

Generic Frames in Corruption Scandals in Chile (2015–2019): Differences and Similarities Between Print and Online Media

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Taking into account that some of the media systems in Chile present high degrees of concentration of ownership and low ideological pluralism, this research shows how the most important print media and news Web portals framed the six main corruption scandals in Chile between 2015 and 2019. Among other conclusions, a higher presence of the morality frame in online media was observed after analyzing news pieces for the five generic frames (attribution of responsibilities, conflict, human interest, economic consequences, and morality) and conducting quantitative content analysis using base study indicators. In applying the method of generic frames to the Chilean media regarding the coverage of corruption scandals in recent years, the validity of this research in other political and media contexts can be corroborated, in addition to its importance in establishing which are the frames promoted by the media, and their differences, in an issue as relevant to democracy and society as corruption.

Keywords: corruption scandals, Chile, generic frames, printed press, news Web portals, Semetko and Valkenburg

The Transparency International (2020) report places Chile among the 30 countries with the lowest perceived corruption from a total of 180, and second in Latin America after Uruguay.

However, in recent years, several important cases of corruption have been mediatized and transformed into media scandals (Thompson, 2001). According to Latinobárometro (2018), for the first time since quantification of this topic began in 2003, corruption is among the problems that most concern Chileans, surpassed only by crime. In this sense, the way the media use frames sets a certain context in which reality is presented, in that both a definition and an interpretation of the problem are promoted among public opinion (Entman, 1993; McCombs, 2014; Scheufele & Iyengar, 2012). Thus, the study of the frames used by the media to report on corruption scandals becomes relevant for promoting public debate and, ultimately, for the development of a democratic system (Entman, 2012; Zamora & Marín Albaladejo, 2010)—even more so when encouraging the need for the surveillance of power (McQuail, 2013; Peruzzotti, 2006; Schudson, 2013; Tagle, 2017; Tumber & Waisbord, 2019).

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However, in the Chilean context, 54% of citizens believe that the media does a good job, and only 25% consider the media to be independent of the influences of power (Latinobárometro, 2016). This kind of dichotomy leads researchers to consider the possibility of differences in the frames being used by the media in the coverage of corruption scandals, depending on the type of media, and to question the significance of the media's relation to power, their ideology, and the impact of concentration of ownership (Becerra, 2015; Becerra & Mastrini, 2017; Loreti & Lozano, 2014; Nyhan, 2015, 2017; Tagle, 2017).

For this reason, this research project involved studying how corruption cases in Chile have been framed by identifying similarities and differences in the coverage of the two major newspapers—the two only players in Chile's duopoly of circulating newspapers—and six news Web portals that offer a broader range of pluralism (Baltra, 2012; Navia, Osorio, & Valenzuela, 2013; Navia & Ulriksen, 2017).

Samples were studied by replicating the classic generic framing study by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). This research paper has been cited almost 3,000 times in scientific articles and is considered by Igartua and Muñiz (2004) to be the most extensive method for conscientious evaluation of different frames in the news.

Given that the analysis covers a variety of media and scandals, it was deemed more appropriate to apply a highly proven method rather than opt for a set of specific frameworks or apply an inductive analysis strategy.

Before this research, the only precedent for the application of the Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) method in Chile—while incorporating some modifications—was conducted by Gronemeyer and Porath (2017a); after conducting a three-year news analysis, they stated that conflict is the predominant frame in Chilean printed press. In this way, it is valuable to establish which frameworks are prevailing when it comes to corruption scandals. The study by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) has been replicated for many issues and in several countries, however, it has been scarcely replicated for issues of corruption scandals and also has not been replicated in Latin American countries (Chikwendu, 2016; Hamid, Mohammed & Khairie, 2018).

This study presents advancements in two areas: the study of frames in the Chilean context, which includes and compares online and printed news and establishes comparisons and similarities, and an analysis of the media's coverage of corruption scandals, an area scarcely studied in Chile (Balán, 2011; Echeverría, González, & Tagle, 2021; Jara-Reyes, Berrios, & Moreno, 2020; Sunkel, 2005; Tagle & Claro, 2018).

