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AN ANALYSIS OF THE MEDIA AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIP

Yusuf Yüksel*

ABSTRACT

This article analyzed the relationship between the media and government. Understanding the dynamics of this relationship is essential as it has implications on the information public gets and strong democracy. For this purpose, different media systems, theories and approaches (cascade model, indexing approach, propaganda theory and hegemonic perspective) were discussed in terms of the media-government relationship. It is clear that the degree of commercialization, political parallelism, and norms of journalistic professionalism in different media systems influence the degree and nature of this relationship. By taking into account these factors, scholars have suggested different theories and models to explain this relationship. Although each theory or model constitutes a unique map for making sense some of the important factors in this relationship, cascade model provides a more comprehensive picture. As suggested in this model, political actors, the media and the public mutually influence and interact with each other at different levels and under certain conditions. Specifically, the interaction of four different variables (cultural congruence, power, strategy, and motivation) influences the government's capacity of setting agenda, the circulation of the preferred frames and attention and support of the public. All these variables and how they are used in news management and political rhetoric were discussed and exemplified in this article.

Keywords: Media Systems, News Management, Political Rhetoric, Hegemony, Propaganda Theory, Indexing Approach, Framing, Cascade Model.

MEDYA VE HÜKÜMET İLİŞKİLERİNE YÖNELİK BİR ANALİZ

ÖZET

Bu makalede medya-hükümet ilişkileri analiz edilmiştir. Bu ilişkinin dinamiklerini anlamak, kamunun alacağı bilgi ve güçlü demokrasi üzerindeki sonuçları bağlamında önemlidir. Bu amaçla, bu makalede farklı medya sistemleri, farklı medya teori ve modelleri (hegemonya, propoganda teorisi, endeksleme yaklaşımı, çerçeveleme, basamak modeli) medya ve hükümet ilişkileri bağlamında tartışılmıştır. Farklı medya sistemlerindeki ticarileşme oranı, politik paralellik ve gazetecilik mesleğinin kurallarının bu ilişkinin doğası ve derecesini etkilediği açıktır. Bu faktörleri de dikkate alarak, akademisyenler bu ilişkiyi açıklayan farklı teori ve modeller ortaya koymuşlardır. Her bir teori veya modelin bu ilişkideki önemli faktörlerin anlaşılması noktasında özgün bir katkısı olmakla birlikte, basamak modeli daha geniş bir resim sunmaktadır. Bu modelde belirtildiği üzere, politik aktörler, medya ve kamu birbirini karşılıklı olarak farklı seviyelerde ve farklı şekillerde etkilemektedir. Özellikle, model içerisindeki dört farklı değişkenin etkileşimi (kültürel benzerlik, güç, strateji, motivasyon) hükümetlerin gündem belirleme kapasitesi, tercih ettikleri haber sunumlarının (frames) yayınlanması ve kamunun destek ve dikkatini etkilemektedir. Tüm bu değişkenler ve haber yönetimi ve politik retorik bağlamında kullanımı bu makalede tartışılmış ve örneklendirilmiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Medya Sistemleri, Haber Yönetimi, Politik Retorik, Hegemonya, Propoganda Teorisi, Endeksleme Yaklaşımı, Çerçeveleme, Basamak Modeli.

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the media and government is one of the most popular topics

of discussion among the media and communication scholars. Gallons of ink have been spilled by journalists, scholars, and politicians in different countries on the phenomenon of censorship, informed citizens,

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national security, the public interest, commercialization, media regulations, media norms, free speech and similar topics in terms of media and government relations. There is a never ending debate between the media owners, journalists and politicians in many different countries including Turkey on these issues. The last one is about the responsibility of the media in the media leak of minutes of meetings on Imralı Island and the 'peace process' that aim to find a political settlement to the terrorism and Kurdish conflict. In the international arena, the responsibility of media has been questioned in the different war periods such as Afghanistan and Iraq.

Critics in different countries have argued that the public is not well informed on certain issues, specifically about terrorism and national security. All these discussions and cases have also opened up a prolific space to discuss the explanatory power of different theories and models that are used to examine the media and government relations. Based on this ground, this study will discuss different media systems and theories in helping us understand the relationship between the media and government, including political rhetoric and news management in varied political systems.

There are many theories and models to explain the media-government relations which will find different degree of accepters and rejecters in the world of scholars. However, there would be little disagreement about the notion that this relationship is never fixed, but dynamic in nature which has been influenced by a number of things including, though are in no way limited to, on the macro level; political, economic, social structures, and historical context in which these structures interact, and on the micro level; media routines, political rhetoric, issues context, and strategies of politicians. This list can be further enhanced by some other variables, but it is sufficient to show the complexity of factors in place which possibly influence the media and government relations and implications of these relations on public opinion.

