

Social movements, media, and democratization in Georgia

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Abstract

A purpose of the study was to analyze the construction of reality around the Georgian media democratization movement in the years 2010 through 2012. The movement mobilized to ensure greater access and transparency in the sector.

The quantitative analysis of news stories (n=552) by six pro-opposition, pro-government, and independent news organizations found that the news organizations used movement-advanced frames, and, in general, used more mobilizing than demobilizing frames. The marginalization of the movement, a dominant mode of news coverage of social movements based on the literature, did not occur. However, the study found differences in coverage based on news organizations' ties with the government and the opposition, or lack thereof. The pro-opposition and independent TV covered the movement more frequently, aired reports at better viewing times, and gave greater voice to the activists and their key frame, It Concerns You. Pro-government news organizations used government sources more often.

Introduction

The Georgian political and media environment is in transition from totalitarianism and authoritarianism to democracy. Citizens are more involved in public affairs, and activism is on the rise. Ahead of the watershed 2012 parliamentary elections, citizens and organizations in Georgia's civil sector stepped up activism, engaging the public in the discussion of social and political problems. The media democratization movement¹ (MDM) mobilized as partnership between major human rights organizations, media unions, and democratically minded citizens to push for reforms in the broadcast sector and democratize the media.

MDM² emerged as a well-organized and articulate social force. It employed a range of institutional and extra-institutional tactics, from staging street protests to negotiating with the government and leveraging the interest of the international community in democratic reforms. The activism achieved spectacular results. The government made the disclosure of ownership structure in the broadcast outlets a mandatory requirement under the law, and introduced regulations obliging cable operators to distribute signals of all TV channels during the two months prior to Election Day. The government's stronghold on information distribution was broken, and Georgian voters gained the plurality of factual information and opinion about the

¹The movement is termed media democratization movement for the purpose of this study. MDM activists referred to their struggle variously as “media advocacy”, “media activism, and “a coalition” (Mikashavidze, 2014). The literature has referred to media rights-oriented movements as “free speech movements” (Postigo, 2012), but also as “media democratization movements,” especially, in the developing world (Mauersberger, 2012).

² Media democratization movement will be abbreviated as MDM in the text.

election campaign. The Parliamentary Elections of 2012 were held in a free and fair environment. The government ceded power to a coalition of opposition parties.

One of the movement's best strategies was to present itself as a special case for journalists, drawing on journalists' interest freedom of speech agenda. The coverage of MDM in the press was extensive and mostly fair. This type of productive partnership between social movements and media are rare. Current theory holds that movements opposed to the status quo receive negative and marginalizing media coverage because the media tend to protect the status quo (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Gitlin, 1980). This study will explore if some media outlets in transitional political and media systems, such as Georgia, are likely to report on social movements in a fair and substantive manner. The core argument is that social movements in these environments have the independent media, but also pro-opposition media, as their allies against the government and the system. This study will analyze the news content across the dominant news media in the country's news ecosystem programs for instances of negative and demobilizing but also mobilizing frames about MDM in 2010 through 2012.

The study hopes to make important contributions to the scholarly literature on the news media's interaction with social movements in non-Western contexts. In these contexts, Western structural and ideological models may not apply, as ownership patterns are different, political ideologies are not fully formed, social movements and independent media maintain close ties, and some types of news media are more susceptible to government control efforts than others. Greater understanding of the successful media democratization movement in Georgia will help media scholars understand more fully the news media's interaction with

social movements in transitional democracies and, in general, the role of social movements and media in democratic transformation.

Literature Review

Georgia: Politics, Social Movements and Media

Georgian Politics and Social Movements. Georgia is one of three nations in the South Caucasus. A former Soviet Union republic, Georgia secured independence shortly before the Soviet Union fell apart, on April 9, 1991. After years of political crises, civil wars and economic hardships, Georgia managed to overhaul its bureaucratic apparatus and initiate economic reforms. Under President Saakashvili (2003-2013), the country turned into one of the most advanced post-Soviet countries. On the negative side, the government's efforts tame the media, the civil sector and the political opposition led to the tension in politics and tarnishing of reformers' international image.

Before the 2012 Elections, the system was deeply polarized and divided. The activists mobilized to gain a greater say in public affairs. Coalition building became a good strategy to follow. With the backing of the Open Society Georgia Foundation, also known as the Soros Foundation, MDM launched the Coalition for Media Advocacy On April 13, 2011, "We publicly declare that we will take all appropriate measures to improve the media regulatory legislation, establish control over the implementation of all laws and protect the rights of journalists and the financial independence of the press," stated the founding document (Media.ge, 201, April 13). The coalition was made up of key non-governmental organizations, and journalists' and media associations, including the Georgian Regional Media Association, Georgian Regional Broadcasters Association, Regional Broadcasters

Network and the Georgian Charter of Journalism Ethics. The coalition became the social movement organization (SMO) for MDM.

MDM has focused on two goals, transparency of ownership and equal access to diverse media content, as key to its action program. Not only were these goals important for the freedom and health of the media system, they were essential to holding free and fair elections. Letting the audience know who stood behind media messages and bias, while simultaneously providing it with diverse sources of facts and views, equalized the chances of both the government and opposition forces for a successful campaign.

The recent activism started around summer 2010, when activists formed informal working groups and sketched the program of media democratization (Mikashavidze, 2014). As the first step, these groups started identifying problems and putting pressure on the government to introduce changes. The government started discussing, and, in April, 2011, enacted legislative amendments requiring the disclosure of the ownership structure in broadcast media. Newly formed Coalition started actively lobbying the government for media reforms: it made regular statements on the progress of MDM; it was visibly engaged in all cases of media rights violations; it engaged in direct action, staging protests, and worked to secure supportive statements and actions from international human rights watchdogs and friendly governments. The coalition engaged in effective negotiations with the opposition and the government. This activism produced spectacular results. The government agreed, in June, 2012, to adopt into law the “must-carry” rule, requiring cable operators to carry all broadcast signals during the two months prior to Election Day. These were major improvements, contributing to greater freedom, diversity and viability in the Georgian media (IREX, 2013).

Georgian Media. The country has a partially free media system (Freedom House, 2013), which means censorship and other repressive tools are not in place, but the government still has the power to manipulate the media. There is greater independence in the print press than in the TV sector. The Internet is free.

