

**THE ILLUSION OF PUBLIC OPINION: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS
OF MEDIA FRAMING OF IMMIGRATION IN THE BREXIT
CAMPAIGN**

By ©

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Abstract

The referendum of 2016 took Brexit to the centre stage as one of the controversial discourses in the United Kingdom. Particularly, the role of the media in framing immigration during Brexit campaign makes it worthy of attention. Using the framing theory, the study gave a descriptive analysis of how the media framed immigration in the context of Brexit campaign. Relying on primary data, the study selected 104 distinct articles published by selected UK national newspapers from the LexisNexis database, and analyzed them under seven frames identified: social welfare, labour market, national identity, law and order, Turkey's possible EU membership, terrorism, and moral values. It combined both quantitative and content analysis to give robust results.

Findings show that while newspapers claim to be neutral entities, they were largely involved in crafting their stories to favour either pro-Leave or pro-Remain group. The study concludes that unless the news media maintain their objectivity within the theatre of politics, they will continue to remain like the two sides of a coin that can unite different and diverse forces together or cause them to fall apart.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to God, Almighty Allah, and to my late father, Mr. Ashas Rauf, who passed on during my last undergraduate days, and to my mother, Mrs Ashagbe Idayat, who took the position of both the father and mother to ensure that I, and my siblings all achieve our dreams and aspirations in life.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction and Background to the Study

The mobility of people from one state to another constitutes an inevitable feature of the inter-dependent world. The rising level of migration could be appreciated with the statistical reports of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2020) that there are about 272 million immigrants across the globe. Immigration mostly occurs between the developing and developed countries, with the advanced industrial economies being the largest recipients. The United Kingdom, therefore, constitutes one of the highest destinations of immigrants in the world. Specifically, the enlargement of the European Union (EU), of which Britain was a member, activated a new dimension of the influx of EU immigrants into the British soil (Martins, 2021). Such inflow has been considered so overwhelming that the media coverage extended its narratives towards Eastern Europe to promote very intense conversations on the supposed effects of immigration on the British economy and socio-political structure. Thus, the media has been at the centre of awareness creation, showing how British membership of the EU has increased immigration to the detriment of both the UK's political integration and sustainable economic development. It was this engagement that was one of the factors that set the context for the 2016 referendum to either leave or remain in the EU (Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015).

This shows the critical importance of the media in amplifying the voice of the public in a democracy. The mass media feeds public data into the political system and that establishes a strong connection between the media and the public voice (Chong and Druckman, 2011). In fact, a strong and independent public voice in a democracy greatly depends on the existence of a free media that captures both usual and unusual diversity of viewpoints in the society (Chong and Druckman, 2011). This assumption has its empirical support in the exit process of the United Kingdom from the European Union that began on June 23rd, 2016, as the UK national

news media took the forefront of construing stories under some frames to appeal to the emotions of Brexit voters (Botta, 2018). Therefore, the role of the news media in shaping the understanding and evaluation of political events and conditions has become very crucial (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987).

The decision of the majority of British voters on the June 23rd, 2016 to leave the European Union was one of the most profound decisions made by the state to determine its smooth existence in decades (Menon, 2019). The outcome of the referendum sprang a wave of surprises for the UK and the EU alike; and at the same time produced a muddled political climate that impinged on every aspect of the lives of the British polity (Sogelola, 2018; Botta, 2018). Such potential effects, ranging from a short term fear of survival in isolation, to the long term political, economic, sociocultural, and financial consequences, triggered a deep polarization of the populace along the lines of Brexiteers (leavers) and the remain camp (those who wanted the UK to stay in the EU), which created a long time stalemate that did not only delay implementation of the divorce from the EU, but also created divides among the people (Gavin, 2018).

While several factors such as economy and national sovereignty can be adduced to the voting behavior in the Brexit vote, the question of immigration is at the forefront amongst the Brexiteers, being reinforced by Abrahams' and Travalglino's (2018) apt commentary that "an important focus of the campaigns was how to deal with the apparently too high level of immigration" (p. 311). This is because it is not uncommon for the citizens of a particular country to feel threatened by outgroups, especially when the consequences on employment opportunities and other socio-cultural implications are envisaged (Stephan and Stephan, 2000). Thus, Brexit debate emerged as a spill-over of the nationalism posture of the Europhobes, who were mainly conservative, adult UK citizens, and over-protective of their national economy that popularized the anti-immigration and anti-establishment sentiments that are gradually