Within this framework, it is reasonable to say that none of the theories is comprehensive enough to provide all the answers all the times

by itself, but each one constitutes a unique map for making sense some of the important factors in the relationship of the media and government. Based on the aforementioned limitation, although this study primarily takes 'cascade model' to explain the relationship between the media and government, 'indexing approach', 'propaganda theory' and 'hegemonic perspectives', with their possible implications in certain times under certain conditions, will also be explained.

In order to understand these models, the author should first develop a clear understanding of different media systems that has a role in the dynamic nature of this relationship. As Hallin and Mancini (2004: 3) suggest media systems operate under many different political, economic, cultural, social systems which, in turn, influence the adaptability and application of these theories and approaches on relationship between the media and governments. In this sense, this article will first introduce political and media systems that influence the relationship between the media and government. This will be followed by an explanation of different theories and models and their implications to explain the media and government relationship. Finally, the paper will be finished by a discussion of difference of the media and government relationship in different national contexts and applicability of cascade model in different contexts.

COMPARISON OF MEDIA SYSTEMS

The first well-known attempt for comparison of media systems was conducted by Siebert in 1956 which still continues to dominate the literature. In this study, four theories of the media are expressed as the authoritarian, the libertarian, the Soviet, and the social responsibility. However, according to Hallin and Mancini (2004: 8-10), a critical evaluation of Siebert's theory shows that it is outdated, superficial, and empty of theoretical content to be useful in today's media research. Hallin and Mancini (2004: 12) has proposed three models of media systems 'liberal model, democratic corporation model, polarized pluralist model' designed on 'most similar systems' approach. This approach is suggested to provide valuable insights for each model and have a heuristic

value for the researcher who deals with comparison. There are a set of other comparative research regarding the media, political communication (see Esser and Pfetsch, 2004) that has improved the knowledge on different media and political communication systems as well as political systems. Although comparative research have certain limitations (see Gurevitch and Blumler, 2004), they are a basic way of enhancing the understanding of one's own media system and contrasting them critically with those prevalent in other countries. It might "serve as an essential antidote against ethnocentrism and premature generalization" (Schmitt-Beck 2004: 293) which, in turn, enables scholars to offer alternative options.

Despite the difficulty of suggesting a complete model regarding the place of the media in larger political, economic, and cultural systems, it has been basically assumed either as a dependent (effect) variable influenced by other systems or independent (cause) variable that mainly influences other systems (McQuail 2005: 34). However, it becomes more evident that, in many cases, there is a reciprocal relationship between the political, social and media systems. That is, the media have an impact of their own on other social systems as well as it is rooted in the aspects of other social structures such as political party system and political culture. Under this general assumption, Hallin and Mancini (2004: 21) adapted four basic criteria to make a comparison: "The development of media markets-commercialization-, political parallelism, the development of journalistic professionalism, the degree of nature and state interaction in the media system".

Though it is beyond the limits of this study to give full description of these criteria, some basic factors and implications of each criterion can be helpful to understand the role of them to examine the media and government relationship and adaptability of the certain theories and approaches in different national contexts. In '*political parallelism*', the media systems are evaluated in terms of their ties to political parties or their political orientation - commercial or ideological- (Hallin and Mancini 2004: 26). Although media models

depend on their autonomy from government as well as ideological orientations of the media, the general trend in the media models seem to become more often associated with general tendencies -catch all- of the public and political orientation (Swanson 2004: 45).

Another important criterion that makes a difference in the government and media relationship is the development of '*journalistic professionalism*'. Different models of journalistic professionalism can be classified under the degree of autonomy of journalists (i.e., from government, from owner, from editor), professional norms (i.e., standards of news worthiness, attitudes against official source), partisanship, and the claims of public interest (i.e., watchdog versus adversary), and the role of journalist (i.e., objectivity or interpretive) (Donsbach and Patterson, 2004: 251).

The other criterion, '*the role of the state in the system*', depends on the degree of public service broadcasting, and other media regulations such as libel laws, hate speech laws, ownership laws, professional secrecy laws, and broadcasting licensing rights (McQuail 2005). All these regulations have been negotiated through the political system and influence the role of the government as a power to intervene the media as well as media's freedom and ability to resist government.

