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The Vice President in the media

Representation of Kamala Harris in American newspapers

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Abstract

This study aimed to clarify Vice President Kamala Harris's framing in newspapers with a different political orientation by the following research questions: How is Vice President Kamala Harris framed in the New York Times and Wall Street Journal, and how do textual framings link to the context of the two newspapers in American society? The focus of the study was on the run-up to her vice-presidency as a woman and woman of color. By analyzing ten feature articles, which were collected based on five major events in the race for the presidency, a difference between the newspaper was found. As predicted, overall, the personal frame was found as the most prominent frame, followed by the horse race frame, which indicates that someone competes, and lastly, the issue frame. This implies for both the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal. Additionally, concerning the differences between the two papers, the Wall Street Journal had more emphasis on Harris's color and gender compared to the New York Times. This indicates that the Wall Street Journal still sees people of color in those positions as remarkable. Contrary to expectations, the Wall Street Journal focused more often on political actions and Harris's opinion and political viewpoint than the New York Times. This is in line with quotations from the newspaper because the Wall Street Journal quotes Harris more often than the New York Times, which could indicate that they see Harris more seriously as a candidate.

Keywords: framing, patterns, political orientation, Liberal, Conservatives, Republicans, Democrats

Introduction

America is divided into two political parties: Democrats and Republicans. The Democratic Party is perceived as Liberal and the Republican Party as Conservative. In general, there are differences between the views and policies of those parties and how the public evaluates them. Based on a survey filled in by American citizens, Democrats score higher on ethics, honesty, speaking up for ordinary American people who are not in the upper class, and they are more in favor of a variety of people compared to Republicans (Pew Research Center, 2019). Thus, whether a Democrat or Republican leads the government might bring other values and beliefs to the government.

Not only is the government in America divided, but the media is so too. The division in politics leads to a division in media. Consequently, the public can choose from which newspaper they want their information (Mutz, 2006). Most newspapers in America are divided into either a left- or right political orientation. This division could influence how certain issues are framed in particular newspapers and is even more significant when there is something to fight for, for example, the presidency (Mullainathan & Shleifer, 2005). For example, prior research found a difference in the framing of Trump, former President of America, in the New York Times (NYT), which is considered left political orientated, and the Wall Street Journal (WSJ), which is considered right political orientated (BU Libraries, n.d.). This difference was about the newspapers' attitude towards Trump's choice to no longer be part of a deal with Iran. The WSJ reported significantly less criticism on Trump compared to the NYT. In addition, the NYT reported more on Trump's character and his motivation in this matter to criticize him (Khanjani, 2020).

For four years, America had a Republican president, Donald Trump. Trump becoming President has led to a far-right government and a more and more divided America in terms of views and political ideas (Dimock & Gramlich, 2021). During his presidency, Trump made different negative statements about women and issues about race. Firstly, as an example in the USA today, a paper considered neutral in political orientation (BU Libraries, n.d.), Trump announced, in his campaign for the presidency in 2021, that he wanted to get the male spouse back to work. This raised the discussion of whether he forgot that women are suitable for the working environment (Santucci, n.d.). Secondly, the phrase of Trump: 'Make America Great Again', is one of the elements that indicate that he was aimed at a white-elite world because, in his opinion, America's diversity of ethnic groups was too diverse (Bobo, 2017).

After four years of having a republican government, America will have a Democratic government again with Joe Biden as President. And for the first time in history, the Vice

President is a Black woman: Kamala Harris. As mentioned, Liberals and Conservatives differ in their political viewpoints and policies. For instance, liberals are more in favor of a variety of people compared to conservatives (Pew Research Center, 2019). Because newspapers also have their own political orientation, could this influence their viewpoints towards the first female Vice President of color? And more important, would newspapers use their own political beliefs and viewpoints while writing those news reports? This study will try to clarify how Harris was framed in left- and right-oriented newspapers in her run-up to becoming Vice President.

Mass media and the representation of social reality

Media nowadays is everywhere and has different forms, for example, television, social media, and newspapers. The dictionary describes mass media as: “a medium of communication (such as newspapers, radio, or television) that is designed to reach the mass of the people” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Mass media has various functions and influences the public. Firstly, people receive information that they did not particularly ask for, and this information could differ from their own views and opinions. Secondly, these could become part of the topics people further discuss in their daily communication. Lastly, personal communication on, for example, politics decreases because it is offered more via the media. Therefore people depend on the information media provides rather than communication with other people (Mutz & Martin, 2001).

Media can offer an image of reality to which people do not have direct access. Thus, remarkable events or persons are transformed into articles written by journalists, who provide a second-hand news report, which is a report about an action or person without actively participating in the action (McCombs & Valenzuela, 2021). News reports are believed to be an objective and neutral opinion about events to inform the public. However, news feature articles give journalists the possibility to express news more creatively without violating objectivity (Knuuti, 2020). Thus, news has different forms which could influence how articles are written and organized, and therefore, how someone or something is portrayed in the media (McCombs & Valenzuela, 2021).