gaining momentum in the West (Goodwin et al. 2020; Inglehart and Norris, 2016). This faction of the citizens conceived of the customs union, single market, and free movement of EU members as a financial burden upon their state, given the unresolved Eurozone crises that hit the zone since 2007 (Deacon et al. 2016). Their propaganda was organized and aided by the UK national newspapers that shaped and popularized such sentiments, which culminated in the drawing of about 52% of the British voters as against the warnings issued by the remain camp over the danger of the post-Brexit financial market (Chung and Kim, 2019). This phenomenon portrays that the media is inextricably linked to shaping the opinions of the public, and to the framing of a political agenda that is either favourable to the Brexiteers (Leave group) or the Remain bloc. The intensive engagement and the information supplied to voters in the course of the Brexit campaign becomes critical in this context. Therefore, beyond the fact that the choice to leave creates the desire to look into the voter's motivations, the power of media in setting the political agenda and influencing voters' choices on Brexit issues is also very significant and worthy of study.

If we ordinarily believe that democracy provides the mass public the opportunity to reach a consensus that is quite representative of the views of the majority, we should be concerned when we sense that voters are susceptible to certain variables within the political environment that, in actual fact, could be the deciding factors when it comes to their final decision at the polls, a dilemma Lippman (1925) captures aptly in his description of the private citizen: "he reigns in theory, but in actual fact he does not govern" (p. 4). This narrative expresses a gloomy assessment of the competence of voters, a discussion that is prominent in one of the unending debates in political behavior and communication.

Following from the aforementioned, it is pertinent to stress that the whole idea of leaving the European Union has consumed British politics for decades. Specifically, it became more intense in 2010, as a result of the power secured by the Conservative-Liberal Democrats

coalition, after it generated an enormous Eurosceptic opposition in the European parliament (Bale, 2018). This culminated in an intense political atmosphere in the British polity, as the event sent a message to the pro-remain campaigners that their glorious four decades of international covenant would soon crash, while the pro-Brexit actors became fascinated about the long-term dividends of taking back control (Chung and Kim, 2019). Again, this segmentation occurred due to a deep sense of Euroscepticism primed by the news media among the public, long before and during the referendum, and later became settled especially in England (Lawton and Ackril, 2016). Thus, the media, we can emphasize, played a significant role in the Brexit campaign. Such a role encompassed the framing of issues to influence the perceptions of the electorate (Bodystun et al., 2014).

Framing connotes the construction of issues in specific contexts by placing emphasis on some aspects, while downplaying others (Dahinden, 2006). An interesting work on framing worthy of note is that of Gamson and Modigliani (1989), who both elucidated the need to look beyond the notion that media discourse changes and influences public opinion, and that what should be important is the realization that media discourse and public opinion are quite synonymous as they interact with one another. Every policy issue (like nuclear power, which was these authors' case of choice) culminates into an issue culture which creates a path for a cultural level (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989). While trying to examine the pattern in which local news outlets framed a demonstration and rally of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and its effects on tolerance, Nelson and Oxley (1997) outlined two experiments: The first framed the rally as a free speech issue, and the other framed it as a disruption of public order. The results show that participants exposed to the free speech story expressed more tolerance for the Ku Klux Klan than participants who watched the public order story (Nelson and Oxley 1997). Another classic work on framing worthy of mention is that of Hopkins and Mummolo (2017), whose

study focused on underlining whether framing effects are limited to the specific issue under study or spill over to structurally similar issues.

Framing in relation to the Brexit campaign speaks to the communicative strategy of the UK media to present and interpret issues that will propel the alignment of the UK voters either toward the Leave or the Remain camp (Wheeler, 2017). This was captured by Khabaz (2018, p. 496), who posited that the top-selling British newspapers drove and popularized the Brexit messages through repetitive frames like ‘taking control’, ‘democracy’, and ‘sovereignty’. The UK newspapers, having dedicated a large space to promoting the leave campaign, organized and structured their messages along the debates of the fear of immigration to win the attention of the public (Skinner et al., 2016). From all the Brexit referendum articles studied by Levy et al. (2016), 41% tilted towards the Leave, 27% were for the Remain, 23% had mixed opinions, and the remaining 9% were undecided. The leading news media for Brexit, such as The Daily Mail, The Sun, The Express, and The Daily Star, were dedicated to publishing over one Leave editorial per day (Firmstone, 2016), even as *The Express* protested through its ‘Get us out of the EU’ slogan. On the other hand, *The Mirror* and The Guardian called for the votes to remain, while The Times pointed to the reforms that ought to be done for the effective operation of the EU (Firmstone, 2016). The media framing also amplified the positions of the politicians, as to whether they were for leave or remain. For instance, the media projected the strong pro-Brexit attitude of some UK politicians, when it showed in their quotations that about 70% of those that wanted to leave the EU were of the conservative Tories, while 13% were Labour, and about 8% of the UK Independent Party (UKIP) wanted to stay (Firmstone, 2016; Sogelola, 2018).