Finally, '*commercialization*' (the development of media markets) addresses the transformation of media as commercial entities that aims to make profit by delivering information and entertainment to individuals. The profit orientation, power of public broadcasting, media ownership trend and deregulation of media ownership are some important things that address the range of commercialization in a media system (Esser and Pfetsch 2004: 26). The commercialization of the media has changed the conditions of politics, journalism practices and the role of media in the system in terms of their connection to government, and economic systems (Holtz-Bacha 2004: 213; McChesney 1999). As Hallin and Mancini suggests (2004: 22), with the emergence of commercialization, the media became more

differentiated from political institutions, but less differentiated from economic systems.

IMPLICATIONS OF COMPARATIVE RESEARCH

The media is essential part of any political and social system. They inform, amuse, entertain, educate, and inculcate people with the beliefs and values of society and integrate them into the system (Herman and Chomsky, 1988: 3). The media provides a sphere for debate and a set of channels for politicians, candidates, political parties, interests groups and public as well as the means of publicity and influence for these actors (McQuail, 2005: 18). On the one hand, governments inevitably need for legitimacy for their actions which require justifying their actions publicly. They need to cultivate a positive image to get an advantage against their opponents, win public approval and gain political power by using the media (Kohut, 2007: 190). On the other hand, the media, especially news media, acquire most of the information from official sources to fill out news hole on daily basis with a more affordable way (Bennett, 1990: 106). In this sense, the relationship of governments and the media are inevitable in every system. However, the nature of relationship varies significantly in different political and media systems. Based on the aforementioned discussion, it would be fair to say that the role of political actors within the system of government, the system of politics (i.e., presidential versus parliamentary system, candidate versus party elections), characteristics of the media system (i.e., commercialization, autonomy of the media, competition), and professional roles of the journalist (i.e., objectivity, adversary, public informant) have inescapable influence on the relationship of media and government. All these factors reflect the differences among various countries.

There are some comparative research that shows how the differences in national context change the style and form of relationship. For instance, Gruvitch and Blumler, (2004: 325), in their comparative research as to the influence of different party systems on the way electoral campaigns are designed on the web sites, found that in party system, politicians see themselves

as a party member rather than individual representatives, as such they tend to use party channels for communication with the people in their district, whereas U.S House of Representatives consider themselves primarily as representatives of their district and aim to improve communication and campaign via their individual web sites. In this sense, despite the increasing use of the web sites in Europe by parties as well as individual politicians, as Chadwick (2006) observes in his study on e-campaigning in the U.S., internet politics is still mainly an American phenomenon.

In another study, Donsbach and Patterson (2004: 251) examined how the changes in the norms of journalism about the objectivity influence news selection. In the U.S., journalists view journalism in terms of '*objective*' style of reporting on '*facts*' and '*balanced*' in the sense of presenting both sides fairly. However, German style gives superiority of opinion over news and aims well reasoned interpretations which is claimed to be more realistic than the American style of objectivism. Thus, their findings show that U.S. journalists are the most aggressive supporters of press freedom, also face the strongest editorial control in terms of factuality and accuracy of news (Donsbach and Patterson, 2004: 271). There are a number of other studies showing how commercialized broadcasting, legal regulations, political communication strategies influence the media and government relationship.

On the other hand, some scholars assert that (Esser and Pfetsch 2004; Hallin and Mancini 2004,) commercialization, globalization, modernization and secularization as well as technology lead to a trend among media and political communication systems toward a convergence and homogenization. Based on mainly under the influence of commercialization, the media organizations aim to reach the maximum audience which, then, can be translated into maximum profit (McChesney 1999: 5). Compatible with this purpose, the media mainly pursue the goal of producing entertainment and information to reach maximum audience rather than just disseminating information. For this sake, there has been much focus on tabloidization,

sensational news discourse, dramatization (McQuail 2005). In addition, the media became more differentiated from political parties and other political actors as a result of mainly commercialism (Kriesi 2004: 45). Political communication systems cannot be thought out of this trend. Politics is increasingly becoming presidentialized. Party centered patterns of campaigns rooted in organized social networks have been undermined by a media centered patterns. Political parties tend to blur their ideological identities and become catchall parties. This trend is expressed as a turn from '*political logic to media logic*' (Esser and Pfetsch 2004: 12). It is hard to say how far the homogenization will go, but it has certain limitations drawn from different political system, media regulations, public broadcasting, professional norms, and state traditions (Hallin and Mancini 2004: 78). Based on our initial purpose, it would be fair to say that national contexts in which media systems work still makes a significant difference in the nature and style of the media and government relationships.