Media Framing

As per Sádaba (2006), the origins of the theory of framing can be traced to the mid-1950s, in the context of interpretive sociology, which considered that when receiving messages, people do not respond directly to objective facts, but they do so regarding their interpretation. Frames could be considered cognitive shortcuts that help us grasp complex realities that are spatially or temporally, and intellectually, challenging (Neuman, Just, & Crigler, 1992). In the words of Lakoff (2007): "You can't see or hear frames. They are . . . structures in our brains that we cannot consciously access, but know by their consequences: the way we reason and what counts as common sense" (pp. 23–24).

In the 1970s, and setting aside the merely individual and psychological aspect of framing, Goffman (1974) introduced a more sociological dimension to the theory, arguing that society also has its own settings. Thus, as Reese (2001) explains, framing begins to open to the field of communication, especially to journalism studies, and to the consideration that the media reports on certain frames.

In general, and considering one of the most accepted definitions, framing is "to select some aspects of the perceived reality and make them more prominent in a communication context, to promote a definition of the particular problem" (Entman, 1993, p. 52). Thus, according to Tuchman (1973), the news is not reality, nor is it a mirror of society. This vision of the reality of the media, as explained by Sádaba, Rodríguez, and Bartolomé (2012), implies accepting that journalistic objectivity will never be exempt from certain approaches. In this sense, Tankard (2001) notes that the study of the frame makes it possible to account for the intentions of journalists and the media, using the information they communicate. Thus, and as Castell (2009) explains, media framing works by leaving gaps in the information that the audience fills in with its own preconceived schemes: "These are the interpretive processes of the human mind based on connected ideas and feelings, stored in memory" (p. 218).

However, the theory of media framing can be considered as a fractured paradigm because of the different approaches, open discussions, and lines of research that exist around it (Maher, 2001; Marín Albaladejo & Zamora, 2014). For example, one of the most important debates is whether framing simply corresponds to a second level of *agenda setting* with specific attributes (McCombs, 2014; McCombs & Shaw, 1972) or is a new paradigm that focuses on how the media makes issues known, rather on what the media presents (Cacciatore, Scheufele, & Iyengar, 2016; Iyengar, 1991; Scheufele & Iyengar, 2012).

Given that this study stems from the notion that framing deals with a "new" paradigm, references should be made to the types of frames that the media use to explain reality. In the analysis of media frames, an extensively used classification is that of general and specific frames (de Vreese, 2005; Lecheler & de Vreese, 2012). General frames explain how the media frames any topic, while specific frames reveal what aspects were selected from a reality (Kozman, 2017).

General frames are present regardless of the subject of a news piece, and the proposal by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) of five general frames is the most widely used in the literature and case studies. These five frames are:

- (a) Attribution of responsibility: This frame presents an issue or problem in a way that places responsibility for its cause or solution on the government or an individual or group.
- (b) Conflict: Conflict between individuals, groups, or institutions is emphasized as a means of capturing the interest of the audience.
- (c) Economic consequences: This frame reports an event, problem, or issue in terms of the economic consequences it will have on an individual, group, institution, region, or country.

- (d) Human interest: The medium promotes a human face or an emotional angle when presenting an event, issue, or problem.
- (e) Morality: The event, problem, or question is placed in the context of religious principles or moral prescriptions.

In Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), a deductive approach method to define these five generic frames is used; it includes a factorial analysis of 19 yes or no questions as analytical variables to verify the extent to which the five aforementioned frames appear in a news piece.