Framing in mass media

The world is ordered in codes, which allow people to understand the world (Fowler, 1991). “Language and other codes, most importantly language, have a cognitive role: they provide an organized mental representation for our experience” (Fowler, 1991, p. 3). Such organized

representations in articles are referred to as ‘frames’. Framing is “to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text” (Entman, 1993, p. 52). The function of frames is to make certain information in communication more “noticeable, meaningful, or memorable” than others (Entman, 1993, p. 53). It is especially important in serious news, such as news about politics, because news reports are supposed to be an objective representation of the event or person.

The objectivity can, consciously or unconsciously, be compromised due to framing. In news about politics, framing can have some important possibilities. It could exclude, include, strengthen, and weaken opinions. Additionally, without communicating a clear bias, it could support a certain political orientation without the public detecting it. In consequence, it could, for example, be “helping to overthrow a president” (Tankard, 2001, p. 96) due to the media’s own values and ideas. Thus, it could either make or break a person with regard to how the media frames the person, or it could represent events in different ways.

For instance, a study on the differences in the portrayal of a radical group, such as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), showed how media could frame events differently. The choices in images, words, or phrases a journalist makes can change a viewpoint, and eventually, the opinion people express against others. Namely, people exposed to articles that describe the KKK as part of free opinion expression were more tolerant against the group than those exposed to articles that define it as a radical group (Nelson, Clawson & Oxley, 1997). Thus, how an issue is framed also influences the discussion that can follow.

Representation in different media

Media may cover the same issue differently because of various contextual factors. These include different journalistic guidelines, processes in someone’s thinking, attitudes concerning the news, and the influence with how much power journalists have (Rafiee, Spooren & Sanders, 2018). For instance, Entman’s (1991) study on media framing in U.S. media of two similar events, namely two shot down airplanes, one Korean flight by the Soviets and one Iran flight by the U.S, with a similar amount of victims. The incident with the Soviets received significantly more media coverage than the U.S. incident. Overall, the Soviets were portrayed as responsible for the incident, whereas the U.S. did not receive these types of critics in writing while the events were similar. Remarkably, the U.S. media was more critical of the Soviets in their framing than of themselves by framing it as more important and as a moral action. In contrast, U.S. action was not presented so much in the media, and it was framed as a technical action (Entman, 1991).

The newspaper's political orientation could also play a role in representing a person or event. An example of differences between the framing of left- and right-oriented newspapers was the framing of the Women's March on Washington, which took place a day after Trump's inauguration. The NYT wrote from a supportive view; for instance, by reporting the protest as peaceful, the protest group as normalized, and they shared the message of the protest successfully. On the contrary, FOX News, considered right-oriented, wrote from a more non-supportive view, for instance, by focusing on the intention of the protest and whether these were good or bad, by taking quotations and behavior out of context, and by not sharing the message of the protesters as it was meant (Nicolini & Hansen, 2018).

Media could also focus on social actors; this is shown in a study on the framing of the British royal members Meghan Markle and Kate Middleton in newspapers. This study compared The Guardian, The Independent, and The Mirror as left-wing with The Daily Express, The Daily Mail, and The Sun as right-wing. Overall, it was found that both sets of papers discriminated against both women with the choice of their words, such as adjectives about their appearance and background and how they name them. However, there was a difference in how this was done. Right-wing media was found to be more sensational. For example, they used "catchy" headings. In addition, right-wing media used various forms and names to refer to Markle, for example, calling her Meg. On the contrary, left-wing media was more reserved in referring to both women with inappropriate adjectives. In addition, the personal aspects of Markle's background did play a role in her framing. Middleton's framing was more positive than Markle's, suggestable due to her biracial background (Fullana Ribot, 2019).

Representation of female leaders in the media

Media representation of political figures is especially significant for women because they are still treated as "different" in media coverage. Journalists most often firstly frame the women and later the politician (Ross, 2004). By emphasizing the gender of a woman, journalists highlight that it is still historical if women hold high offices. On the one hand, you could think that newspapers celebrate that women are becoming more and more salient in the higher offices. However, by emphasizing this, women are still perceived as not belonging there (Braden, 1996).

With women holding higher offices these days, media might normalize these women more compared to the past. Williams (2021) studied the difference in media coverage between Margaret Thatcher, who was Prime Minister in 1979, and Theresa May, who was Prime

Minister in 2016. Against the expectations, the focus on gender was higher with May compared to Thatcher. Thatcher did receive coverage on her gender by stereotyping her, for example, as a housewife, but it was not as much as May received. Media in these times were more focused on May's gender, femininity, and the way she looked. Especially, conservative news increased in their reference to gender, while liberal news slightly reduced their gender reference (Williams, 2021).

Secondly, women receive, compared to men, a different representation concerning the content. Overall, women receive not as much coverage as men, and more significantly, the coverage women get is often pessimistic with regard to the likeliness of winning the campaign. Women receive more coverage on their campaign polls since people do not expect a woman to win. In addition, women receive less coverage on important issues, again because there is a tendency that women are not capable of talking about major issues (Kahn, 1994).