THEORIES OF THE MEDIA AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

This part of the study deals with the theories and models to explain the relationship between the media and government as well as political rhetoric and news management. The relationship between the media and government has attracted scholarly attention since the use of propaganda increasingly after the First World War to transform public for different purposes by the governments. The rise of ideological movements in Europe and the Second World War as well as the rise of the alternative media such as radio and TV increased the attention of scholars to the media and government relationship and its implication on public opinion (Cobb and Elder 1971: 894). As Lipmann (1922: 29) rightly observes "the world that we have to deal with politically is out of reach, out of sight, out of mind". In fact, most of the time, we face a world with which we do not have direct experience. Under this condition, the media help us reach out the world which is inevitably constructed by certain news frames which are selected under different motivations with

consistent biases (McQuail 2005: 36). As we don't have opportunity for independent validation of information for most of the events, public inevitably relies on the media (Van Gorp 2005: 484). At this point, the media does not operate as a fully independent actor. It has a reciprocal relationship with governments which certainly influences the news management and the information public gets. Scholars of mass communication have developed different theories and models to explain this dynamic relationship and its consequences on the information public gets. Communication scholars mainly have referred the concept of '*hegemony*', '*propaganda model*', '*indexing approach*', and '*cascade model*' to explain the relationship between the government and the media.

'*Hegemony*' which was developed by Gramsci, emphasize the role of powerful groups to constitute a direction to society on economic, cultural, judicial and political levels. Media is claimed to be as key apparatus of state to produce hegemony. As Hallin (1994: 23) summarized this view, "cultural institutions like the media are part of the process by which a world-view compatible with the existing structure of power in society is reproduced". In this sense, media does not represent things that already exist; it produces what we believe to be natural, and leading the domination of some interests (Deetz 1994). Any statement which looks like the report of truth or a fact may involve some taken for granted propositions of dominant ideology. Although Hall (1982) recognize the active role of human agency to create meanings and resistance, hegemony theorists believe that "government officials keep the information available to the public within such narrow ideological boundaries that democratic deliberation and influence are all but impossible" (Entman 2004: 4). Despite they accept the likelihood of elite disagreement; this is not the norm. By emphasizing the elite agreement and harmony on the first place, harmony and consistent information framed by the interests of dominant group becomes the (not inevitable) general tendency of the media (Entman 2003: 415). However, hegemony is an abstract concept that is not testable in a specific way.

Taking a political economy perspective, Herman and Chomsky (1988) presented '*propaganda model*' in their 1988 book '*Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*' to explain the dynamics of the media and government relationship. Although propaganda model does not directly refer to hegemony, it provides a testable theory which basically includes the components of sustaining hegemonic power of governments over the system by using the media. In this model, the ownership (profit oriented media giants), advertising (main income), heavy reliance to official sources for information (beat system, PR operations of government, use of expert), flak (negative responses to a media statement and program), and ideology help elites to manage news and marginalize dissent, and in this way allow government and other elite groups to dominate public discourse and reproduce existing structure of power in society (Herman and Chomsky 1988).

In contrast, for the '*indexing approach*', elite disagreement is central (Bennett 1990; Entman 1991). The indexing approach argues that when there is a consensus between elites on a certain issue, media coverage supports and promotes government policy. However, where there is a lack of consensus between the elites and division in the government, the media is free to cover the range of views presented by these people which in a way limits the media's role as mere transmission of propaganda (Bennett 1990: 103). That is, "the range of media opinion in a time of conflict in the administration will only reflect the range of that conflict and will not, at least in the mainstream media, go beyond it" (Robertson 2004: 458). Thus, the role of media for independent contribution seems not very likely in this approach.

Entman (2003, 2004) claimed that hegemony, propaganda model and indexing approach have certain limitations that should be addressed to understand the relationship between the government and media. These models are based on mostly the events of the pre-Cold War era, and thus limited to respond to changes in international and internal politics, the media system, and globalization. In the last a few

decades, differences among elites are no longer the exception, but the rule. In this sense, government elites and other elites have far less freedom in manipulating and dominating public opinion than the hegemonic perspective suggests (Patrick and Thrall 2007: 95). Although indexing theory recognizes the disagreement of elites in the first place, it is limited to explain the situations why political leaders sometimes deviate from certain lines, sometimes not, the role of public and journalists, news text, and how they are related to each other (Entman 2003: 416-417). In order to address the deficiencies of these approaches, Entman (2003, 2004) proposes cascade model which will be explained in the following section together with framing which is needed to understand the model.