Though later changed to accommodate different areas, the Brexit campaign was framed around fundamentally three distinct aspects by the pro-Leave group (Chung and Kim, 2019). These included immigration, economy, and national sovereignty (Travis, 2016). The

immigration factor, amidst the potential influx of the Syrian refugees, became sellable by the news media through the use of shocking tones on social media, especially Twitter. Tones like ‘out of control’, ‘influx of immigrants’, and ‘rocketing’ were adopted by the pro-Brexit media outlets, who also developed mobile applications to scale-up the level of communication between the party and the voters (Ammerman, 2016). News media strategically presented news to create frames for information during the campaign. Such campaign bordered on the incessant increase in net immigration to an all-time high of 333,000 in 2016 (Johnson, 2016). The leave campaigners had assured the British citizens of a reduction in the number of immigrants and speculated that the number of EU immigrants might reach over five million by 2030, should countries like Turkey be allowed full membership in the EU. Furthermore, they pledged to redirect the 350 million Euros going to the EU on a weekly basis to the National Health Services (Full Fact, 2019). On the other hand, the failure of the ‘Remain’ campaigners to present arguments that do not only focus on fears of the consequences of leaving, brewed lack of confidence in their agenda. The anti-Brexit campaigners painted negative effects of immigration on National Health Services funding and the economic conditions of the UK (Johnson, 2016).

Framing of an important issue like immigration has been argued to be one of the major factors that handed Brexit victory to the Leave camp, while on the contrary served as the defeating factor for the Remain camp. This is attributable to the methods, style, and aggressiveness with which they framed immigration issues up to the Brexit referendum. According to Chung and Kim (2019), the former was performed on key promises that would later be deemed false or broken, and were largely conducted in a misleading version, while the latter was mainly reactionary without well-defined original frames. In order to test and confirm the claims made by different parties in literature, this study aims at providing a descriptive

analysis of how immigration-related information delivered to the British public was constructed to persuade and swing voters to their respective camps.

1.2 Objective of the study and research question

The objective of this study is to provide a descriptive analysis of how immigration was framed by selected UK newspapers during the Brexit campaign. This leads to the question that this study seeks to answer, ‘how was immigration framed by the UK newspapers during the Brexit campaign?’

1.3 Scope of the Study

For a fact, mixed opinions had existed on Brexit from the time the UK joined the EU. This is why the discourses on Brexit are inexhaustible. From the pre-referendum issues to the post, and from issues within the EU, unto the effect of Brexit on the international system, no single research can claim the sufficiency of information and answer to the topic; thus, this research seeks to approach the Brexit from a unique point of view (using the framing theory), by looking at how 104 distinct articles published by the UK national newspapers presented and emphasized the immigration issue. The UK national newspapers whose stories will be examined include: The Independent, The Times, Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, The Sun, The Observer, Evening Standard and Financial Times. While some national newspapers such as Daily Mirror, Daily Mail, Daily Express, and Daily Star would be expected to be included because of their high readership and polarized views on Brexit, it is important to indicate that they are excluded in this study because they are not available on the LexisNexis database used. This study attempts to identify and describe media frames that targeted immigration in these

popular British national newspapers during the salient period before the referendum. This would be between the periods of May 23rd, 2016, to June 23rd, 2016.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

In the face of the dearth of systematic studies on immigration and media framing in the context of Brexit, this study would contribute to the gap in the existing literature on the subject and become a major source of information for future studies. In other words, despite the fact that Political Science literature is awash with works that have advanced explanations for how immigration was one of the major factors that the Leave campaign put forward to justify their position in the Brexit vote (e.g., Clarke, Goodwin, and Whiteley, 2017; Abrams and Travalgino, 2018; Neil, Lee., Katy, Morris., and Thomas Kemeny, 2018), little attention has been paid to how extensive media coverage of this sensitive and important issue played out. This effort could help discern the exact frames and metaphors used to present the threats posed by immigration. No doubt, the specific terms used to ‘create’ a political issue out of a social problem have a strong effect on the nature and degree of popular agreement with various sides of that issue (Jacoby, 2000, p. 750).

1.5 Research Design

This study is guided by an idealistic and constructivist research paradigm. This is because media framing defies objective realities. Presentation of issues and emphasis on a particular subject are largely by different news media based on their ideological dispositions towards Brexit and immigration. This is why the study is ontologically idealistic. Ontological idealism speaks to a philosophical perspective that argues for the existence of multiple social realities (Blaike, 2000). So, the cause and effect of immigration can be defined and conceived in relation to culture, context, and the experience of the society, in this case the UK people. This justification bears corollary with Miller & Rice (1967), who argued that all factors that

influence dispositions, including the system and context, must be taken into account when assessing it. Epistemologically, it will lean on constructivism rather than empiricism. This is the criterion that determines that the knowledge of media framing on Brexit and immigration will be judged not by external reality or independent reasoning, but with actual interaction of the researcher with news articles (Blaike, 2000).

