude with which President Morsi has met press transgressions, including personal insults, for example, has been ambivalent.

Overall, it becomes evident that this cross-section of different outlets affiliated with different ownership types showcases competing frames. This has particular significance if viewed within the broader framing process, which typically culminates in framing effects. It is assumed that framing effects are challenged when citizens become exposed to a full array of alternative arguments, as opposed to being held captive by one

version of the story presented by one biased outlet.

An important finding was that the five newspapers sampled in this study have tended to present different versions of reality. In line with their economic and political loyalties, the press outlets researched appear to be perpetuating the polarization pervading contemporary Egyptian society.

Most notably, this study provides an empirical account of the divide that exists within Egyptian press. Government-affiliated Al Ahram remains biased towards the ruling regime similar to the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party paper, while the opposition paper Al Wafd was biased against President Morsi and his government, as independent papers Al Shorouk and Al Masry Al Youm exhibits a more ambivalent tone of coverage.

The mixed coverage that appeared in the independent press is reflective of the identity of this type of publication. Moreover, privately owned press is neither affiliated with the government nor does it exist as the voice of an opposition party. The independent press sector, which grew significantly over the past decade, emerged to fill a gap in Egypt's media landscape, offering citizens an alternative to state media.

In a way, this study offers a quantitative cartography of the frames that emerge in Egypt's contemporary press landscape. Overall, the implemented frames varied across the sample. Al Ahram was most likely to rely on an economic consequence frame, while Al Wafd, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk were more likely to use a conflict frame.

Interestingly, the two independent papers, Al Masry Al Youm and Al Shorouk had the comparable tendency to focus on conflict. Both papers covered stories on strikes and protests more than any other topic on their front pages, and both implied that "Egypt

is divided/polarized" is over half of their sampled articles, and used a conflict frame in a large portion of the sample.

This study also highlights the shortcomings of state owned and controlled media. As evidenced in this content analysis comparing the government affiliated Al Ahram with the Muslim Brotherhood run Freedom and Justice Party paper, liberal opposition paper Al Wafd, and two independent papers, Al Ahram's news coverage displayed similarity not to the independent papers, but rather to the ruling party paper's coverage. This finding is reminiscent of Al Ahram's framing and tone of coverage under Mubarak; pre-revolution, the paper was favorable to the regime, as blatantly verified by the notorious incident in which the Al Ahram front page showcased a photograph that was edited to portray former President Mubarak walking ahead of US President Barack Obama and Israeli and Palestinian leaders, Binyamin Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas at Middle East peace talks.

Today, the governmental paper's tone of coverage displays comparable loyalty to the ruling regime, which reveals its role as mouthpiece to the regime rather than a balanced platform that offers fair coverage to the masses. State media therefore still, to this post-revolution day, functions as a tool of political control, in a manner evocative of Nasser's use of the media in his era. State media is therefore a perilous force in today's media landscape, perpetuating the same patterns of bias and favoritism that have appeared over the past 60 years.

The findings of this study shine a spotlight on crucial questions pertaining to the future of Egyptian media in a time of social, economic, and political turmoil. Moreover, a meta-goal of this study was to catch a glimpse of the role played by the media in fostering

democratic dialogue in contemporary Egypt. Are media outlets in Egypt working towards paving a common ground or is a fragmented media discourse creating a fractured public opinion?

As it stands, the role of the media as a tool for democratic socialization is obliterated in the contemporary media scene; instead, press outlets function as tools for furthering political polarization.

The findings echo the political struggles and contrasting discourse in Egyptian current affairs. “News is affected by the political, economic, social and organizational influences from which it evolves,” (Hamdy, 2008, p.220).

The relationship between media and politics has become rather conspicuous, which has been particularly spotlighted in the unfolding events of the Arab Spring. A dynamic, heavily politicized media landscape in Egypt has rendered citizens more engaged in current affairs than ever. In light of such a function for the media, it becomes crucial to monitor the way in which the media creates prisms through which citizens become exposed to social, political, economic and legal issues.