FRAMING AND CASCADE MODEL

The framing theory finds its roots at Bateson's (1972: 10) usage of this metaphor as "principles of organization which govern events". In the following period, many definitions of frame and framing have flourished with some common and distinctive features. For instance, Gitlin (1979: 12) defined it as "persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual". This definition is compatible with the Gamson's (1989: 157) definition of frame as a "central organizing principle or idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue". If we take it as news frame, this definition implies that a news frame helps the readers make sense of news stories. As Gamson (1989: 157) suggests, this framing is inevitable part of producing news. That is, the news does not portray reality that already exists, but journalists necessarily select some words over others in the organization of news which shapes reality and gives the meaning to the news.

In fact, in order to understand the role of framing in the cascade model, we need to focus on the process of news framing. In Entman's (1993: 52) definition, process, selection and salience (highlighting) is the core process of framing, such that "framing 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 for the item described". Framing is highly critical for government officials and the media to exercise political influence over each other and over the public because the way how you define a problem promote particular perceptions, interpretation, evaluation, and solution that benefit one side while obscuring the other sides (Entman 1993: 52-54). This framing process entails selecting and highlighting certain words, phrases, metaphors, choosing certain pictures, referring certain sources, and making certain contextual references (Reese, Gandy and Grant 2001: 23), which shapes the way public think about the event or issues and ultimately influences public opinion. The media leak of Imrali minutes of meeting and the debate among politicians provide a good example of the importance of framing. While Justice and Development Party (AKP) promote a particular problem definition by focusing the person leaking this document, Opposition Parties highlight the content of these documents to influence the public opinion in a different way.

CASCADE MODEL

Cascade model addresses the deficiencies of indexing model, and presents a bigger and dynamic picture of relationship of different forces (the government, elites, media and public opinion). The main point is that political actors, the media and the public mutually influence and interact with each other at different levels, under certain conditions (Kriesi 2004: 45-46). In this sense, it demonstrates the variation and stratification that emerges as a result of mutual influence among different forces (Entman 2004: 50). Political actors, mainly presidents or prime ministers, have the most independent ability to produce events and decide which mental associations to activate. The media most probably report it (Keisen 2004: 46). However, the interaction among elites, media, media frames and the public lead to a complex system of interaction which cannot be simply controlled or dominated by one of the actors

(Patrick and Thrall 2007: 96). While citizens now tend to perceive politics exclusively through the media (frames), politicians also tend to rely exclusively on the media for their perception of the citizens' concerns. Especially, "ambiguous events present more opportunities for players outside the administration, including the media, to affect framing" (Entman 2004: 50). Thus, all the forces in the system try to optimize their control over the events with different degree of power.

At this point, the question is when governments' preferred frame flows down and dominates thinking and communication at each level. This depends on the interaction of four variables: '*Cultural congruence, power, strategy, and motivation*' (Entman 2003: 37). Motivations and cultural congruence work internally, while elite power and strategy operate from the outside. When events are congruent with the cultural schemas of a society, it is more likely to be accepted and supported by the public and the media. For some events, like 9/11 in the U.S. (Entman 2003) or the terrorist attack to civil citizens in the Kumrular street, the government, public, and the media are so perfectly aligned in terms of cultural congruence that the media organizations are simply instrumentalized by the political actors. That is, the more an event fits established schemas that are dominant in culture it is more likely that the media will follow the government's frame preferences (Entman 2003: 37). However, the media have more autonomy when events are ambiguous. Due to the absence of predetermined habitual schemas on some events, like Ergenekon trial in Turkey, it is much more difficult for governments to manage the media.

In addition to cultural congruence, strategy, power and motivation are other important variables that influence political actor's ability to get circulated their own frames. In terms of motivation, governments try to package frames in a way that fits the motivations of media staff such as autonomy, objectivity, and other normative values to get it circulated (Entman 2003: 421). Power and strategy works as external forces. For instance, military situations give power to administration to control the

facts on the ground. At the same time, the power of governments depends on the approval ratings and effectiveness of administration. The media staff also has some independent power that arises from their capacity to ask question and select some words over others in the organization of news and transmit it. Lastly, strategies are related with word choice, information distribution and withholding, timing which is mostly defined by political actors (Entman 2003: 422).

Thus, the goal of the administration is to get one-sided news coverage that favors its framing of the issue. The more skillfully the governments apply power, strategy, and motivations, the more completely it will succeed in managing the news and having public opinion on its side. Within this context, the next section deals with how political actors manage news and use political rhetoric to frame issues for their sake.