For example, the factor analysis methodology and proposal of Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) has been replicated to analyze the media coverage of different events, such as the introduction of the Euro in 1999 (de Vreese, Peter, & Semetko, 2001); Turkey's entry into the European Union (de Vreese, Boomgaarden, & Semetko, 2011); the European parliamentary elections of 2004 (de Vreese, Banducci, Semetko, & Boomgaarden, 2006) and 2009 (Elenbaas, Vliegenthart, & de Vreese, 2011); the revolution in Egypt of 2011 (Fornaciari, 2012); the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Almahallawi & Zauddin, 2018); and, recently, on the frameworks that prevailed in the coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic (Ogbodo et al., 2020). Likewise, it has been applied to general themes such as climate change (Dirikx & Gelders, 2010; Xie, 2015); immigration (Igartua, Cheng, & Muñiz, 2005); religion (Hassan, Latiff Azmi, & Abubakar, 2017; Lai Fong & Ishak, 2016); crises in general (An & Gower, 2009); and social networks (Valenzuela, Piña, & Ramírez, 2017), among others.

The Frame of the Media Scandal

In media scandals, when the media pay attention to an illicit act, they apply frameworks that present corruption as something that defies existing norms and needs a solution (Entman, 2012) and/or as a kind of drama that includes villains and ends with a moral (Zamora & Marín Albaladejo, 2010). As Clemente and Gabbioneta (2017) point out, the media, with their frames of corruption, "influence the perception of a transgression, its magnitude, and consequences" (p. 287). In the case of scandals, there is a tendency to personify corruption, in an individual or in a group, as a kind of bad apple instead of framing it as an institutional or societal issue (Just & Crigler, 2019). Likewise, in corruption scandals, the media promote with their framing, tending to point out who is, or who would be, guilty of the corrupt activities at the same time that they give space for the defense of the accused (Entman, 2012; Mair, Janse, & von Sikorski, 2019). Both the balance and objectivity, in contrast to the partisanship and sensationalism with which the media report in media scandals, not only constitute a normative ideal of correct journalism (Christians, Glasser, McQuail, Nordenstreng, & White, 2009; McQuail, 2013), but are also a matter of power (Thompson, 2001). In this sense, a greater media pluralism, together with a lower concentration of ownership, better ensures that competitors will denounce what a medium does not. Also, political and factual powers find it more difficult to control many media than a few, especially if the media system has media with editorial lines of different ideological positions (Besley & Prat, 2006; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008; Prat & Strömberg, 2013; Vaidya & Gupta, 2016).

However, the factor analysis methodology of Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) has hardly been applied to the coverage of corruption scandals. For example, Hamid and associates (2018) applied the frames in

Sudan's written press regarding cases of corruption, obtaining that in the newspapers, the attribution of responsibilities and economic consequences frameworks predominated, but rarely those of human interest and morality. Likewise, Chikwendu (2016) did the same with newspapers in Nigeria, obtaining that the attribution of responsibilities and economic consequences frameworks also prevailed.

Power and Media in Chile

Since Chile's return to democracy, the Chilean media system has been characterized by a liberalization of information, in contrast to the years of military dictatorship (Sunkel & Tironi, 1993). In this sense, the return of democracy in the 1990s did not bring along a diversification of print media; on the contrary, publications that had been contrary to the regime in the 1970s and 1980s disappeared because of lack of financing and little public support (Araneda & Alarcón, 2019; León-Dermota, 2002).

At present, and according to Godoy (2016), the Chilean print media is characterized by a high concentration of ownership and low pluralism, in addition to connections to business groups (Humanes, Mellado, & Márquez-Ramírez, 2017; Mayorga, del Valle, & Nitrihual, 2010; Monckeberg, 2011). In this media market, the protagonists are El Mercurio SAP and the Copesa group, which, respectively, own *Las Últimas Noticias* and *La Cuarta*; the former is a tabloid, and the latter is a popular newspaper with the largest circulation in the country (Valida, 2019). Likewise, these two communication companies respectively own *El Mercurio de Santiago* and *La Tercera*, both considered conservative newspapers. These are the two most important political newspapers and are generally held to most influence the debate of public opinion (Navia et al., 2013).

In terms of Hallin and Mancini's (2004) typology, and according to Humanes and colleagues (2017), the Chilean print media system could be classified as a polarized pluralist, characterized by low readership, and high political and economic parallelism.