Georgian media outlets in 2010 – 2012 reflected the political and social flux in the country, and were “essentially split into two opposing camps” (IREX, 2009). Unlike Western media, in which the nature of ownership and ideology are key influences on news reporting (Scheufele, 1999), the Georgian news coverage is best explained by news organizations’ level of dependence or independence from the government or the opposition. Three TV stations, Rustavi 2, Imedi and Georgian Public Broadcaster, dominated the market, reaching 95% of Georgian viewers. The popularity of these TV stations stemmed from their accessibility around the country. Rustavi 2 and TV Imedi, and, to a lesser extent, the Georgian Public Broadcaster, supported the government³. Two Tbilisi-based independent stations, Kavkasia TV and Maestro, voiced opinions of the opposition. The opposition launched 9th Channel in April 2012, and closed shortly after the elections. These TV station distributed their signals via cable and satellite, and were primarily available in Tbilisi and other big cities. Private ownership of TV stations has been “non-transparent” (Freedom House, 2012). All Georgian governments have maintained close ties with the owners of nationally-distributed TV stations.

³ The ownership in Rustavi 2 has always been in the hands of government-linked businesses. The current general director of the company is the former minister of education. At different times, business partners of former ministers of defense and economy were at the helm of the company.

Newspapers provides diverse views, but reach a tiny segment of the population. In 2010-2012, Tbilisi-based dailies *Resonance*, *24 Saati* and *Kviris Palitra*, led the list of serious press, while *Alia*'s professional standards were less stringent. These newspapers had varying degrees of financial and ideological independence. *24 Hours* was perceived to editorially support the government (TI Georgia, 2011)⁴. *Alia* was radically critical of Saakashvili's government, and less critical of the opposition during the Elections 2012 (CRRC, 2012)⁵. Newspaper *Resonansi* held a middle ground: it has been vocal about government's transgressions without leaning heavily towards the opposition.

Georgian media legislation is liberal and progressive, but the Courts have done little to ensure their implementation. During the 2012 election campaign the police seized 140,000 satellite dishes that had been distributed to viewers by pro-opposition Maestro TV and Global TV. The antennas were needed to transmit the signal of Maestro TV and Channel 9, another opposition-aligned station, to the regional population. The antennas were returned only after the opposition won the 2012 Elections.

Framing by Social Movements and Media

This study relies on the framing theory and social constructivist framework to explain how social actors, such as social movements and media, engage in meaning construction, that

⁴ *24 Saati* has publicly denounced the allegation of its links with the government (Tsiklauri, 2011, December 16).

⁵ *Alia* was accused by the Georgian Public Broadcaster and other government-controlled national television stations (Tsiklauri, 2012, June 2) that it received financial backing from the opposition. *Alia* has vehemently denied these accusations (Tsiklauri, 2012, February 6).

is, framing, to advance their interpretation of issues in the discourse (Entman, 1993; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). Social movements, as agents of social change and innovation in the society, attempt to influence societies' symbols and self-understandings (Goodwin, 2013) and the construction of individual and shared social reality. To serve this purpose, social movements engage in framing, that is, "signifying work or meaning construction" (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 614).

Framing is the essential process in social movements' operations (Gamson, 1992). Movements "frame" and articulate the grievances and ways to attend to them for potential recruits, supporters, by-standers and targets. Framing of movement issues affects the interpretation of grievances, collective identities, structural opportunities and resource availability for action. Entman's definition of framing process is rooted in the sociological approach. According to Entman (1993, p. 52), "to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described."

Gamson and Modigliani (1989, p.2) explained that social actors – social movements, governments, specialists, the media -- produce various frames of a contentious issue. The relative "careers" of these frames in the public discourse determines "issue culture." Individuals' interpretation of that issue and any related events are heavily influenced by issue culture. Because frames create certain definitions of reality and cause audiences to have different reactions, they are highly contested in the political discourse (Nelson et al, 1997).

To win the meaning-making contest, movements deploy mobilizing frames. These are movement-specific frames, or collective action frames, and master frames. Master frames are

generic frames, which serve a purpose of punctuating, attributing and articulating social problems, but they do so at a higher level than movement-specific frames (Benford & Snow, 2000).

If social movements are forces of social change, the media's role in a society has long been recognized as a force of social scrutiny and social control (Duster & Manza, 2013, p.455). Media are seen as both producers of frames and sites of framing contests. Media are also the key link to public opinion, both in terms of its formation and reflection (Gamson & Modigliani. 1989)

The critical perspective on social movements and media (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Gitlin, 1980; Olien et al, 1995) emphasizes structural and ideological influences and the issues of power. Media propaganda model, rooted in the political economy perspective, views media as an integral part of the power elite (Herman & Chomsky, 1988), entrenched in political and economic relations. The propaganda model posits that the role of media is to inform, entertain and ingrain citizens with national values and to suppress dangerous oppositional perspectives. Media's opposition to social movements stem from their interest in preserving the existing institutions and social order (Herman & Chomsky, 1988).

The media hegemony perspective views media as part of the hegemonic cultural power. Gitlin (1977) analyzed media practice in great detail, and the patterns of media's reporting about social movements, and concluded that the way media shaped and "certified" (p. 797) the reality for social movements left no chance for their success. The media diminished importance of social movements and crippled their development. Gitlin offered a two-part explanation: one deals with journalists' unspoken "journalistic codes," rooted, at the level of practitioners, in their assumptions about "objectivity," "newsworthiness,"

“timeliness,” and their “fetishism of facts” (p. 793); the second explanation is structural as the codes journalists use reflect media’s integration with the power elite and their interest in maintaining social stability and the status quo.

The protest paradigm, advanced by Chan and Lee (1984), builds on Gitlin’s ideas. It posits that journalists’ coverage of protests is determined by their ideologically-based “reporting paradigms,” which inform “where to look (and where not to look), and ... what to discover” (p. 187), and whether to support or denounce protests. These reporting paradigms tend to emphasize social controversy or violence surrounding protest activities, rather than the issues being protested. Yet, contrary to strong hegemony models, the protest paradigm seems to suggest that an ideologically-inspired “reporting paradigm” might offer positive news coverage of protest that is ideologically aligned with the movement at hand.

Over years, the “protest paradigm” came to denote not just ideologically-based coverage, but negative, marginalizing coverage of social movements. Weaver and Scacco (2012) urge to revisit this interpretation of Chan and Lee’s (1984) original idea to apply in a new, politically polarized, ideologically-colored, fractured media environment. They found that the framing of the Tea Party in popular evening programs on CNN, Fox, and MSNBC depended on the ideological hues of the channel. MSNBC, a channel ideologically least aligned with the Tea Party movement, used delegitimizing frames significantly more often than others. The Fox, as ideologically most aligned with Tea Party movement, was least likely to marginalize the movement.