An example of differences in newspaper coverage in politics is Elizabeth Dole's Presidential Bid coverage compared to Governor George W. Bush, Senator John McCain, and publisher Steve Forbes. Overall, there were significant distinctions between the men and Dole concerning the content and quotation associated with Dole's gender. Concerning the content, the researchers looked at whether it was focused on political actions (issue frame) or the personal or professional background (personal frame). Firstly, the articles' content was more about personal aspects, such as her emotions, rather than her political perspective on certain issues, such as taxes. Secondly, the quotation differed between the women and men. Paraphrasing occurred more often than quotations. In other words, Dole's words were more often revised instead of being quoted the same way they were uttered (Aday & Devitt, 2001).

Representation of minorities of color in media

The second aspect that may play a role concerning a person's framing in the media is whether the person is part of a minority group, for instance, if someone is colored. Articles about people who are part of a minority group often refer to their ethnic aspects rather than their political views (Gardikiotis, Martin & Hewstone, 2004). For example, a study on the framing of race in the New York Times and the Washington Post, both liberal newspapers, about Black Lives Matter showed a significant difference in White and Black people's representation in the articles. Those differences were represented by attributing certain linguistic devices like adjectives to emphasize that the Black race is divergent. In addition, Black people were seen as dangerous and as people who would violate the law, while white

people were seen as ‘good’, and as people who would rather defend the law (Lane, Williams, Hunt & Paulk, 2020).

Generally, articles about politics refer more often to the race and historical role of the person if this person is part of a minority group. Especially when this person is the main actor in the article, in other words, it is still a remarkable moment if a person of color is talking about political issues because they have not as much representation in governing compared to other groups, and therefore their race is emphasized. Additionally, in articles on politics with people of color, the focus of the coverage is on the fact that people compete with winning and losing parties (horse race frame) (McIlwain, 2011).

An example of differences in newspaper coverage of people of color in politics is Douglas Wilder’s governor’s campaign. The Washington Post, considered liberal, and the Culpeper Star-Exponent, considered conservative, were examined on their media framing of Wilder, Coleman, and Chichester. Overall, Wilder received more coverage than his male counterpart, and the newspapers emphasized that he would be the first governor who is Black. Both the coverage and emphasizing his race could be explained by the fact that Black candidates were significantly less present in campaigns and therefore noteworthy and “different”. Furthermore, Wilder’s representation was receiving remarkably more negative coverage than his counterparts, and in both newspapers, more focused on his personality. Concerning the political orientations of the newspaper, the conservative paper showed significantly more negative coverage towards Wilder. And even though the liberal paper endorsed Wilder, it did cover him more negatively than his counterparts and less negatively than the conservative paper (Jeffries, 2002).

Present study

This study aims to clarify the framing in left- and right-wing newspapers regarding Vice President Kamala Harris. This will be done by a qualitative content analysis of feature articles because “the genre allows for more creative expression than a news article. While containing elements of news, feature writing provides scope, depth, and interpretation of trends, events, topics, or people” (Knuuti, 2020, p. 15). Studies on framing of differences in gender and color are conducted, but the combination of those aspects and the differences in media is limited. This study aims to fill in research gaps by combining the following factors that could influence Harris’s framing in newspapers: the political orientation of the newspapers, Harris’s gender, and her race.

The two newspapers that will be analyzed are *The New York Times* (NYT), which has a left political orientation, and *The Wall Street Journal* (WSJ), which has a right political orientation (BU Libraries, n.d.). Liberalism (left) and Conservatism (right) differ in their beliefs of equality. Firstly, for Liberals, equal chances for everyone in society are important, but this equality has still not been achieved. According to Liberals, success should not be based on where someone is born, and the government could play a significant role in achieving this. On the contrary, Conservatives believe that achieving equality is not the government's role and that social culture's conventional roles, like social order and traditional family roles, should not be changed (Ellis & Stimson, 2012). For this study, it is expected that the Liberal paper favors Harris more than the Conservative paper.

Harris being the first female Vice President could also influence the way the media frames her. Due to prior research, it is expected that both newspapers emphasize Harris's gender; however, the WSJ is expected to have more emphasis on Harris's gender compared to the NYT (Williams, 2021). In addition, it is expected that Harris's representation will emphasize her personal aspects rather than her political viewpoints (Aday & Devitt, 2001).

Concerning Harris's race, it is expected that the newspapers emphasize Harris's race due to the remarkability of her achievement (Jeffries, 2002; McIlwain, 2011). In addition, the focus of the content is expected to be more on her ethnics rather than her political view (Gardikiotis et al., 2004) and on the fact that she is in a competition (McIlwain, 2011). Concerning the political orientation of the newspaper, the WSJ is expected to present more negative coverage compared to the NYT (Jeffries, 2002).

In summary, this study will try to achieve clarification on whether Harris is differently framed in left- and right-wing American newspapers. Therefore, the following research questions are formulated for the present study:

How is Vice-President Kamala Harris framed in the New York Times and Wall Street Journal?

How do textual framings link to the context of the two newspapers in American society?

The answer to the first research question will be presented in the results section, and the second research question will be discussed in the discussion section as it needs more interpretation to be answered.