The age of censorship and repressive laws is not behind Egypt. As exhibited in the period following the revolution, the model of repressing media freedom has not been eradicated with the toppling of Mubarak's regime. Yet this study has displayed that journalists in the independent and opposition press are boldly challenging the hegemony of the state over media outlets. The press arena is no longer property of the state, in which partisan or independent outlets are mere guests who must abide by the rules or suffer the wrath of those in power.

### *Recommendations*

Journalists and civil society organizations and human rights defenders have a responsibility to monitor and report on the status of the press, including the violations of freedom by the government and measures taken to oppress the media.

Independent and partisan media should seek out professional training from local or international academics and professionals for their journalists, at all stages of their careers, to enhance journalistic practices, and to improve key standards such as objectivity, balance and fairness.

Civil society organizations and the Press Syndicate should strongly advocate that new laws on freedom of speech and information adhere to international standards and reflect democratic principles such as transparency and openness.

### *Limitations and Further Research*

While this study captured the similarities and differences that exist across three different ownership categories, namely government-owned, partisan, and independent press, only five out of approximately 15 daily newspapers were selected for content analysis, effectively eliminating a possible range of alternative –or matching- voices in the media.

It is also important to note that one medium, such as print media, cannot be credited for exclusively affecting audience's perceptions of issues or political actors. Despite enduringly low literacy rates and low Internet penetration, Egypt's modern-day media scene is in its most dynamic era yet. Citizens are faced with a plethora of options and an expansive media menu, and it is therefore inevitable that they become exposed to

competing media frames. Future research could investigate the different combinations of media outlets that citizens are exposed to, whether or not exposure to alternative frames renders audiences less vulnerable to biased communications, how citizens choose the ingredients of their media diets, and how such ingredients in turn collaborate in affecting their views and perspectives.

Framing theory predicts that the choices made by communicators during the framing processes have the power to influence the interpretations of the audience. In that regard, it would be useful to examine how the contrasting frames that appear therein would affect consumers of different news content.

Aside from framing effects, future research should investigate the factors that directly or indirectly shape the media content. Moreover, qualitative studies, including interviews and surveys of Egyptian journalists and ethnographic observations in local newsrooms, could be extremely valuable in finding out the restrictions and forces behind manifested news content.

Qualitative textual analysis could be also beneficial as a supplement to quantitative content analysis, in order to capture the hidden meanings behind texts.

It would be valuable to compare the content of the online news outlets, to investigate how news organizations are harnessing contemporary digital opportunities to cover the news, and how new and tradition media collaborate in creating news.



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## VI. APPENDIX I

- 1. Article ID#**
- 2. Newspaper name**
  1. Al Ahram
  2. Al Wafd
  3. FJP
  4. Al Masry Al Youm
  5. Al Shorouk
- 3. Date of article**
  1. 12 August 2012
  2. 3 December 2012
  3. 9 October 2012
  4. 27 February 2013
  5. 14 February 2013
  6. 11 January 2013
  7. 10 November 2012
  8. 19 August 2012
  9. 24 December 2012
  10. 5 March 2013
  11. 13 March 2013
  12. 27 December 2012
  13. 19 October 2012
  14. 2 March 2013
- 4. What is the article source as identified in the byline?**
  1. Reporter
  2. MENA
  3. AP
  4. AFP
  5. Reuters
  6. Foreign Newspaper
  7. Other Agencies
  8. Reporter & Agencies
  9. No source
  10. Other
- 5. What is the article's primary topic?**

*Look at headline, lead, and first three paragraphs to decide.*

  1. Morsi domestic meetings  
*Dialogue meetings, speeches*
  2. Economy  
*Stock market, currency value, investments, food prices*

3. Crime/security  
*Anything that has to do with interior ministry, security before protests, arresting rioters*
4. Elections  
*Parliamentary elections, presidential elections, syndicate elections*
5. Religion  
*News about Al Azhar, the Church*
6. Party news  
*Alliances between different parties, press conferences by liberal or opposition party members*
7. Strikes or protests  
*Including boycotts by government officials*
8. Disaster/accident
9. Education
10. Health
11. Sports
12. Transportation
13. Law/court  
*Court rulings, new laws*
14. Government Diplomacy
15. Constitution
16. Sexual harassment
17. Arab region news
18. International news (non-Arab)
19. Media
20. Egyptian Revolution
21. Human Rights
22. Other \_\_\_\_\_