This idea holds true in non-Western contexts (Mauersberger, 2012; McCarthy et al, 2008; Yuan, 2013). Those outlets in the media landscape oriented towards social change are more sympathetic towards movement causes. Mauersberger (2012) analyzed the adoption of

a progressive media legislation in Argentina in October, 2009, which tightened media cross-ownership limits, and guaranteed equal access to airwaves for public, private and non-profit media. In the scholar's view, the movement's success was due to an unusually broad participatory process, which included coalition building with the members of media, "potent framing of media regulation as a matter of democracy and the changing media-state dynamics that disrupted the long-standing mutually supporting ties between the dominant media group and the government" (p.222).

Method

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The study theoretically argued that political factors, such as news organizations' ties with the government and the opposition (or lack thereof) would influence their application of mobilizing and demobilizing frames in the coverage of MDM. Pro-opposition media would be interested in change and willing to cover social movements positively. Pro-government media would be interested in the maintenance of status quo and either ignore or negatively cover social movements. The study posed a research question if the independent media, if and when they experienced government pressures and unfair competition from government-controlled media, would also be sympathetic towards the challengers of the system, such as social movements, and cover them positively.

Based on these theoretical conjunctions, this study hypothesized that:

H1: Pro-government media are more likely to use a negative tone (H1a), demobilizing frames (H1b), not use movement-advanced frames (H1c) and use government officials as sources (H1d) in the coverage of MDM. These media will cover

the movement less frequently (H1e), more briefly (H1f), less prominently in terms of assigned page space or airtime (H1g) than pro-opposition media.

H2: Pro-opposition media are more likely to use a positive tone (H2a), mobilizing frames (H2b), activists as sources (H2d), in the coverage of MDM. These media will cover the movement in greater length (H2f), and more prominently in terms of assigned page space or segment of airtime (H2g) than pro-government media.

RQ1: How do independent newspapers cover MDM in terms of the tone (RQ1a), demobilizing versus mobilizing frames (RQ1b), using movement-advanced frames (RQ1c), sources (RQ1d), frequency (RQ1e), length (RQ1f) and prominence of page space and airtime assigned to the coverage (RQ1g)?

Quantitative content analysis of news media content.

The study used quantitative content analysis as the method to look into the coverage of social movements in the content of news media.

Media Democratization Movement. The study operationalized the coverage of MDM as the coverage of the Coalition for Media Advocacy (SMO for MDM), the It Concerns You (MDM's campaign), the "must carry" regulation to ensure unlimited distribution of TV broadcasts by cable operators, transparency regulations to disclose media ownership structure and financial data (movement's two key proposals), and a special case to publicize the government's ban on the distribution of TV Maestro's antennas. The coverage of these organizations, actions and issues was treated as a proxy of movement's coverage.

Selection of media organizations. The study analyzed the content of three newspapers, pro-government daily *24 Hours*, independent daily *Resonansi* and pro-opposition daily *Alia*, and their weekend editions, *Weekend*, *Mteli Kvira* and *Kronika*, respectively. The study also

analyzed news coverage of MDM in three TV stations, pro-government Rustavi 2 (12 daily Courier newscasts, daily Business Courier and weekly Courier P.S.”), pro-opposition 9th Channel (12 daily News editions), and independent Kavkasia (three daily Today newscasts)⁶. The content of these news sources was downloaded from the Terramedia database. Two-step search – first with more broad and next with more narrowly defined keywords, was conducted to deal with the limitations of Terramedia’s search engine. The search resulted in 23 stories in *Alia*, 42 stories in *24 Saati*, 87 stories in *Resonansi*, 105 stories in Rustavi 2, 186 stories in 9th Channel, and 139 stories in Kavkasia. After setting 30 TV reports aside for coder training, the study analyzed all 152 newspaper stories and 400 TV news reports. (Due to limited amount of newspaper stories, coders used other newspaper materials for training.)

Timeline. The study analyzed materials produced between July 1, 2010, the approximate time first informal groups of MDM organized (Mikashavidze, 2014) and October 1, 2012, Election Day.

Analysis of content. The study analyzed media texts for the presence of mobilizing and demobilizing frames, movement’s innovative *it concerns you* frame, and recorded the

⁶ This categorization is based on newspapers’ and TV stations’ perceived editorial bias, documented by industry watchdogs (Freedom House, 2009-11) and on the monitoring of these newspapers’ coverage of the 2012 elections (www.mediamonitoring.ge). None of these newspapers or TV stations have publicly endorsed either the government or the opposition in the 2012 Elections. Rustavi 2 has endorsed the ruling party, National Movement, in the 2003 Elections.

tone of articles and TV stories, their use of sources, genre, and frequency and prominence of coverage.

Mobilizing and demobilizing master frames. The study analyzed the text with the codebook comprised of frames drawn from Benford's (1997) typology of social movement master frames but also from other studies (Chan Lee, 1984; Fuchs, 2013; Manning, 2007; Mauersberger, 2012; Postigo, 2012), and demobilizing frames, drawn from several existing typologies (Chan & Lee, 1984; Dardis, 2008; Di Cicco, 2010; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). The mobilizing frames were *rights, injustice, democratization, rule of law, free speech, transparency, plurality, access to information, fair elections*. The demobilizing frames were: *support for status quo, hinders free business, hinders country/unpatriotic, immoral/against tradition, politicizing, violence/police confrontations, freak show/carnival, romper room/idiots at large, public opinion/ other statistics/bystander accounts, counter-demonstrations, bothersome/disruptive, impotent/ ineffective/ counterproductive*. (see Table 20 for definitions of frames).

Sourcing. The study analyzed the media's use of sources. The idea was to make a distinction between the coverage in which social movement activists and their supporters were given a voice from the reporting that relied on official sources and accounts. This study identified and analyzed the media's use of ten categories of sources: a) MDM activists, b) activist journalists of MDM (MDM activists practicing or having professional background in journalism), c) other activists, d) other journalists, e) government officials & MPs from ruling party, f) opposition MPs, g) non-parliamentary opposition, h) diplomats & internationals, i) ordinary people, j) others.

Tone. The coders were asked to determine whether each paragraph in a newspaper or a TV story was negative, positive or neutral toward MDM. The story was coded as positive

or negative if two-thirds of paragraphs pointed in either direction, otherwise, it was coded as neutral.