NEWS MANAGEMENT AND POLITICAL RHETORIC

Governments generally try to reinforce the circulation of their preferred frames on the media and reach the public to get its attention and support (Kriesi 2004: 46). This process obliges using some organized attempts on the side of governments because they cannot count on being able to simply instrumentalize the media. The media do not necessarily concentrate on the “substantive part of the messages supplied by officials, but they try to demonstrate their independence by focusing on the social and personal aspects of the political contest and on the strategic intentions of the political actors” (McQuail 2005: 192). The media organizations use their power that comes from selection of news (gate keeping), framing of news content. In this sense, the media does not only provide information, but also may become autonomous actors in the political process. In this process, the relationship of the media and government can be considered in terms of power struggle to influence the agenda and make their own frames part of the story, in an effort to influence public opinion (McCombs 2004: 12).

For these purposes, governments seek to deploy strategies to communicate their messages rather than expect their messages to be simply instrumentalized by the media. Based on this discussion, news management can be described as the strategic attempts of government to influence media agenda and frames which, in turn, benefit government in terms of public opinion (Kohut 2007: 191). In this view, political actors encompass the creation, distribution, and control of the information in ways that support government cause for a desired effect on public opinion. There are a number of strategies followed by governments for this purpose. The success of these strategies depends on national context, issue context, individual context and application of news management skillfully considering these different factors at work (Entman 2007: 170).

In terms of news management, governments have a set of tools that they can use effectively. One of them is having the control of the information on certain issues, especially war and international terrorism. A number of studies show a heavy reliance on official sources on foreign issues by the media staff (Herman and Chomsky, 1988; Reese, 2004). Especially, in international conflicts, news media typically give much more weight to official sources in their country due to partly the accessibility of information and partly the norm of claiming objectivity by using official sources. This situation provides an inevitable power to government sources to adapt their preferred frames to an issue and event. This power is more dominant on military situations which let governments control ‘*the facts on the ground*’ (Robertson 2004: 35). ‘*Embedded journalism*’ illustrates the power of government to control the information during the war. In fact, the use of official sources and the practice of embedded journalism inevitably lead to unintended bias and one-sided news coverage that favors government (Hallin 1988: 22). Reese (2004) convincingly expresses how embedded journalism undermines the autonomy of journalists in terms of protection, leading military logic, one-sided news and heroic frames among journalists.

In addition to institutionalized events, governments can also create pseudo events of their own which gain media attention. They have important resources for professional public relations and political marketing that are used to create pseudo events (Herman and Chomsky 1988). "Nearly all political parties and government agencies employ news managers and spin doctors whose task is to maximize the favorable presentation of policy and action and minimize any negative aspect" (McQuail 2005: 325). They use their technical knowledge about the production and impact of political messages and arrange the circulation of political messages by using the right media at the right time (Cook 1989; West 2005, 2008). Press conferences, press releases with carefully articulated political messages are some of the strategies they use for this purpose. In his study, Yang (2003: 231) found that more than half of the news on the newspapers is originated from press conferences or press releases. At this point, practice of journalism illustrated as the beat system, need for filling out news hole on daily basis, and economical pressure to reduce costs serve to governments to adapt news management more easily. For instance, Reese (2004) showed how '*rescue Private Jessica Lynch*' case were packaged by spin doctors in a way which is beneficial both to the military for its image management and to news organizations seeking drama.

Political rhetoric is inevitable part of the news management. The success of any attempt to communicate messages to public partly depends on the success of rhetoric. As Lakoff (2004: 2) states '*language matters*'. It is a key aspect for political actors to win public and the media support for their policies. Rhetoric deals with properties of speech or text, message construction, message source, metaphors or choices (Neuendorf 2001: 12). Word choices (emotional, simple, repetitious, unambiguous, culturally resonant), the strategic use of information and linguistic tools, generalization, categorization, and stereotyping are among the resources that help political actors to have greater control over framing (Jamieson and Waldman 2003: 1-5). In terms of framing, the critical thing is the definition of problem by using rhetorical tools which in turn determines moral judgment, remedy, and the solution of

the problem (Entman 1993: 51). It becomes more evident that political rhetoric and news management is inevitable instruments of political actors, will be much more in the near future.