Method

Data

The corpus consists of ten feature articles from two American newspapers: the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal. Both newspapers are part of the top three most-read daily newspapers in the U.S. (Barthel, 2019). The NYT has a more left-wing political preference, whereas the WSJ is more situated right-wing (BU Libraries, n.d.). Five articles are selected from both newspapers. The articles are selected from the websites of the two newspapers. Thus, I analyzed the online versions of the newspapers.

The time frame of this study was from the 11th of August 2020 till the 27th of January 2021 because Biden chooses Harris on the 11th of August as his running, and they both were inaugurated on the 20th of January. The 27th of January is selected because it is a week after the inauguration of Biden and Harris. The selection of articles stopped at the inauguration because that is when Harris officially started in the office of Vice President. Thus, this study analyzed events where Harris was not officially working as Vice President and focused on how she is framed in her run-up to Vice President rather than her functioning as Vice President. This might give a better representation of how the newspaper treats the Vice President in terms of who she is, including her color and gender, and it excluded the influences from her activities as a Vice President in power.

Different criteria were drawn for the selection of the news articles. Firstly, to ensure that the articles contain enough information to analyze, the article's minimum must exist of at least 300 words. Secondly, the selected articles must be of the same date or at least with a minimum difference of three days. Thirdly, the chosen articles must contain information from the same event and are selected by looking at the headline and lead paragraph. The following events are chosen for the analysis:

- Kamala Harris was officially chosen as running mate (11th of August 2020);
- Vice-President debate (7th of October 2020);
- Victory presidential election (7th of November 2020);
- Victory speech Kamala Harris (7th of November 2020);
- Inauguration (20th January 2021).

For every event, one feature article per newspaper was selected.

Procedure Analysis

To examine how Harris is framed in newspapers, I conducted a discourse analysis. This process consisted of two phases, namely: textual analysis and contextual analysis. The first

phase had as central purpose the examination of feature articles on the textual representation of Harris. The second phase contained an analysis of the findings in phase one.

Phase 1. Textual analysis

In the textual phase, I conducted a qualitative content analysis. This textual analysis was conducted by an inductive approach (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). In this analysis, I followed the process of analysis by Elo and Kyngäs (2007), which consisted of the following steps:

Step 1: Preparation

Firstly, the selected news articles were read and re-read to get familiar with the data. Secondly, the first idea and striking point of the news article was written down in a Word document. Thirdly, every aspect in the text that contained information about or referred to Harris and her vice-presidency was highlighted. In addition, it was described where the information referred to.

Step 2: Organizing

This step contained two actions: “open coding and creating categories” (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007, p. 109). For the open coding, all the aspects that referred to Harris and her vice-presidency were extracted from the text and written in a column. A list of possible framing devices and explanations was used for this action and can be found in Appendix A. The categories *rhetorical and or written or grammatical devices* and *technical devices* are based on Linström and Marais (2012). After the first open coding analysis, it was determined to which aspects of Harris the term or theme referred to.

Lastly, the data were categorized to find patterns in the coding. Those patterns were found by combining the text’s striking points and overall idea from step 1 with the framing devices from step 2. The overall idea of the text and how the text developed was the overall pattern. The framing devices, which referred to the same concept or idea with regard to Harris, resulted in aspects that described the pattern. The purpose of categorizing was to gain insights and understanding of the data by connecting findings and finding patterns that could, for example, suit a particular group. This is done by comparing data to each other.

Step 3: Reporting

Finally, in the reporting stage, the findings of the coding were reported coherently and explicitly. A detailed example analysis is provided in Appendix B.

Phase 2. Contextual analysis

In the contextual analysis, I followed an explorative approach to make sense of the findings from phase one. Most importantly, this phase was about finding explanations in the broader social context concerning the findings. For example, why did particular patterns appear in certain texts? The knowledge that I used in this phase came from the content presented in the introduction and from findings from new sources.

Reliability

To ensure certain reliability for the study, it focused on transparency and accountability. Firstly, every step in the process was described explicitly to reach transparency. This has led to a transparent representation of what this study has done. Secondly, for accountability, there were three data sessions with a fellow student. These data sessions aimed to check whether there were disagreements between the coders about the research process and coding. The benefit of the data sessions was that the 1st coder took a second look at the analysis and coded parts. The data sessions contained the following steps:

The first session aimed to familiarize the second coder with the topic, data, and model of analysis based on two examples texts from the dataset. After this session, the second coder coded two different articles from the data set, namely NYT_01 and WSJ_01, to prevent any influence from the example coding.

The second session contained a discussion about the differences in the coding of the articles. Overall, in relation to the length of the texts, the coding was quite similar; the first article contained 15 different cases, and the second article 12. Differences were found in the coding of the linguistic devices and the eventual description of the aspects. Concerning the aspects, the 2nd coder accepted the 1st coder's description. Generally, the aspects were corresponding, but differences were found in the word choice and the number of aspects. The 2nd coder divided the linguistic devices over more aspects compared to the 1st coder. For instance, while the 2nd coder described two aspects, namely that Harris worked her way up and that she was suited for the position, the 1st coder categorized this in one aspect, namely Harris qualities.