Regarding the Internet, Web portals have helped to pluralize the Chilean information spectrum (Navia & Ulriksen, 2017). For example, and in contrast to the written press, according to Del Valle Orellana and Bustamante (2018), journalists who work on Web portals in Chile mostly define themselves as left-wing and consider the editorial line of their media to be center-left. In this sense, it should be taken into consideration that the main print media, like television and radio, have news Web portals that compete with other online media and are not necessarily the sites with the highest number of visits (Alexa, 2020).

Greene (2017) concluded that Chilean journalists lack the autonomy and independence to carry out their work; editors, corporations, and sponsors can influence their decisions. As Humanes and colleagues (2017) state, through sponsors and payment for advertising, the different economic sectors instrumentalize the owners of the media and the journalists who work for them for their own purposes.

Given these property and ideological characteristics, an analysis of how the media reports in Chile indicates that a tendency has been empirically established among the media, especially the printed press, to frame the news in similar ways (Gronemeyer & Porath, 2015, 2017a; Mellado, Cabello, & Torres, 2017; Valenzuela & Arriagada, 2009), with use of official sources predominating (Díaz & Mellado, 2017). Meanwhile, online media, given the features of their medium, such as the lack of a guideline, mainly aim at publishing

news hits and display immediacy (Greene, 2016). Likewise, they provide for active participation via comments, in some cases serving as *feedback* for the medium (Elgueta, 2015).

Corruption Cases

The corruption cases selected for this research are here briefly outlined.

Caval case: At the beginning of 2015, influence peddling for the purchase of agricultural land became known, involving the son and daughter-in-law of President Michelle Bachelet.

Penta case: This case, which occurred in 2014, involved tax fraud committed by the Penta Company through false invoices and payment receipts. The purpose was, among others, to finance electoral campaigns of the right-wing UDI party.

The Toilet Paper case: This 2015 case dealt with price collusion in the toilet paper market between CMPC (known as La Papelera) and the Swedish company SCA Chile.

Supermarkets case: This case, which came to light in 2016, involved the country's three main supermarket chains—Líder, Jumbo, and Unimarc—colluding with their suppliers between 2008 and 2011 to set chicken prices.

Pacogate case: Uncovered in 2017, Carabineros officials accumulated more than \$15 million through a series of illicit operations.

Case of Black Budget Expenses of the Army: In 2019, the commanders in chief Juan Miguel Fuente-Alba and Humberto Oviedo were prosecuted for tax fraud and unjust enrichment.

Methodology

This research is based on the following research questions:

RQ1: Can the Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) indicators be detected in the news of the corruption scandals in Chile between 2014 and 2019?

RQ2: Are there differences between the generic frames that prevail in the printed press and those that prevail on the news Web portals?

This study is deductive (Bryman, 2008) and applies frame typologies to a sample. In this sense, it is empirical with quantitative techniques and content analysis (Bardin, 2002; Carrasco-Campos & Saperas, 2015; Neuendorf, 2002). Replicating the research that Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) conducted, a factor analysis using the 19 questions corresponding to the five frames proposed by these authors was performed.

The coverage of the two only political newspapers with national circulation, *El Mercurio de Santiago* and *La Tercera*, was analyzed (Valida, 2019). Regarding news Web portals, the six most visited (by number of unique visitors) were analyzed (Alexa, 2020) to cover a broad spectrum of pluralism, or at least considerably broader than what print offers (Navia & Ulriksen, 2017). Thus, the selected news Web portals were: *The Clinic*, *El Mostrador*, *Bio-Bio*, *Cooperativa*, *Emol*, and *La Tercera.cl*. It should be noted that the last two belong to the same corporations as *El Mercurio de Santiago* and *La Tercera*, respectively.

A range of corruption cases that affected different elites were selected to allow for generalization and establishing differences. For this reason, two cases involving politicians were chosen, Caval (2015) and Penta (2014); two involving collusion in the corporate world, toilet paper (2015) and supermarkets (2016); and two involving embezzlement of funds in national security institutions, Pacogate (2017) and Black Budget Expenses of the Army (2019).