DISCUSSION

The scholars of communication mostly focused on the media and government relations for its implication on public opinion. The nature of this relationship has clear consequences on what public gets as news. Although there are some scholars who believe in informed public opinion may not be desirable in certain situations, it is generally agreed that it is in the national interest to have an independent press fostering informed, independent citizen deliberation (Carey 2002: 71). For instance, Norris (2004: 115) has suggested both independency and access of the media systems are necessary conditions to strengthen good governance and informed citizenship. Both Habermas's '*ideal speech situation*' and Barber's (2003) '*strong democracy*' notions emphasize the importance of informed citizenship that leads independent deliberation for the democracy. Compatible with these goals, the journalists have also defined their role as watchdog, public interest and maintaining democracy (McQuail 2005). However, most scholars who studied this relationship clearly showed that the media are usually passive rather than adversarial, especially in times of war or international conflicts like terrorism. The media are also criticized for being susceptible to manipulation by the powerful groups. As cascade model suggests, although this might be the case for many situations, there are certain cases when the media can deviate from dominant frames and play an active role. The set of opportunities and constraints for an active role of the media depends on the political, media, and economic systems in which it occurs as well as the power, strategy, and motivation factors expressed in the scope of the model.

On the one hand, all these forces work differently in international conflicts. As briefly stated, due to partly the accessibility of information and patriotic attitudes and national identity of media professional, the governments

have an extensive degree of support given by the media during the international conflicts. The schemas that originated from previous stories in the media such as '*support our troops, patriotism, freedom*' provide cultural schemas that can be activated during the war or international conflicts (Tunstall 2008: 82). On the other hand, the media can play much more central and independent role in domestic issues, especially in the election process. Decline in ideological differences, weakened party identification, individualism, commercialism, the U.S. style presidential, competitive democratic environment and new technology emerged media as an autonomous power in the center of political process (Chadwick 2006: 12). The political communication is mainly mediated by the media rather the political parties which is called as '*media oriented political communication*' (Pfetsch 2004: 325). This situation brings a specific set of interaction between political actors and the media in which political actors aim to attain positive media representations and the broadest possible attention to audiences. News management and political rhetoric conducted by professionalized spin doctors become a strategic political resource for political actors in order to communicate their messages and circulate their preferred frames (Hacker 2000: 1-2). In addition, government rhetoric and credibility of governments become more critical in order to convince others to see things as you do and support your goal (Entman 2004).

Commercialization is also essential in terms of its positive and negative effect on the media and government relationship. "Media organizations in highly commercialized media systems obey profit oriented imperative of maximum audience reach and thus higher advertising revenues" (Pfetsch 2004: 356). In this way, the media become more autonomous from government and political institution (less press-party parallelism), while becoming more dependent to economical systems in terms of advertising, profit and economical regulations (Tunstall 2008: 82). At this point, while some scholars emphasize the importance of being independent at least organically from government or parties and availability of multiple sources for public information as

positive aspects of commercialism, some scholars argue that it has decreased the flow and quality of information and discussion (Barrett 2004: 435). Although Hallin (1988: 3) did not find strong evidence for the decreased political content in the media, he provided evidence for commercial and multiplication of channels erodes to some extent strong public service broadcasting and enforces more entertainment oriented '*infotainment*' forms of political content to reach maximum audience. It is obvious that tabloidization, sensational news discourse, dramatization become more dominant in the media. This argument is important for its implications on the quality of information given by the media for being informed citizen and participative democracy.

Another important critique is about the consequences of having profit orientation on the news content. The argument is that the newspaper owner and editors take into account the commercial and political interests of the firm more than quality of papers. In fact, 15 years of uninterrupted support of media giant Robert Murdock to Margaret Thatcher during her ministerial period in the UK for loosing monopoly rules is an example of symbiotic relationship of the media owners and political actors (Tunstall 2008: 82-84). In the same way, the use of media for commercial and political interests of media owners has been questioned extensively in Turkey. There are also some statements of editors of newspapers for the involvement of media owners to news content in some ways thought it is not on daily basis (Downie and Kaiser 2003: 26). In addition, the profit orientation influences the content of papers by cutting downs, closing downs and ultimately undermines the notion that journalism is a public service (McChesney 1999: 45).

In this sense, this orientation has some implications for the media and government relationships and the information public gets. Firstly, as illustrated in the example, common interests of the media and government leads to decrease in quality, increase bias and manipulation of public by news management. Secondly, cutting the costs leads to more reliance to public relation oriented news - pseudo news- which is mostly presented by

government and interest groups that reflect their preferred frames. Thirdly, the concentration of media ownership can lead to decrease in public interest and watchdog orientations of the media and become more status quo, profit and business oriented (McChesney 1999: 45). In addition, increasing competition might loose the standards of confirmation, accuracy, and fairness. In fact, commercialization has affected many countries in similar ways. However, strong autonomous public broadcasting (like BBC) culture in some countries and monopoly laws balance the weaknesses of commercialism to some extent. In contrast, some public broadcasting organizations are more like mouthpiece of governments. In general, commercial media seems more independent from pressure compared to many public broadcasting organizations, but they have also their own dependencies.