Concerning the linguistic devices, differences were discussed in detail. Sometimes, the 1st and 2nd coder differed by unconsciously not coding a word. For example, in paragraph 5 in NYT_01, Harris is being described as the front-runner. The 1st coder coded this as a significant reference to Harris; the 2nd coder agreed on this but missed it in the coding.

Another example, which is discussed in the session, were quotations from other people. For example, in paragraph 14 in WSJ_01, Trump is quoted as he is criticizing Harris. The 2nd coder did not find this significant because it was not a direct quotation from Harris herself. However, the 1st coder found it significant because it shows that the criticism in the WSJ comes from direct quotations from Republicans. After the 1st coder explained this to the 2nd coder, the 2nd coder agreed on it.

Results

The purpose of this study was to analyze whether the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal differed in how they framed Vice President Kamala Harris by answering the following research questions: how is Vice-President Kamala Harris framed in the New York Times and Wall Street Journal? To test this, ten articles were analyzed. The patterns that appeared in the text were sometimes corresponding, and sometimes they differed in how they portrayed Harris. Below, it is explained in more detail. The numbers between brackets refer to the paragraph in the article.

Pair 1: Kamala Harris was officially chosen as running mate

The two articles from the NYT and the WSJ about Harris being chosen as the VP showed different patterns. While the NYT framed this topic in terms of a tough process starting from Biden's doubt about whether Harris would be a good choice to complete certainty based on thorough research, the WSJ based the appropriate choice of Harris on the importance that a woman, and preferably a woman of color, had to be chosen. The two newspapers focused on similar aspects, namely the process to become Vice-President, assessment of Harris qualities, and personal aspects. However, the way that these aspects were discussed is remarkably different. Below, I explain the pattern in each text in detail.

NYT: Uncertainty to certainty

In the article from the NYT, the process to become Vice President was described as a hard process, where there was uncertainty about Harris being a good choice. Adjectives referred to a hard audition for Harris by describing it as “a *delicate* audition” [4]. Secondly, by assessing Harris's qualities, the article showed certainty about Harris as a good running mate, why she is a good candidate, and Biden being certain about her by assessing her qualities and what she would bring to the vice-presidency. They mainly referred to this using active voice and nouns to describe Harris's in relation to what she covered and what made her special:

“Ms. Harris *alone* covered *every one* of their essential political needs [6], *racial diversity*” [14] (*The New York Times*, August 13, 2020).

Lastly, with regard to personal aspects, the NYT took a neutral position in Harris's previous work about her criminal justice record and donations as state attorney general. They referred to this with active language, without describing an explicit opinion.

“Ms. Harris faced *intensive scrutiny* of her *personal and political history*” [38] (*The New York Times*, August 13, 2020).

Concerning Harris’s personal background, the NYT referred to Harris’s race as an important aspect for her vice-presidency by describing it as *essential* [15], and quoting others to emphasize the importance of a Black women, for example:

“*They are our most loyal voters, and I think that the Black women of America deserved a Black vice-presidential candidate*” [16] (*The New York Times*, August 13, 2020).

WSJ: Gender and color

In the article from the WSJ, the choice of a woman, and preferable a woman of color, was described as important. Positive quotation from other people referred to the importance of a Black woman and the qualities Harris has:

“*I think it’s a gamechanger for American democracy and women’s leadership, particularly Black women’s leadership* [26], *Joe Biden made a powerful choice in Harris: a woman of incredible accomplishment, a fighter for our democracy, and a compassionate and emphatic leader*” [20] (*The Wall Street Journal*, August 11, 2020).

Secondly, by assessing Harris’s qualities, the article used direct negative quotations from Trump referring to previous hearings from Harris, which he called “*extraordinarily nasty*” [14], and he named her “*the most meanest, horrible Senator*” [14]. Lastly, with regard to personal aspects, the WSJ took a position in Harris’s working background; namely, they criticized her previous criminal justice record. They also quoted a third party to emphasize this:

“*Where they hit a roadblock is she’s a former prosecutor who had a less than admirable record as a prosecutor*” [22] (*The Wall Street Journal*, August 11, 2020).

Concerning Harris's personal background, the WSJ referred explicitly, with the use of adjectives, to Harris's background and where she is from: "*Black* [1, 2], *Asian* [1, 2], *Indian* [9], and *Jamaican*" [9].

Pair 2: Vice-President debate

The two articles from the NYT and the WSJ about the Vice-President debate showed different patterns. While the NYT framed this topic in terms of a competition with debate strategies, with a winning and losing party, without focusing on the actual political viewpoints, the WSJ focused on what is said in the debate, concerning the viewpoints of both Vice-President's and their administration. The two newspapers focused on different aspects, namely the NYT on the assessment of Harris's qualities and that it was a tough debate for her, and the WSJ focused on political viewpoints of Harris, criticism from Harris on Trump's administration, criticism from Pence on Harris, and personal aspects. The way that the aspects were discussed was also remarkably different. Below, I explain the pattern in each text in detail.