### **Sourcing**

- 6. How many times is the government cited (quoted or paraphrased)?**  
*The government: President, Shura council, cabinet, ministers, governors, and judiciary*
- 7. How many times is the liberal opposition cited (quoted or paraphrased)?**  
*Activist movements including 6 April Movement, Askar Kazeboon, Ekhwan Kazeboon, National Salvation Front, The Popular Current, liberal parties (Masreyeen Ahrar, Ghad Al-Thawra, Al Wasat, etc.)*
- 8. How many times is the Islamist opposition cited (quoted or paraphrased)?**  
*El Noor, Abu Ismail, Al Gamaa Al Islamiya, etc.*
- 9. How many times are youth activists cited (quoted or paraphrased)?**



*Ultras, Revolutionary youth (“shabab al-thawra”), protestors, etc.*

**10. How many times are ordinary citizens cited (quoted or paraphrased)?**

*Includes: Victims of crime , victims of sexual harassment/abuse, Martyrs families, wounded in protests*

**11. How many times are stories from social media (Twitter or Facebook) cited?**

**12. How many times are stories from foreign media cited?**

**13. How many times are Arab/foreign leaders cited?**

**Photos**

**14. Who does the main photo in the story represent?**

1. President Morsi
2. Government
3. Muslim Brotherhood
4. Activists
5. Liberal Opposition
6. Islamist Opposition
7. Citizens

*Includes protests and demonstrations*

8. Clashes
9. Other
10. No photo

**Coverage Direction**

**15. If the president/government are mentioned in the article, are they presented favorably, unfavorably, or neutrally?**

1. Favorably  
*The article praises the president/government, presents mainly positive quotes*
2. Unfavorably  
*The article blames the president for problems, presents mainly negative quotes*
3. Neutrally  
*The article is balanced, it presents both positive and negative quotes or it simply relays facts*
4. Not mentioned

**16. If members of the Muslim Brotherhood are mentioned in the article, are they presented favorably, unfavorably, or neutrally?**

1. Favorably
2. Unfavorably
3. Neutrally
4. Not mentioned

**17. If the liberal opposition is mentioned in the article, are they presented favorably, unfavorably, or neutrally?**

1. Favorably
2. Unfavorably
3. Neutrally
4. Not mentioned

**18. If the Islamist opposition is mentioned in the article, are they presented favorably, unfavorably, or neutrally?**

1. Favorably
2. Unfavorably
3. Neutrally
4. Not mentioned

**19. If youth activists are mentioned in the article, are they presented favorably, unfavorably, or neutrally?**

1. Favorably
2. Unfavorably
3. Neutrally
4. Not mentioned

**20. If the constitution is mentioned in the story, how is it presented?**

1. Favorably
2. Unfavorably
3. Neutrally
- Not mentioned

**21. What type of rhetoric emerges throughout the article?**

1. Activist rhetoric  
*Look for revolutionary attitude*
2. Observer rhetoric  
*Look for neutral, balanced, facts and figures*
3. Government-mouthpiece rhetoric  
*Look for bias towards government, similarity to public service announcement*
4. Opposition rhetoric  
*Look for praising the opposition, advocates for opposition party or movement*
5. Other
6. NA

## **Framing the President/Opposition**

### **22. What is the identity/character impression conveyed about Morsi in the article?**

1. Morsi is a hero
2. Morsi is a villain
3. Morsi is trying his best
4. Morsi is passive
5. Morsi is progressive
6. Morsi is religious
7. Morsi is old-fashioned
8. Morsi does not keep his word
9. Morsi is a MB puppet
10. Other \_\_\_\_\_
11. NA

### **23. Which of the following keywords/labels are used to describe the president:**

1. Incompetent
2. Passive
3. Strong Leader
4. Dictator
5. Mubarak-Like
6. Democratic
7. Muslim Brotherhood (“Ekhwany”)
8. Puppet
9. Savior
10. Deceptive
11. Other \_\_\_\_\_
12. NA