The unit of analysis was the news piece. News follows up extended for a week starting on the day following the release of the news piece to the public opinion in print media, and from the day on news Web portals. This period of time was considered appropriate to measure and establish comparisons between the different media coverage and the responses of the main players. Entman (2012) deems that no less than a week is a long enough period of time to establish the magnitude of a scandal and how it has penetrated the public. Printed press samples were obtained from the archive of the National Library, Web portals were searched on search engines, using as keywords the names by which the public opinion knew each case: Penta case, Caval case, Toilet Paper case, Supermarkets case, Pacogate case, and Black Budget Expenses of the Army case.

Three communications graduates with research experience coded the sample. They were provided with the typologies by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), and the concept of *framing* as described in Tankard (2001): The *frame* of a news piece is the central or organizing idea of all the information displayed in the news piece, namely, headlines, images, sources, citations, statistics, tables, graphics, audios, and videos. In this sense, the coding was carried out using a spreadsheet; the coders answered the 19 questions of the model for each news item, marking 0 for no and 1 for yes.

Coding reliability was ensured by conducting an intercoder retest on a subsample of 10% of the total, Holsti method, in which a 94 % reliability was obtained (Krippendorff, 2009; Riff, Lacy, & Fic, 2014).

Results and Discussion

A total of 498 news items were found that corresponded to the coverage of the eight analyzed media regarding the six corruption scandals. Figure 1 shows information on the percentages of news per medium per case.

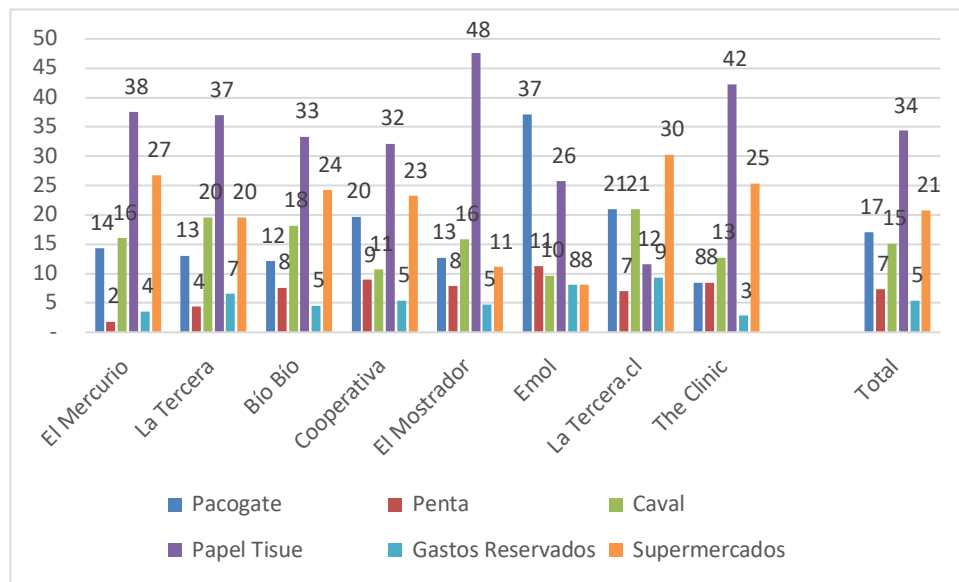


Figure 1. Percentages of coverage of the studied cases of corruption in print media and online news portals between 2014 and 2019.

As can be observed, the Toilet Paper and Supermarkets corruption cases had the most extensive coverage, and Penta and Black Budget Expenses had the least.

Generic Framing in Chile's Corruption Scandals

To determine whether the five generic frames observed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) were replicated in the news of corruption scandals in Chile, 19 of their 20 questions were applied. The question regarding visual aspects of television news was omitted, as Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) did. A frame was considered detected when scores were sufficiently high for two or three of the questions. Following the work of Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), only indicators with a minimum factor of 0.5 were considered.