NYT: Competition

In the article from the NYT, the debate was described as a competition with a winning and losing party. Verbs referred to Harris's debating style by describing it as "*unrelenting*" [7], and Harris "*declined*" [24] and did "*not answer*" [23] questions. In addition, the NYT focused on the theme that it was a tough debate for Harris due to her gender and race because she was "*one of the few women*" [16] on that seat, which led to an "*undercurrent of gender and racial dynamism*" [16].

WSJ: Politics

In the article from the WSJ, the debate was described by explicitly stating what the candidate said during the debate. Direct quotations from Harris gave her space to express her own opinion about political viewpoints and negative utterances about Trump:

"The greatest failure of any presidential administration in the history of our country" [8], there couldn't be a more fundamental difference between Donald Trump and Joe Biden" [41] (The Wall Street Journal, October 8, 2020).

With regard to the aspects Pence criticizing Harris and personal aspects, it must be noted that these were not prominent in the pattern.

Pair 3: Victory presidential bid

The two articles from the NYT and the WSJ about the victory of the presidential bid showed different patterns. While the NYT framed this topic by starting with the obstacles Harris had to face to become Vice-President, due to her personal background, changing into assessing her accomplishments and features, the WSJ was starting with how special it is that Harris is going to hold this office, with regard to being a woman of color, to the importance of her role and personal features. The two newspapers focused on similar as well as different aspects. The similar aspects were personal aspects and the importance of gender and color. With regard to the different aspects, the NYT focused on criticism on Harris and the WSJ on the process. When discussing the same aspects, the way that aspect was discussed was remarkably different. Below, I explain the pattern in each text in detail.

NYT: Hard process to accomplishments

In the article from the NYT, the process to accomplish high offices as women of color was described as hard, where her gender and color played a significant role. Quotations from Harris herself, positive quotations from other people, and the theme described how historic and important it was:

“Yes, sister, sometimes we may be the only one that looks like us walking in that room. But the thing we all know is we never walk in those rooms alone – we are all in that room together [5], this is exciting and is finally a breakthrough that so many of us have been waiting for [25], and higher in the country’s leadership than any woman every before her” [1] (The New York Times, November 7, 2020).

Adjectives and nouns were referring to the importance of gender and color, and Harris’s accomplishment, by describing it as “a milestone” [6], “a barrier-breaking role” [21], and references to her personal features, such as “first women of color” [6, 21, 24]. Concerning her personal aspects, the NYT referred with the theme to her previous work and scholarship to positively emphasize where she is from and what she has accomplished:

“That she has risen higher in country’s leadership than any woman ever has underscores the extraordinarily arc of her political career” [8] (The New York Times, November 7, 2020).

Lastly, concerning the aspect criticism, the NYT referred to criticism from Republicans. Adjectives referred to the attacks as “*racist and sexist*” [17]. Trump referred to Harris as “*a monster*” [17], and the theme described that he refused to pronounce Harris’s name correctly.

WSJ: Historical

In the article from the WSJ, Harris holding a high office was described as historical with regard to Harris’s gender and color. Mostly direct quotations from Harris emphasized the historical aspects of herself becoming Vice-President:

“My mother would look at me and she’d say, Kamala you may be the first to do many things, but make sure you are not the last” [20] (*The Wall Street Journal*, November 7, 2020).

Concerning personal aspects, adjectives referred to Harris by emphasizing where she is from and that she will be the first in many things: “*first Black*” [1, 3, 8], “*Indian*” [1, 3], “*first female*” [2, 8], and “*Jamaican*” [3]. Lastly, with regard to the process aspect, the WSJ assessed her by positive quotations from Democrats and Republicans:

“Right women, for the right time, for the right position [9], and *she earned it, and she’s there, because she’s the best person for the job* [10] (*The Wall Street Journal*, November 7, 2020).

Pair 4: Victory speech Harris

The two articles from the NYT and the WSJ about Harris’s victory speech showed different patterns. While the NYT framed this topic on Harris’s appearance and what she communicated with it, the WSJ focused on how Harris paid an attribute to America and the women who came before her. The two newspapers focused both on similar as well as different aspects. A similar aspect was historical win. With regard to the different aspects, the NYT focused on assessing Harris’s appearance, and the WSJ focused on her attribution to America. When discussing the same aspects, the way that aspect was discussed is remarkably different. Below, I explain the pattern in each text in detail.

NYT: Appearance

In the article from the NYT, the victory speech from Harris was mostly described based on her appearance. Adjectives referred to how she looked in her clothing by describing it as “*serious, prepared, and no-nonsense*” [20]. The theme focused on what she was communicating with her clothing style:

“Symbols of women’s rights for decades [4], a nod to the struggle to break the final glass ceiling” [5] (The New York Times, November 8, 2020).

In addition, the NYT emphasized the fact that it was a historical win concerning Harris’s gender and color. Adjectives referred to many first’s Harris is going to cover:

“First women, first women of color, first women of South Asian descent, and first daughter of immigrants” [2] (The New York Times, November 8, 2020).