### **24. Which of the following keywords/labels are used to describe the liberal opposition:**

1. Trouble-makers
2. Incompetent
3. Passive
4. Democratic
5. Remnants of Mubarak regime (“Felool”)
6. Infidels
7. Savior
8. Diplomatic
9. Self-serving
10. Deceptive
11. Disorganized/Fragmented
12. Other \_\_\_\_\_
13. NA

**25. Which of the following keywords/labels are used to describe the Islamist opposition:**

1. Radical/Extremist
2. Islamist/Ekhwany
3. Incompetent
4. Old-fashioned/Reactionary
5. Terrorist
6. Savior
7. Democratic
8. Smart
9. Pious/Religious
10. Organized/Structured
11. Deceptive
12. Disorganized/Fragmented
13. Other \_\_\_\_\_
14. NA

**26. Which of the following keywords/labels are used to describe the youth activists:**

1. Trouble-makers/rioters
2. Passive
3. Democratic
4. Remnants of Mubarak regime (“Felool”)
5. Infidels
6. Saviors
7. Diplomatic
8. Self-serving
9. Deceptive
10. Disorganized/Fragmented
11. Other \_\_\_\_\_
12. NA

**27. Does the article associate a political strategy by the president or the government with a universally supported goal or value?**

1. Freedom
2. Social Justice
3. Democracy
4. Better living conditions
5. Dignity
6. Renaissance “Nahda”
7. Other \_\_\_\_\_
8. NA

**28. Does the article associate a political strategy by the president or the government with a universally condemned concept?**

1. Dictatorship
2. Brotherhood-ization of the state (“Akhwan”)
3. Poverty
4. Corruption
5. Oppression
6. Capitalism/Disparity in wealth
7. Other \_\_\_\_\_
8. NA

**29. What impression does the article give about the state of the country?**

1. Egypt is taking steps towards democracy
2. Egypt is taking steps towards development  
(*infrastructure, economy, housing..*)
3. Egypt is regressing to Mubarak era politics
4. Egypt is becoming a religious state
5. Egypt is not safe
6. Egypt is going bankrupt
7. Egypt is divided/polarized
8. Egypt is stable
9. Other
10. Egypt is not the focus of the article

**Attribution of Responsibility Frame**

**30. Does the article indirectly or directly discuss a problem in Egypt?**

1. Yes  
*Problems include fragmentation of political parties/groups, bankruptcy, violence and clashes*
2. No

**31. Does the article suggest/ present evidence to suggest a cause for the problem?**

1. Government
2. Islamist Opposition
3. Liberal Opposition
4. Revolutionary youth
5. Civil society
6. Foreign leader
7. International organization
8. Combination of the above
9. Other \_\_\_\_\_
10. There is no cause suggested
11. NA (there is no problem, no cause suggested)

**32. Does the article suggest/ present evidence to suggest a solution to the problem?**

1. Government
2. Islamist Opposition
3. Liberal Opposition
4. Revolutionary youth
5. Civil society
6. Foreign leader
7. International organization
8. Other \_\_\_\_\_
9. No cause
10. NA

**33. Does the article describe how Egyptian citizens are affected by the problem?**

1. Yes (statistics, descriptions)
2. No
3. There is no problem

**34. Does the article describe how citizens are affected by the suggested solution?**

1. Yes (statistics, descriptions)
2. No
3. There is no problem

### **Economic Consequence Frame**

**35. Does the article focus on financial losses?**

1. Yes
2. No

**36. Does the article focus on financial gains?**

1. Yes  
*Including loans, investments, potential financial gains*
2. No

**37. Does the article suggest that a certain course of political action by the government has the power to affect economic situation?**

1. Yes- alleviate problem
2. Yes- increase problem
3. No- it has no power
4. NA

## **Conflict Frame**

### **38. Does the story refer to winners and losers?**

*Look for elections, syndicates*

1. Yes
2. No

### **39. Does the story reflect disagreement between parties or individuals?**

1. Within government
2. Between government and opposition
3. Between opposition and other opposition
4. Between government and activists
5. Other
6. No it does not reflect conflict

### **40. What type of conflict does the story present?**

1. Elections
2. Clashes
3. Arab conflict
4. International conflict
5. Combination of the above
6. Other
7. NA