Frequency, briefness and placement of coverage. Frequency was operationalized as the ratio of MDM stories and the total amount of published newspaper issues or aired newscasts. Briefness (or length) of coverage was operationalized as genre-based treatment. Brief coverage was signaled by the use of news briefs and TV voice/overs, while lengthy coverage was associated with the use of newspaper stories, interviews, opinions and editorials and TV packages. The placement of stories was operationalized as prominent coverage on a newspaper front-page or 1st segments of newscasts or not prominent.

Coding. Two trained coders hired for the analysis coded the stories after three weeks of training and subsequent adjustment of the coding instrument. They double coded 91 articles for the intercoder reliability test, which were taken randomly from the populations of news stories. The intercoder reliability was satisfactory. All variables had a Knipendorff's alpha above .80 with the exception of three variables -- "tone – positive," "sources – activist journalist" and "mobilizing frame - free speech" (Knipendorff's alpha above .70) .

Findings

Descriptive

The study analyzed 152 newspaper and 400 TV stories about MDM, produced from July 1, 2010, to October 1 2012.

Types of stories. The news organizations produced three types of stories: a) stories focused on MDM, b) stories that mentioned MDM in the general discussion about the media, and c) stories about public affairs that mentioned MDM in connection with other issues, for example, the elections (see Table 1 and Table 2). The study also counted the attention to each

of five issues that were used as proxy of MDM coverage. As shown in Tables 1-4, the news organizations across ideological spectrum used different types of stories in their coverage of MDM, and emphasized different issues. Pro-government media was more likely to cover MDM as part of broader discussion of political issues, while pro-opposition and independent media were more focused. All news organizations put greater emphasis on two proposed reforms, and limited mention of the Coalition for Media Advocacy, the movement organization behind the proposals.

[insert Tables 1-4 here]

Hypotheses and Research Questions

Tone. This study proposed that pro-government media would be more likely to use a negative tone about MDM than pro-opposition media (H1a); Pro-opposition media were more likely to use a positive tone about MDM than pro-government media (H2a); Independent media's tone of coverage MDM compared to other media types was posed as a research question (RQ1a).

In general, a positive tone was prevalent in the coverage of MDM across all media (see Tables 5 and 6). Newspapers and TV stations produced very few negative stories. Chi square test showed the significance of the analysis ($\chi^2 = 10.23$, $p < .05$).

To test the hypotheses and answer research questions, the study used Pearson's chi square test. As per Table 5, the test showed significant differences ($\chi^2 = 10.23$, $p = 0.03$) in newspapers' tone of coverage of MDM: pro-government *24 Saati* used negative tone slightly less frequently (2.4%) than pro-opposition *Alia* (4.3%), even though both wrote no more than one negative articles. H1a was not supported. *Alia* used a positive tone more frequently (91.3%) than *24 Saati* (64.3%). H2a was supported for the newspaper sample. As RQ1a,

independent *Resonansi* (78.2%) was more likely than *24 Saati* (64.3%) but less likely than *Alia* (91.3%) to be positive regarding MDM. The newspaper did not produce a negative article, that is, used negative tone less often than both newspapers. As shown in Table 6, TV stations did not significantly differ by tone of coverage of MDM. H1a and H2a were not supported in the TV sample. Independent Kavkasia's tone did not differ from the tone used by pro-government and pro-opposition stations in statistical terms. RQ1a was answered.
[insert Table 5 and Table 6 here]

Dominant frames. The study proposed that pro-government media would be more likely to use demobilizing frames about MDM than pro-opposition media (H1b); Pro-opposition media were more likely to use mobilizing frames about MDM than pro-government media (H2b); The study posed RQ1b about independent media's use of frames compared to other media.

In general, mobilizing frames were used much more frequently than demobilizing frames across all types of media, based on McNemar's test. Pro-government *24 Saati* used mobilizing and demobilizing frames in 95.1% and 35.7% of articles, respectively ($\chi^2=21.33$, $p=00$); Pro-opposition *Alia* used mobilizing and demobilizing frames in 95.6% and 13% of articles ($p=00$); Independent *Resonansi* used mobilizing and demobilizing frames in 91.1% and 34.4% of articles ($\chi^2=47.17$, $p=.00$); Pro-government Rustavi 2 used mobilizing and demobilizing frames in 96.8% and 13.7% of articles ($\chi^2=77.01$, $p=00$); Pro-opposition 9th Channel used mobilizing and demobilizing frames in 93.8% and 19.9% of articles ($\chi^2=126.00$, $p=00$); Independent Kavkasia used mobilizing and frames in 99.2% and 23.3% of articles ($\chi^2=96.01$, $p=00$).

[insert Table 7 and Table 8 here]

As per Table 9, Pearson's chi square test showed no significant differences between pro-government and pro-opposition newspapers' use of mobilizing and demobilizing frames. H1b and H2b were not supported. There were no significant differences between independent *Resonansi*'s and other newspapers' use of frames (RQ1b). As shown in Table 10, pro-government Rustavi 2 used more mobilizing frames (96.8%) than pro-opposition 9th Channel (93.8%, $\chi^2=6.30$, $p=.04$), and there was no differences in the use of demobilizing frames. H1b and H2b were not supported in the TV sample. Independent TV Kavkasia used mobilizing frames (99.2%) more often than Rustavi 2 (96.8%) and 9th Channel (93.8%) ($\chi^2=6.30$, $p=.04$).

[insert Table 9 and Table 10 here]

Movement-advanced frames. H1c proposed that pro-government media would be less likely to use movement-advanced frames than pro-opposition media. RQ1c inquired about independent media's use of movement-advanced frames.

As shown in Tables 11 and 12, all newspapers and TV stations used the key frame advanced by the movement – *it concerns you*. Newspapers devoted approximately the same share of materials, one fourth, to the frame such that the differences were not significant based on Pearson's chi square test. H1c was not supported for the newspaper sample. Independent *Resonansi*'s use of the *it concerns you* frame was not different from pro-government or pro-opposition newspapers use of the same frame (RQ1c). Pro-government Rustavi 2 used movement-advanced frame-- *it concerns you* --six times less frequently (3.2%) than pro-opposition 9th Channel (20.5%, $\chi^2=15.08$, $p=.00$). H1c was supported for the TV sample. Independent Kavkasia used movement-advanced frame less often (18.6%) than 9th Channel (20.5%), but more often than Rustavi 2 (3.2%, $\chi^2=15.08$, $p=.00$) (RQ1c).