Lastly, by focusing on the theme of a historical win, the NYT referred to factors that made it historical. They did this by emphasizing her gender and color and referring to people who came before her:

“She is the representation of so many promises finally fulfilled, so many hopes and dreams” [2] (The New York Times, November 8, 2020).

WSJ: Speech

In the article from the WSJ, Harris’s gender and race were described as important factors which made her win historical. Adjectives referred to her personal background by describing Harris as “*first Black Vice-President, first Vice-President of Indian descent*” [8]. In addition, the article mostly referred to direct quotations from Harris herself, in which she made an attribution to the women who came before her and who paved the way for her vice-presidency:

“Tonight I reflect on their struggle, their determination and the strength of their vision to see what can be unburdened by what has been. And I stand on their shoulders” [7] (The Wall Street Journal, November 7, 2020).

Additionally, the WSJ gave Harris space to express her opinion and make an attribution to America. They referred to this using direct quotation from Harris, with regard to thanking America for the votes by emphasizing that everything is possible:

“When our very democracy was on the ballot in this election, with the very soul of America at stake, and the world watching, you ushered in a new day for America” [3] (The Wall Street Journal, November 7, 2020).

Pair 5: Inauguration

The two articles from the NYT and the WSJ about the inauguration showed different patterns. While the NYT framed this topic as Harris being Biden’s companion and what she will bring to the ticket as Vice-President, the WSJ referred to Harris’s background as an important factor for her vice-presidency, how this affects other people, and who played a role in her achievements. The two newspapers focused both on similar as well as different aspects. The similar aspects were historical win and future job. With regard to the different aspects, the NYT focused on assessing Harris’s appearance and criticism on Harris, while the WSJ focused on personal aspects. When discussing the same aspects, the way that aspects were being discussed is remarkably different. Below, I explain the pattern in each text in detail.

NYT: Companion

In the article from the NYT, Harris’s future job is described as helping Biden and supporting him wherever she can, with the use of her own qualities. They mainly referred to this using active voice, which shows her responsibility for certain factors, and positive quotation from Democrats who emphasize the role Harris could play:

“She will support Mr. Biden’s broader agenda [28], she’ll bring a justice lens, a racial justice lens, racial equity, to everything and every policy and every decision that’s going to be made” [11] (The New York Times, January 20, 2021).

Secondly, the article emphasized the fact that Harris winning is historical. Adjectives referred to a historical win, where gender and race play a major role, by describing it as a “*landmark moment*” [3] and “*history-making role*” [10]. Lastly, concerning the aspects of assessing Harris’s appearance and criticism from Republicans, it must be noted that these were not prominent in the pattern.

WSJ: Importance of her role

In the article from the WSJ, Harris as Vice-President was described as historical because a lot of people fought for equality, and this shows the result and future possibilities, and her personal background playing a role in this. They mainly referred to this by using positive quotations from supporters of Harris:

“It’s a momentous day that we have a Vice President who is South Asian and Black [9], it’s just knowing that our ancestors are smiling in heaven because they dreamed of this day when they would see a Black woman in the second seat of power in this country” [13] (The Wall Street Journal, January 20, 2021).

Secondly, concerning Harris’s personal background, the WSJ focused on the theme that Harris was inspired by women around her and describe her family as a *“family of fighters”* [21]. Adjectives referred to Harris’s race by describing explicitly where she was from *“daughter of Indian and Jamaican immigrants”* [3]. Lastly, concerning the aspects about Harris’s future job, it must be noted that these were not prominent in the pattern.

Conclusion and discussion

The purpose of this study was to answer the following research questions: how is Vice President Kamala Harris framed in the New York Times and Wall Street Journal, and how do textual framings link to the context of the two newspapers in American society? The NYT and WSJ differ in their political orientation, namely the NYT is considered Liberal, and the WSJ is considered Conservative (BU Libraries, n.d.). Studies on the combination of gender, color, and newspapers with different political orientations were limited. Therefore, this study aimed to fill this research gap by combining gender, race, and political orientations.

It was found that in both the NYT and the WSJ, the dominant patterns were referring to Harris's personal background. This is in line with the expectations from Aday and Devitt's (2001) study that women are covered more on their personal aspects rather than their political viewpoints, which refers to the personal frame. And with the study from Gardikiotis et al. (2004), that people of color are emphasized on their ethnics rather than their political view. Those results, emphasizing Harris's color and gender, are in line with the expectations that for both newspapers, a woman of color in a high office is still seen as remarkable (Braden, 1996; McIlwain, 2011).

The findings also demonstrated two other patterns for both newspapers, which were less prominent than the personal one: assessment of Harris in her race to vice-presidency and coverage on Harris's political viewpoints. Regarding the assessment of Harris, it is in line with the expectations from the study from McIlwain (2011) that people of color receive more coverage on the fact that they compete, which refers to the horse race frame. Concerning the references to Harris's political viewpoints, there was, as expected, little coverage on it in both newspapers. This is in line with the expectations from Aday and Devitt (2001) and Gardikiotis (2004) that women of color do not get much coverage on their political views. The patterns that were found are in line with the issue frame from Aday and Devitt (2001), which focuses on political actions.