Initially, three variables had to be excluded to perform the analysis: "Does the story suggest that an individual or group of people in society is responsible for the problem?" "Does the story suggest that the problem requires urgent action?" and "Is there any reference to the economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?"

This was done because these variables generated too low a variance to be included in the model. The high presence of these questions can be explained by the fact that these news pieces, independent of the medium they were extracted from, covered corruption cases, a type of incident in which those considered guilty are pointed out, losses are quantified, and the general public is notified about what happened. In this sense, these variables were excluded because they were present in more than 96% of the analyzed news, which did not allow a correct grouping. When performing the model with the 20 factors, these three variables failed to reach a commonality of 0.5 and made the model less reliable.

The initial analysis of the data revealed high correlations between the items considered ($\chi^2 = 1467.2$; KMO = 0.663; Bartlett's test, $p < .05$). A principal component analysis with varimax rotation was used, in which the questions were grouped into five factors.

In terms of shared characteristics, most of the variables were found above 0.5, and those below that score were excluded at the time the scales were constructed. In the end, and as shown in Table 1, two variables were excluded: "Does the story contain visual information that could generate feelings of outrage, empathy, sympathy, or compassion?" and "Is the story about winners and losers?" It should be noted that when Gronemeyer and Porath (2017a) replicated the proposal by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) for the Chilean cases, questions from the original model were also omitted in pursuit of reproducibility. However, the authors did comply with the requirement of identifying at least three questions to detect frames.

It should be noted that the model of this research allows explaining 56.1% of the total variability. In this sense, in the research by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), the solution factor explains 54.2% of the variability of the frames, while in the case of the research by Gronemeyer and Porath (2017a) it is 47.2%. On the other hand, when performing the analysis of variance test, it is appreciated that there are significant differences in the use of the conflict concept depending on the environment ($p = .002$, $F = 3.229$).

Table 1. Rotated Factors of 14 Indicators for Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) Five Generic Frameworks Applied to the News From Eight Media Regarding Their Coverage of Corruption Scandals in Chile Between 2014 and 2019.

Framing items	Factors				
	Morality	Conflict	Economic consequences	Human interest	Attribution of responsibilities
Morality frame					
Does the story offer social prescriptions on how to behave?	.824	.024	-.064	.067	-.001
Does the story make reference to morality, God, or other religious tenets?	.804	.052	-.024	.079	.020
Does the story contain any moral message?	.665	.351	-.059	.064	.176
Conflict frame					
Does the story refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue?	-.004	.792	.000	-.012	.221
Does the story reflect disagreement between parties-individuals-groups-countries?	.142	.714	-.081	-.051	-.244
Does one party-individual-country blame another?	.372	.736	-.149	-.009	.038

Economic consequence frame					
Is there a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future?	-.083	-.055	.885	.011	-.085
Is there a mention of the costs/degree of the expense involved?	-.056	-.067	.852	.105	-.053
Human interest frame					
Does the story provide a human example or put a "human face" on the issue?	.041	-.003	-.118	.758	-.091
Does the story go into the private or personal lives of the actors?	.007	-.010	-.003	.691	-.258
Does the story employ adjectives that generate feelings of outrage, empathy-caring, sympathy, or compassion?	.239	-.007	.146	.635	.250
Attribution of responsibilities					
Does the story emphasize how people-groups are affected by the problem?	.197	.040	.151	.086	.675
Does the story suggest that some level of gov't is responsible for the problem?	.100	-.203	.252	.038	.644
Does the story suggest solutions to the problem(s)?	.063	-.098	-.099	-.120	.606

After performing a Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis, it was decided that the variable "Does the story suggest that some level of government can solve the problem?" should be eliminated. This was done to ensure the internal consistency of the scales, which ideally should be above .70. In the end, the model was left with 14 variables.

For each of the five categories, Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis yielded the following results: morality, comprising three indicators, .706; conflict, three indicators, .695; economic consequences, two indicators, .786; human interest, three indicators, .525, and finally, attribution of responsibilities, .452. For the morality, conflict, and economic consequences framework, these are considered acceptable values even though the latter was only assembled with two variables. However, coherence problems do arise with the human interest and attribution of responsibilities frames; thus, caution is required when analyzing their universalization in this case study.