[insert Table 11 and Table 12 here]

Sources. This study identified and analyzed the media's use of ten categories of sources. The study hypothesized that pro-government media would be more likely to use government officials as sources about MDM than pro-opposition media (H1d); Pro-opposition media would be more likely to use activists as sources more often than pro-government media (H2d). RQ1d asked about independent media's use of sources in comparison to other media types.

The study relied on Pearson's chi square test for the analysis. As shown in Table 13, newspapers' use of two category of sources, "government officials & ruling party MPs" and a combined category of "activists ("MDM activists", "MDM activist journalists," "activists other") showed significant differences. Pro-government *24 Saati* was nearly three times more likely to use government officials as sources (59.5%) than pro-opposition *Alia* (21.7%, $\chi^2=10.66$, $p=.00$). There were no differences in newspapers' use of combined "activist" category. H1d was supported, and H2d was not supported for the newspaper sample. Independent *Resonansi* used government sources more often (35.6%) than pro-opposition *Alia* (21.7%), but less frequently than *24 Saati* (59.5%, $\chi^2=10.66$, $p=.00$) (RQ1d) The differences between *Resonansi's*, *Alia's* and *24 Saati's* use of activists as sources were statistically not significant. In the TV sample, pro-government Rustavi 2 was twice more likely to use government officials as sources (73.7%) than pro-opposition 9th Channel (29.5%, $\chi^2=49.38$, $p=.00$), while pro-opposition 9th Channel was three times more likely to speak to activists than pro-government Rustavi 2 (15.8%, $\chi^2=24.12$, $p=.00$). H1d and H2d were supported for the TV sample. Independent *Kavkasia* used government sources more often (45%) than 9th Channel (29.5%) but less frequently than

Rustavi 2 (73.7%, $\chi^2=49.38$, $p=.00$). Independent Kavkasia spoke to activists more often (46.5%) than either 9th Channel (40%) or Rustavi 2 (15.8%, $\chi^2=24.12$, $p=.00$) (see Table 14).

[insert Table 13 and Table 14 here]

Frequency. H1e proposed that pro-government media would cover MDM less frequently than pro-opposition media. RQ1e posed a question about the volume of independent media's coverage of MDM.

As shown in Table 15, pro-government *24 Saati* (and weekly *Weekend*) produced 42 stories about MDM per 814 published issues; Pro-opposition *Alia* (and weekly *Kronika*) produced 23 stories about MDM per 580 published issues; Independent *Resonansi* (and weekly *Mteli Kvira*) produced 87 stories per 814 published issues. Story per issue ratio was .05 for pro-government *24 Saati*, .04 stories per issue for pro-opposition *Alia*, and .11 stories for independent *Resonansi*. Pro-government newspaper covered MDM more frequently than pro-opposition newspaper. H1e was not supported for the newspaper sample. Independent *Resonansi* wrote more frequently about MDM than pro-opposition *Alia* or pro-government *24 Saati* (RQ1e). As shown in Table 16, TV stations aired 400 stories about MDM during the timeframe of the study, from July, 2010, to October, 2012. As shown in Table 16, pro-government Rustavi 2 produced 95 stories per 10,793 news programs; Pro-opposition 9th Channel aired 176 stories per 1825 programs; Independent Kavkasia aired 129 stories per 2,463 programs. Story per newscast ratio was .008 for pro-government Rustavi 2, .09 stories per newscast for pro-opposition 9th Channel, and .05 for independent Kavkasia. Pro-opposition 9th Channel covered MDM more frequently (nearly one story per ten newscasts) than pro-government Rustavi 2. H1e was supported for the TV sample (see Table 5.19).

Independent Kavkasia covered MDM more frequently than pro-government station, but less frequently than pro-opposition 9th Channel (RQ1e).

[insert Table 15 here]

Brief versus lengthy coverage. The study proposed that pro-government media would be more likely to provide brief coverage of MDM than pro-opposition media (H1f); Pro-opposition media would be more likely to provide lengthier coverage of MDM than pro-government media (H2f). RQ1f inquired about the briefness versus depth of the coverage of MDM in the independent media.

As shown in Table 16, government-leaning *24 Saati* produced news briefs more often (36.7%) than opposition-leaning *Alia* (4.3%, $\chi^2=9.66$, $p=.01$). H1f was supported.

Opposition-leaning *Alia* produced more “lengthy stories” (95.6%) than government-leaning *24 Saati* (64.3%, $\chi^2=9.66$, $p=.01$). H2f was supported for the newspaper sample.

Independent *Resonansi* was less likely to use news briefs (18.4%) than *24 Saati* (36.7%) but more likely than *Alia* (4.3%, $\chi^2=9.66$, $p=.01$), and it was less likely than *Alia* (95.6%) and more likely than *24 Saati* (64.3%) to produce “lengthy stories” (81.7%, $\chi^2=9.66$, $p=.01$) (RQ1f). As per Table 17, genre-based differences were not statistically significant across TV stations. H1f was H2f were not supported for the TV sample. Independent Kavkasia was no different from other TV stations in its choice of genre (RQ1f)

[insert Table 16 and Table 17 here]

Placement. H1g proposed that pro-government media would place the coverage of MDM less prominently than pro-opposition media. H2g proposed that pro-opposition media would place the coverage of MDM more prominently than pro-government media. RQ1g inquired about independent media’s placement of MDM coverage.

As shown in Table 18, newspapers differed in terms of newspaper space assigned to the stories about MDM. Pro-government *24 Saati* placed materials on the front page in 59.5% of cases, while pro-opposition *Alia* did not (0.0%, $\chi^2=36.82$, $p=.00$). H1g was not supported. Pro-government *24 Saati* was less likely to put materials about MDM on less prominent pages 6-16 (0.0%) than pro-opposition *Alia* (21.7%, $\chi^2=36.82$, $p=.00$). H2g was not supported in the newspaper sample. Independent Resonansi placed MDM materials on the front page less often than *24 Saati*, but more often than pro-opposition *Alia*. As shown in Table 19, pro-government Rustavi 2 aired 20% of stories during less prominent morning news segment, while pro-opposition 9th Channel did not air stories about MDM in the morning ($\chi^2=71.44$, $p<.00$). Pro-opposition 9th Channel aired 60.2% of stories during the primetime hours, compared to pro-government Rustavi 2 (49.5%, $\chi^2=71.44$, $p=.00$). H1g and H2g were supported for the TV sample. Independent Kavkasia did not air stories in the morning, and aired 74.4% of stories during the primetime segment, that is, more often than Rustavi 2 (49.5%) and 9th Channel (60.2%, $\chi^2=71.44$, $p=.00$).