The norms of journalism are another important factor that makes a difference between different systems. As we already mentioned, in the U.S., journalists view journalism in terms of 'objective' style of reporting on 'facts' and 'balanced' in the sense of fairly presenting both sides. Although these norms bring a set of standards to journalism, they also mask certain deficiencies such as reliance on 'neutral expert or authority' (Herman and Chomsky 1988:) which, in turn, creates a bias for the sake of certain groups and government. Ideological or interpretive stance in other countries has also created its own bias towards government intervention.

Lastly, the role of the state in the system depends in different countries. The regulations such as libel laws, hate speech laws, ownership laws, professional secrecy laws are stricter in most of the Western countries (McQuail 2005). The idea of freedom of speech is more strongly supported in the U.S. However, this idea is interpreted in terms of deregulations rather than promoting alternative views and stronger democracy on the media (Carey 2002: 71; Schiller 1989: 2).

All these factors provide valuable insights into understanding the differences and similarities in the media and government relationships in

different countries. In this sense, all the models of this relationship, including cascade, that emerged in a specific national context cannot be applied easily to another country. For instance, the role and power of government and bureaucracy is different in various countries due to political system. In addition, the place and power of the media in the system as well as the norms of journalism (i.e., objectivity versus interpretive) are quite different which influence both selection of news and framing criteria. On another level, although the level of power of actors, their ability and methods to adapt different strategies, the nature of motivators and culturally congruent concepts and words change, these variables in general seem to have a value in different contexts. All these differences shape the way these factors express themselves in a given country and are very likely to have a decisive impact on the kinds of strategies that will be used based on the opportunities and constraints they set in the system. So, the role public can play in the system and information they get for deliberation very much influenced in different systems.

However, the basic assumptions of the model have a value in terms of understanding the media and government relationship in different systems and issues. For instance, Turkish government is able to get support of elites in general, the media and public on their policies regarding Israel-Palestine conflict, but they do not enjoy the same level of support on their policies regarding Syria which suggests limits on the government's ability to control every foreign issue. The problems in refugee camps, criticism of the policies by the members of opposition party, the media, and divided public support emerged a different dynamics than the situation in Palestine case. Similarly, while Bush administration was able to get support of elites, the media and public before the War in Afghanistan, they did not enjoy the same level of support before the War in Iraq. The culturally congruent words and images and the nation in danger discourse of 9/11 did not have the force they once had (Waisbord 2002: 201). 9/11 was a '*perfect storm*' which influenced not only the government, public but also the journalists that possess the same cultural values and beliefs which has increased patriotism,

perception of threat, and fear of being perceived as unpatriotic among journalists for a period of time (Kern et al. 2003). 9/11 case can be viewed through the assumptions of hegemony and indexing. However, as discussed, this was not the case in the long run. The variables of model (cultural congruence, power, strategy, and motivation) imply a new set of dynamics among government, elites, the media, and public which can be analyzed by this model. It can be concluded that the model can be applied to understand the different dynamics in these different issues rather than offering a hegemonic or indexing view which might be valid in certain cases, under certain conditions and periods though. This situation gives a brief picture of this argument about the media's role being a more complicated role which depends on national and issues context as well as other factors.

In addition to different issues, this model can also be adapted in different countries, if you know the dynamics of relationship among the forces in a national context as well as broader political, economical, and the media system. Thus, the important thing is to understand the dynamic nature of relationship among different forces and their interaction based on the variables in the model and the macro level factors that influence the model itself.

CONCLUSION

There are certainly clear differences in each country. The essential instruments needed for informed public in any country for both foreign policies and political communication is pluralism, independence and access (Norris 2004). Although scholars mostly assert that the public is not well informed in times of war and international conflicts, there are still some grounds for hope as suggested by the model. Entman (2004: 17) proposed that "it is not enough for media to present information in ill-digested and scattered morsels. Rather, what citizens need is a counter frame constructed of culturally resonant words and images, one that attains sufficient magnitude to gain wide understanding as a sensible alternative to the government's interpretation". If a counter frame has been provided in the media side, public do have a better chance to construct their own opinions.

In addition, the new medium of the Internet certainly has provided new channels of information, new information networks (global, local) and frames which is not easily controlled by the governments and powerful big media. As McQuail (2005:544) suggests "those who communicate within the space are linked together in numerous and diverse forms of network or group. There are many, often quite small, minorities involved, but the participants, if it were possible to aggregate them, would constitute a sizeable minority in any society and also probably a larger minority of the active citizens". As idealistic as it may sound, it is not impossible to achieve.

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