These findings are consistent with those of Gronemeyer and Porath (2017a), who were only able to find consistent findings for the conflict frame and or the attribution of responsibilities.

After the level of replication and definition of the five generic frames was established, their frequency was analyzed to analyze patterns and differences in the different media studied.

As proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), a single variable was created for each dimension in which its presence was measured and averaged based on the frames that had been previously grouped in the factor analysis.

It is observed in Table 2 that the most widely used concept is the attribution of responsibilities, followed by conflict; the least frequently used is economic consequences. In addition, the largest difference between print media and Web portals appears in the morality frame, with its higher presence in online media. An independent-samples A *t* test established that the difference in this frame is statistically significant ($p < .05$, $t = -2.7$) and failed to do so for the differences in other frames, deeming them to be statistically nonsignificant.

Table 2. Level of the Presence of Generic Frames in Corruption Scandals by Type of Media.

Media type		Morality	Conflict	Economic consequences	Human interest	Attribution of responsibilities
Print media	Average	.294	.611	.246	.516	.722
	Standard deviation	.658	1.035	.628	.827	.615
Online media	Average	.495	.728	.237	.527	.766
	Standard deviation	.880	.968	.576	.802	.666
Total	Average	.444	.699	.239	.524	.755
	Standard deviation	.833	.986	.589	.808	.653

The high standard deviation is explained by the fact that, unlike the research conducted by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) and Gronemeyer and Porath (2017a), which was based on a single case in general, this study (although also covering corruption), analyzed eight different samples, each bringing about its own distinctive features.

In this sense, in the Chilean media, a vision prevailed in corruption cases both of “shaping the public understanding of who is responsible for causing social problems” (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96) and of dealing with a conflict between political and economic elites. On the one hand—and, although, all cases had as a common factor, illegalities in the economic sphere (embezzlement of public funds, illegal financing of politics, business collusion, etc.)—the media did not mostly fit into the frame of economic consequences; this is explained by the understanding of the problem of corruption as a political issue, mainly of denunciation of the elites and their power.

On the other hand, it was the morality framework in which significant differences could be seen between the written press system and that of news Web portals. This is important, given that in both the research by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), focused on television and the European written press, and that

of Gronemeyer and Porath (2017a), focused exclusively on the Chilean written press, this framework was a minority. Thus, unlike the written press, the Chilean Web portals also conceived the scandals as a moral problem, in which the medium takes the license to set aside the informative objectivity in pursuit of a social condemnation (Semetko & Valkenburg 2000). This can be explained because the editorial lines and journalists of the news Web portals call to be more critical of the political and economic system (Del Valle Orellana & Bustamante, 2018), while the written press newspapers maintain not only a relative homogeneity in their content, but also a less critical position in search of an informative balance (Gronemeyer & Porath, 2017b).

When disaggregating the results by means of communication (Table 3), it can be seen that the attribution of responsibilities frame is not predominant in all media. For Web portals, *The Clinic* and *El Mostrador*, considered left-leaning and critical media (Baltra, 2012; Couso, 2012; Navia & Ulriksen, 2017), the conflict frame was the most extensively present.

Table 3. Level of Use of Generic Frames in Corruption Scandals by Medium.

Media type		Morality	Conflict	Economic consequences	Human interest	Attribution of responsibilities
El Mercurio	Mean	0.474	0.526	0.246	0.491	0.667
	Standard deviation	0.847	0.984	0.635	0.805	0.607
La Tercera	Mean	0.128	0.830	0.277	0.404	0.660
	Standard deviation	0.397	1.148	0.649	0.742	0.600
Bío Bío	Mean	0.508	0.746	0.269	0.463	0.881
	Standard deviation	0.927	1.005	0.539	0.765	0.663
Cooperativa	Mean	0.593	0.678	0.136	0.424	0.881
	Standard deviation	0.985	0.937	0.434	0.700	0.721
El Mostrador	Mean	0.600	1.092	0.308	0.723	0.677
	Standard deviation	0.932	1.155	0.705	0.857	0.640
Emol	Mean	0.403	0.371	0.226	0.436	0.807
	Standard deviation	0.858	0.607	0.612	0.802	0.623
La Tercera.cl	Mean	0.372	0.558	0.233	0.488	0.628
	Standard deviation	0.725	0.881	0.527	0.856	0.536
The Clinic	Mean	0.461	0.829	0.237	0.592	0.697
	Standard deviation	0.807	0.971	0.586	0.819	0.731