[insert Table 18 and Table 19 here]

Discussion

This study analyzed the construction of reality around the media democratization movement (MDM) in Georgia. The movement made great progress in the areas of access to broadcast content and transparency in the press. The study aimed analyze whether political factors, such as news organizations' ties with the government or the opposition (or lack thereof), and frames constructed by activists influenced the news coverage. The study content analyzed 152 newspaper and 400 TV stories about MDM produced by three newspapers and three TV stations representing pro-government, pro-opposition and independent media segments. The

study timeline was set as a period from July 1, 2010, the launch of movement's Coalition for Media Advocacy, and October 1, 2012, Election Day.

The key finding of the study was the prevalent use of positive tone and mobilizing frames in the coverage of MDM across all types of media. Newspapers and TV stations across the political spectrum used a predominantly positive tone and more mobilizing than demobilizing frames. While the study theorized about positive coverage of the movement in pro-opposition and independent media, it did not predict positive coverage in pro-government media. MDM has been spared negative and marginalizing coverage, a proven weapon against social movements and social change around the world. Pro-opposition and independent media provided consistent, extensive, and enthusiastic coverage of MDM. Pro-government media focused predominantly on those MDM issues that were eventually endorsed by the government and covered them positively, relying on government sources. Pro-government TV simply remained silent most of the time, covering MDM ten times less frequently than pro-opposition station. This finding of predominantly positive coverage of the social movement is at odds with much of the early literature on social movements and media, which predicts consistently negative and marginalizing coverage of social movements (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Gitlin, 1980, Olien et al, 1989, 1994, 1995), and complies with more recent literature, which finds supportive coverage of social movements in some parts of media (Harlow & Johnston, 2011; Mauersberger, 2012; Weaver & Scacco, 2013; Yuan, 2013).

The study takes a close look at the dominant view in the literature that the media tend to demobilize movements by de-emphasizing their causes and marginalizing their supporters. Acknowledging the influence of power on the media, and journalists' tendency to rely on

formulaic reporting, this study rejects the deterministic role of power in media's coverage of social movements. Following Ryan (1991), the author concludes that active contestation of meaning in pluralistic and partially pluralistic political and media environments allow social movements more opportunity to attain fair coverage.

The study situates the patterns of news coverage of MDM in the context of the news and political environment in Georgia. The dynamic changes in emergent democracies, such as Georgia, lead to great disparities among political elites and the media. Parts of the news media align themselves with the government, while other parts side with the political opposition. A new type of independent media, open to change, emerge as new forces in civil society. These media occupy disadvantageous positions in relation to other media and thus experience undue government control and unfair business practices (Freedom Forum, 2011, 2012, Transparency International – Georgia, 2011). Since media's support for the status quo is the key premise of negative coverage of social movements (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Gitlin, 1980), media sectors that oppose the status quo are not expected to be negatively biased towards social movements. News organizations aligned with the government or the opposition, and the independents were found to have different editorial policies towards social movements, consistent with their political ties or lack thereof. The opposition media appeared to align with MDM in an effort to weaken the government. Pro-opposition *Alia* was most likely among the newspapers in the sample to use a positive tone in coverage of MDM. *Alia*, by some accounts received financial backing from the opposition. Pro-opposition 9th Channel, a television launched by the opposition six months ahead of the 2012 Elections, aired ten times as many stories in six months after its launch in April 2012 as pro-government Rustavi 2 during the timeframe of the study (July, 2010, to October, 2012). 9th

Channel exceeded independent Kavkasia in frequency of coverage of MDM. The station used the activists' new, innovative frame, *it concerns you*, more often than the other stations. The news producer at 9th Channel said in the interview that her channel, and two other critical TV stations, TV Maestro and Kavkasia, had engaged in advocacy journalism and supported MDM (Mikashavidze, 2014).

The other type of news media analyzed by the study – the independents – have had long-standing strong ties with the civil sector (Topuria, 2000) and MDM. These media were new forces in the society and developed and gained strength as a result of the process of transition (Spark, 2008). At the start of the latest wave of activism, which this study has analyzed, MDM established close ties with the independent media. Four influential media unions -- the Georgian Regional Media Association, the Georgian Association of Regional Broadcasters, the Regional Broadcasters' Network, and the Georgian Charter of Journalism Ethics--became formal founders of the movement's SMO, the Coalition for Media Advocacy. Independent *Resonansi* and Kavkasia covered MDM both extensively and consistently during the period sampled by the study. *Resonansi's* coverage had greater focus on MDM and its issues, than *Alia's*, which covered MDM as one element of the generally problematic media environment in Georgia, or *24 Saati*, which covered MDM as part of its elections and political coverage. *Resonansi* and Kavkasia spoke to activists more often than other stations and covered all three issues of MDM evenly, compared to selective coverage in other newspapers and TV stations. The two independent news organizations also sourced government officials more often than the pro-opposition media (but much less than the pro-government media), to reflect both the government's and the activists' discourse about MDM.

The pro-government media abstained from harsh rhetoric and slander in its coverage of the movement. The marginalization of activists for demands of greater freedom of media and information could upset readers in Georgian society, which strongly supported freedom of expression and press. Every seventh citizen polled in 2013 said that the freedom and independence of media was the most important issue facing the country, ahead of jobs and lost territories (Navarro & Woodward, 2013). After two centuries of censorship under the Imperial and the Communist regimes, Georgians were highly protective of their right to free expression and information. This may explain the lack of negative coverage in the pro-government media. However, the pro-government media in the sample tried to belittle the movement actors and limit information about its activities. The content analysis of the news coverage of the movement corroborated this view. Pro-government Rustavi 2 television did not interview or otherwise use as a source a single activist journalist, and such journalists were a vocal and influential group within the movement. Rustavi 2 also used other activists as sources less often than other TV stations. In their interviews, activists said Rustavi 2 was not showing their faces nor gave them voice in coverage (Mikashavidze, 2014). Rustavi 2 covered the movement during less popular morning newscasts more often than other TV stations. Rustavi 2 used demobilizing frames less often than other TV stations, but limited coverage to some nine stories per hundred newscasts. This strategy of no mention, of “sealing off” news about a movement (Gitlin, 1980), has been described as one of the marginalization techniques in the literature.