Concerning the newspapers' political orientation, the WSJ referred more often to the race and gender of Harris compared to the NYT. Concerning Harris's gender, this is in line with the expectations that Conservative news has more reference to gender than liberal news, and therefore emphasizes that women do not belong there (Williams, 2021; Braden 1996). This is also in line with Conservatives' beliefs, namely that they value traditional family roles (Ellis & Stimson, 2012). The findings also indicate that the WSJ covered Harris more on her political views compared to the NYT. The WSJ mostly did this with direct quotations and gave Harris space to express her opinion and political viewpoints. This is against the

expectations because it could indicate that the WSJ is taking Harris more seriously as a candidate by giving her the stage for her own viewpoints (Aday & Devitt, 2001), while Conservatives were expected to adhere to the social roles (Ellis & Stimson, 2012).

Compared to previous studies, the strength of this study is the combination of variables. Studies on the combination of gender, race, and political orientation of newspapers are limited. Another strength of the study is the fact that feature articles are analyzed. Those articles gave the opportunity of a more in-depth analysis which provides much information. However, this study also has some limitations. Firstly, the results of this study are not generalizable for all newspapers with different political orientations because the study only looked at two newspapers, and the amount of coded newspapers is too small to generalize.

Secondly, on some aspects, the intercoder reliability could be improved. Various data sessions have taken place to explain the model of analysis and the eventual coding. Generally, the chosen aspects were corresponding but could be more similar with regard to the amount, and the coding of the linguistic devices could be improved. Even though the coders came to an agreement on which aspects to use, this could have influenced the coding and eventual findings. The intercoder reliability could have been higher by the performance of more data sessions and examples; however, this was not manageable in the limited time.

Concerning further research, it is advised to look at a more varied data set. It will increase the generalizability if more newspapers are being investigated within and outside America. Additionally, this will automatically lead to a bigger data set with regard to the number of articles. For the coding scheme, it is advised to evaluate it with more people, to come to a clearer coding scheme that will improve the study's validity.

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Appendix A. Table with potential framing devices

Category	Examples
<i>Rhetorical and other written or grammatical devices</i>	<p>Noun: persons, places, or things.</p> <p>Adjectives: offer context for the issue, actor, or event in question with just their mere exposure (Luther & Miller, 2005).</p> <p>Verb: “indicating the action, state, and process” (Fowler, p. 97, 1991).</p> <p>Adverb: qualifies adjectives and verbs</p> <p>Figure of speech</p> <p>Metaphor</p> <p>Active/passive: active speech is “when the focus is to be on the agent of the action, implying clear responsibility” (Fowler, p.78, 1991).</p>
<i>Technical devices</i>	<p>Theme: an idea that connects different semantic elements of a story (Pan & Kosicki, 1993).</p> <p>Quotation: whether the person is quoted by herself with her own political view (Aday & Devitt, 2001) or when others are quoted.</p> <p>Paraphrasing: when own words revised instead of copying exactly what is said (Aday & Devitt, 2001).</p>

Appendix B. Example analysis

For this example analysis, paragraphs from the articles are used to demonstrate how the analysis was conducted. Firstly, paragraph 16 from the article with code NYT_02:

“Ms. Harris is one of the few women ever selected for a major party’s presidential ticket, and the first woman of color to be chosen as a running mate. Her debate with Mr. Pence, a white man from Indiana, was always going to have an undercurrent of gender and racial dynamics” (The New York Times, October 8, 2020).

The following parts were coded from this paragraph: *one of the few*, *first*, and an *undercurrent of gender and racial dynamics*. Firstly, the adjective “*one of the few*” refers to Harris being the first woman selected for Vice President’s office. This was coded because it relates to the historical aspects of Harris’s candidacy, and in this text, it also refers to the fact that it influences her debate with Pence. Secondly, the adjective “*first*” refers again to the historical aspects Harris will bring to the ticket and which influenced the debate. Lastly, the theme “*undercurrent of gender and racial dynamism*” was coded because it evokes the idea that Harris sitting in that seat is historical and might influence the debate. Those coded linguistic devices referred to the aspect of a tough debate for Harris due to her personal background.

A second example is paragraph 7 from the article with code WSJ_01:

“Ms. Harris’s selection could play a major role in the Democratic Party’s leadership for years to come. She is well-positioned to succeed the 77-year-old former vice president as the head of the party. If Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris win the November election, she would be the nation’s first woman to serve as vice president” (The Wall Street Journal, August 11, 2020).

From this paragraph, the following parts were coded: *major*, *well-positioned*, *first*. Firstly the adjective “*major*” refers to the role Harris is going to cover as Vice President. This was coded because it assesses Harris and the influence of her role. Secondly, the adverb “*well-positioned*” was coded because it assesses Harris’s qualities as Vice President. Lastly, the adjective “*first*” refers to the historical aspects of Harris becoming Vice President due to her gender. The first two linguistic devices referred to the aspect qualities of Harris as Vice President, and the last linguistic device referred to the aspect personal aspects about Harris.