In the print media system, it was also possible to see a difference between *El Mercurio de Santiago* and *La Tercera*. While in the first, the attribution of responsibilities frame prevailed, in the second, it was the conflict frame. This difference can be explained by the rivalry between these two large conservative newspapers. Being the only competitors in Chilean print media, they have chosen to differentiate themselves, with *La Tercera* more oriented toward political discussion (Navia et al., 2013).

Conclusions

In applying Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) method to the Chilean media regarding the coverage of corruption scandals in recent years, the validity of this research in other political and media contexts can be corroborated, always taking into account that, as happened with the research by Gronemeyer and Porath (2017a), the model could not be applied as a whole and had to be refined and adjusted to allow for its reproducibility. It should even be considered that this research presented a higher variability index than the research by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) and Gronemeyer and Porath (2017a).

Given that this study dealt with news on political corruption, it comes as no surprise that the media, printed or online, have framed these news pieces mostly in the generic frame of attribution of responsibilities, and conflict. Similar investigations into generic frameworks and corruption scandals carried out in other countries found similar results (Chikwendu, 2016; Hamid et al., 2018). The recent investigation by Jara-Reyes and associates (2020) on the specific frameworks in corruption scandals established that a similar specific framework predominated in the Chilean written press. The nature of this type of news about corruption scandals—which is to account to society for actions, or absence of actions, contrary to the law or morals of certain groups—explains this.

However, a significant difference between the different media could be observed regarding the morality frame; this frame, comprising three indicators, was the one that best defined the entire sample. That the morality frame encompasses "prescriptions on how to behave" (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000, p. 96) makes it a relevant frame for a topic such as corruption. This frame grants a critical sense to the information, even indicating corruption as a structural problem of society (Iyengar, 1991). In this sense, Web news portals tended to use the morality frame for corruption significantly more than did newspapers. Likewise, differences can be observed among Web portals themselves, which is proof of more informative pluralism, given that left-leaning media exhibited the conflict frame more frequently. In this way, this research establishes that the written press and Web portals present some differences in how they frame corruption cases. There is a trend toward a greater range of approaches in a system with greater pluralism, such as online, where an attempt is made not only to attribute responsibilities, but also to promote a moral and structural vision of social anger over corruption cases.

In an issue as relevant as the corruption scandals, where issues of influence and power are intermingled, and in the face of a written press system that, since the return of democracy in the 1990s and up to the present, has not managed to expand its pluralism (Godoy, 2016), the news Web portals make it possible to enrich the informative treatment of these cases with new approaches.

This study verifies the presence of media type differences in the valuation of corruption in Chile. Given the proliferation in recent years of major corruption scandals in this country and their impact on public trust regarding institutions and democracy (Consejo Nacional para la Transparencia, 2020; Latinobárometro, 2020), it is extremely valuable to understand how the different communication media frame information and the implications that media concentration may have.

Once the usefulness of generic frameworks to establish differences and similarities in the coverage of corruption in Chile has been proved, it is possible to determine on what aspects of reality the media focus. Future research should, and as a limitation of this, opt for specific or inductive framing methods. Likewise, and to detect the different informational treatments of one media system and another, other media systems should be added to the analysis—from television and radio to social networks—and new dimensions, such as the sources used by different media in scandals (official sources, off the record, etc.), should be included. These will provide researchers with a complete panorama that will help society understand the specificity of the media when covering an issue as relevant as the corruption scandals.

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