Pro-government *24 Saati*, which covered MDM quite extensively (*24 Saati*'s coverage was more frequent than pro-opposition *Alia*'s but less frequent than *Resonansi*'s), limited one-third of its coverage to news briefs, that is, to two to three paragraphs. Both

Rustavi 2 and *24 Saati* relied heavily on government sources compared to other types of media. Pro-government media was the least likely to talk about the Coalition for Media Advocacy, the social movement organization for MDM. According to Gamson and Modigliani (1989), the media rarely covered key players in the movement, in attempts to disassociate them from issues.

Most theoretical predictions in the study were corroborated by the findings. The key finding of the study was the prevalent use of a positive tone and mobilizing frames in the coverage of MDM across all types of media. The study corroborated the recent findings of supportive coverage of social movements in those parts of news media that were open and interested in social change (Harlow & Johnston, 2011; Mauersberger, 2012; Weaver & Scacco, 2013; Yuan, 2013). It also found that the pro-government media abstained from marginalizing coverage of the movement. This study explained the predominantly positive tone and mobilizing frames in the news media's coverage of MDM by aspects of the social conflict in Georgia and activists' skill in constructing the movement through framing. However, the nature of MDM – its focus on the freedom of speech and press, which clearly overlapped with the interests of the professional journalistic corps in maintaining professional freedoms– may have been a factor leading to journalists' positive and mobilizing coverage of the movement. Yet the positioning of the movement as a special cause for journalists, and the framing of its goals as shared goals between activists and journalists, was a calculated and deliberate strategy of the movement, as is argued in this study.

On the whole, politically engaged media stood by their respective political parties in selecting nuances of tone, frames, genre, sourcing, frequency, and prominence of coverage of

MDM. The study concluded that social movements that manage to exploit tensions in the “media-state dynamics” (Mauersberger, 2012, p. 588) and differences in the media (Weaver & Scacco, 2013) in framing decisions have a better chance of gaining good access to audiences and fair coverage. On the whole, the Georgian media democratization movement was successful in crafting its messages and pushing them into the news media.

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Tables

Table 1. Focus of coverage of MDM by newspapers

Focus of stories	pro-gov't newspaper (n=42)	pro-oppos'n newspaper (n=23)	Indep't newspaper (n=87)
MDM	25 (59.5%)	12 (52.2%)	65 (74.7%)
Media, mentions MDM	1 (2.4%)	3 (13.0%)	11 (12.6%)
Other, mentions MDM	16 (38.1%)	8 (34.8%)	11 (12.6%)

chi²=14.77, p<.05

Table 2. Focus of coverage of MDM by TV stations

Focus of stories	pro-government TV (n=95)	pro-opposition TV (n=176)	independent TV (n=129)
MDM	74 (77.9%)	147 (83.5%)	90 (69.8%)
Media, mentions MDM	0 (0.0%)	8 (4.5%)	14 (10.9%)
Other, mentions MDM	21 (22.1%)	21 (11.9%)	25 (19.4%)

chi²=18.65, p<.001

Table 3. MDM organization, campaign and issues by newspapers

Topics	pro-gov't newspaper (n=42)	pro-oppos'n newspaper (n=23)	Indpe't newspaper (n=87)	chi ²	p
The Coalition for Media					
Advocacy	2 (4.8%)	2 (8.7%)	10 (11.5%)	1.54	.46
It Concerns You	13 (31.0%)	6 (26.1%)	23 (26.4%)	.32	.85
Must carry rule	36 (85.7%)	4 (17.4%)	29 (33.3%)	39.2	.00
Maestro TV antennas case	13 (31.0%)	9 (39.1%)	26 (29.9%)	.73	.69
Media ownership/financial transparency	3 (7.1%)	4 (17.4%)	26 (29.9%)	8.91	.05

Table 4 MDM organization, campaign and issues by TV stations

Topics	pro-gov't TV (n=95)	pro-oppo'n TV (n=176)	indep't TV (n=129)	chi ²	p
The Coalition for Media Advocacy	3 (3.2%)	18 (10.2%)	5 (3.9%)	7.23	.05
It Concerns You	3 (3.2%)	36 (20.5%)	24(18.6%)	15.08	.01
Must carry rule	63 (66.3%)	103(58.5%)	71 (55.0%)	2.95	.29
Maestro TV case	11 (11.6%)	83 (17.2%)	45 (34.9%)	34.44	.00
Media transparency	28 (29.5%)	4 (2.3%)	25 (19.4%)	41.45	.00

Table 5. Tone by newspapers

Tone	pro-gov't newspaper (n=42)	pro-oppos'n newspaper (n=23)	Indep't newspaper (n=87)
Negative	1 (2.4%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Neutral	14 (33.3%)	1 (4.3%)	19 (21.8%)
Positive	27 (64.3%)	21 (91.3%)	68 (78.2%)

chi² =10.23, p<.05

Table 6. Tone by TV stations

Tone	pro-gov't TV (n=95)	pro-oppo'n TV (n=176)	Indep't TV (n=129)
Negative	5 (5.3%)	6 (3.4%)	2 (1.6%)
Neutral	11 (11.6%)	27 (15.3%)	20 (15.5%)
Positive	79 (83.2%)	143 (81.3%)	107 (82.9%)

chi² =3.11, p<.6

Table 5.7. Presence of mobilizing and demobilizing frames in newspapers

Media	Mobilizing	Demobilizing	chi ²	P
Pro-government newspaper	40 (95.1%)	15 (35.7%)	21.33	.00
Pro-opposition newspaper	22 (95.6%)	3 (13%)		.00
Independent newspaper	80 (91.1%)	29 (34.4%)	47.17	.00

Table 8. Presence of mobilizing and demobilizing frames in TV

Media	Mobilizing	Demobilizing	chi ²	P
Pro-government TV	92 (96.8%)	13 (13.7%)	77.01	.00
Pro-opposition TV	165 (93.8%)	35 (19.9%)	126.00	.00
Independent TV	128 (99.2%)	30 (23.3%)	96.01	.00

Table 9. Mobilizing and demobilizing frames by newspapers

Frames	pro-gov't newspaper	pro-oppo'n newspaper	Indep't newspaper	chi ²	p
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	(n=42)	(n=23)	(n=87)		
Mobilizing	40 (95.2%)	22 (95.7%)	80 (92.2%)	.71	.70
Demobilizing	15 (35.7%)	3 (13%)	29 (33.3%)	4.13	.13

Table 10. Mobilizing and demobilizing frames by TV stations

Frames	pro-gov't TV (n=95)	pro-oppo'n TV (n=176)	Indep't TV (n=129)	chi ²	p
Mobilizing	92 (96.8%)	165(93.8%	128(99.2%)	6.3	.04
Demobilizing	13(13.7%)	39 (22.2%)	30(23.3)	3.6	.16

Table 11. Mobilizing master frames by newspapers

Frames	pro-gov't newspaper (n=42)	pro-oppo'n newspaper (n=23)	Indep't newspaper (n=87)	chi ²	P
<i>It Concerns You</i>	13 (31.1%)	6 (26.1%)	23 (26.4%)	.32	.85

Table 12 Mobilizing master frames by TV stations

Frames	pro-gov't TV (n=95)	pro-oppos'n TV (n=176)	indep't TV (n=129)	chi ²	p
<i>It Concerns You</i>	3 (3.2%)	36 (20.5%)	24 (18.6%)	15.08	.00

Table 13. Government officials and activists as sources by newspapers

Sources	pro-gov't newspaper (n=42)	pro-oppo'n newspaper (n=23)	indep't newspa (n=87)	chi ²	p
Government officials & MPs ruling party	25 (59.5%)	5 (21.7%)	31 (35.6%)	10.66	.01
Activists	20 (47.6%)	11(47.8%)	52 (59.8%)	2.19	.33

Table 14. Government officials and activists as sources by TV stations

Sources	pro-gov't TV (n=95)	pro-oppo'n TV (n=176)	Indep't TV (n=129)	chi ²	p
Government & ruling MPs	70 (73.7%)	52 (29.5%)	58 (45.0%)	49.38	.00
Activists	15 (15.8%)	70 (40.0%)	60 (46.5%)	24.12	.00

Table 15 Frequency of coverage of MDM by newspapers and TV

	Pro-gov't newspaper (n=95)	prooppo'n newspaper (n=176)	Indep't newspaper (n=129)	Pro-gove't TV (n=95)	pro-oppo TV (n=176)	Indep't TV (n=129)
Issues/newscasts	814	580	814	10792	1825	2463
MDM stories	42	23	87	95	176	129

Ratio	.05	.04	.11	.008	.09	.05
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Table 16. Brief news and longer stories by newspapers

Genre	pro-gov't newspaper (n=42)	pro-oppo'n newspaper (n=23)	indep't newspaper (n=87)
News brief	15 (35.7%)	1 (4.3%)	16 (18.4%)
Story	27 (64.3%)	22 (95.7%)	71 (81.6%)

chi²=9.66, p<.01

Table 17. Brief news and longer stories by TV stations

Genre	pro-gov't TV (n=95)	pro-oppo'n TV (n=176)	indep't TV (n=129)
News brief	59 (62.1%)	122 (69.3%)	80 (62.0%)
Stories	36 (37.9%)	54 (30.7%)	49 (38.0%)

chi²=2.29, p<.31

Table 18. Story placement by newspapers

Page	pro-gov't newspaper (n=42)	pro-oppo'n newspaper (n=23)	Indep't newspaper (n=87)
Front page	22 (59.5%)	0 (0.0%)	18 (20.9%)
Pages 2-5	15 (40.5%)	18 (78.3%)	42 (48.8%)
Other pages	0 (0.0%)	5 (21.7%)	26 (30.2%)

chi²=36.82, p<.00

Table 19. Story placement by TV stations

News program	Pro gov't TV (n=95)	pro-oppo'n TV (n=176)	Indep't TV (n=129)
Morning	19 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Afternoon	29 (30.5%)	70 (39.8%)	33 (25.6%)
Evening	47 (49.5%)	106 (60.2%)	96 (74.4%)

chi²=71.44, p<.00

Table 20. Codebook definitions of frames

Mobilizing frames	Definition
<i>Rights</i>	Refers to general human rights and freedoms and equal opportunities for all social groups. The frame accentuates the rights that constitute the civil society.
<i>.2 Injustice</i>	Accentuates the injustice that a movement intends to address.

<i>Democratization</i>	Refers to the process of transition from totalitarian and authoritarian systems to the democratic system and attendant processes, requirements and benchmarks.
<i>Rule of law</i>	Is used in framing movements' goals as the improvement of the legislative system and the practice.
<i>Fair elections</i>	Refers to the aspects of fair elections and the need to hold fair elections.
<i>Free speech</i>	Refers to commonly understood, important and universally held value of freedom of expression and speech.
<i>Access to information – plurality</i>	This frame accentuates that not only free speech and expression is important, but also access to information for the audiences.
<i>Access to information – transparency</i>	This frame underlines the need for greater transparency and sincerity as opposed to conspiratorial and covert conduct in public affairs.
<i>It concerns you</i>	Refers to citizens' responsibility, ownership and agency to deal with problems in their sociopolitical environment.
<i>Other</i>	Code any other frame that is not listed above here, and specify their meaning.

Demobilizing frames

<i>Supports status quo</i>	Refers to expressions of support for the maintenance of status quo versus changes proposed by activists; support for any repressive measures against activists by a government.
<i>Hinders free business</i>	Refers to claims that protesters' demands interfere with a free market.
<i>Hinders country development, unpatriotic</i>	The essence of the frame is that developmental concerns -- economic, infrastructural, administrative -- development are superior to other concerns, such as human or media rights.
<i>Politicizing, political scam</i>	Defines any protest, even one that focus on community concerns, in political terms. Protesters are accused of having manifest or hidden political agendas and seeking political benefits for themselves.
<i>Immoral, against tradition</i>	Defines protest as defying tradition and morality and religious values.
<i>Violence, police confrontation</i>	Refers to general lawlessness, anarchy, violence, vandalism, crime, clashes with the police.
<i>Freak show/carnival</i>	Appearance and dramaturgy- based coverage, which emphasizes physical or mental oddities among the protesters, such as body piercing, long hair, outfits.
<i>Romper room/idiots at large</i>	Stresses mental, ideological oddities of participants, their idealism, naiveté, unprofessional judgment, lack of understanding of the problem they are dealing with.

<i>Polls, other statistics, bystanders</i>	Refers to the use of public opinion polls and other statistics to show public opposition to the protest.
<i>Counter demonstrations</i>	Describes counterdemonstrations against a protest event or against a cause of a social movement.
<i>Bothersome, disruptive</i>	Refers to minor disruptions, such as traffic disruptions, garbage and sanitation problems, upset commerce, various other public costs related to demonstrations and other action.
<i>Ineffective, impotent, counterproductive</i>	Code here any references to ineffectiveness of a protest, it being ignored by its targets – the government, the public -as well as comments that the activism will lead nowhere.