The above implies that while the study will try to be as objective as possible, construction of realities cannot be distanced from elements of subjectivity, with which interpretation would be done to drive home the aim of the study. As a strategy, the study will be deductive. This is because the theory of media framing is being constructed, and from such theory observation will be made on how media developed frames on immigration issues for Brexit (Grix, 2002). In other words, this study seeks to assess and test the media framing of immigration along the line of the analytical frameworks of social welfare, labour market, law and order, terrorism, Turkey's possible EU membership, moral value and national identity, by matching them with data to understand the immigration issues around the Brexit campaign. The research design for the study is cross-sectional and qualitative. It is cross sectional because it is a one-shot study that gathers data on the required information at one point in time (and in the case of this study from May 23rd, 2016, to June 23rd, 2016), while its qualitative feature is defined by the fact that it is an investigation that seeks to answer the descriptive question of 'how' to uncover trends in thoughts and opinions, and drive deeper into the subject matter (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Thus, this design fits the subject matter, given that this study examines the role of media framing on the immigration issue of Brexit, even as the cross-sectional design permits intensive and descriptive analysis.

This piecemeal study will give an adequate explanation and add to the existing body of knowledge on the study of immigration and media framing. In this case, data will be collected about the specific issue of immigration and how it was presented in selected UK national

newspapers. The LexisNexis database is accessed through the search for UK national newspapers with two relevant keywords ('Brexit' and 'immigration'). The result presented by the database is further filtered to the specified dates of study (May 23rd, 2016, to June 23rd, 2016). This reduces the articles to one-hundred and four (104). This means that the media outlets in the UK constitute the population of the study. The one hundred and four (104) national newspaper stories are the sample, and these were purposively selected for this study, as they were sifted based on relevant keywords mentioned above.

The data collected is analyzed using content analysis. In this case the analysis process begins with a careful reading and identification of tone and the frequency of some keywords, which are further organized into expansive themes for adequate coding and categorization. These themes were then organized into frames, namely: social welfare, labour market, national identity, terrorism, Turkish EU membership threat, law and order, and moral values. These frames were derived in a systematic way, using Chong and Druckman's (2011) framework. According to them, the first important step is to identify the issue (Chong and Druckman, 2011). The issue in our case is immigration in the Brexit campaign. This step is expected to be followed by isolating specific attitudes, characteristics or causal attributions of the frames (Chong and Druckman, 2011). Thus, possible attitudes or characteristics of the immigration frames are highlighted in the form of the above-stated seven frames. Having identified an initial set of frames for the issue, the next step is to inductively create a coding scheme (Chong and Druckman, 2011). This is where distinct concepts on Brexit and immigration are assigned some categorical values for the purpose of presenting frequencies and percentages for easy visualization and understanding. Coding in this study is both axial and open, as it is done based on the study's invention cum literature. A computer program, specifically Google Sheets, is used to organize and code the data. This is further documented, presented, and summarized for proper understanding.

The work is focused on news stories on Brexit and immigration in the aforementioned newspapers between May 23rd and June 23rd, 2016. The study settled for this timeframe because the weeks leading to the vote are salient, as campaigns on both sides (of the leavers and those who want the UK to stay in the EU) were intense and loaded with all the details to be communicated to the mass public using the power of the media. Significant details from the news stories will be qualitatively analyzed and decent efforts will also be made to provide a systematic expression of the findings in such a way that will represent the key development and also ease understanding of the work. It is imperative to stress that the analytical goal of this work is to arrive at a valid description of the major frames through which Brexit was linked to immigration. And this is to be achieved without compromising the appropriateness, consistency, and transferability of the findings of this study. This research leans on data that can be reproduced with similar results of the subject, even if conducted by another researcher.

1.6 Limitation to the Study

There are not too many limitations to this study, as it primarily deals with article extraction for framing. However, it will also be acknowledged that the study was unable to get the direct contacts of the news media and hold further discussion for deeper analysis. This was covered for by dealing with primary speeches of politicians, as projected by the news media. These speeches were constructed into frames and sub-frames, and organized for objective analysis.

1.7 Chapter outline

Apart from all the details provided in this section that constituted the first chapter of the study, the work will further have four (4) additional chapters that will help drive home the key arguments, observations, and conclusions, and create a better understanding of the work. These additional parts are listed below:

- Chapter two - Literature Review and Theoretical framework.
- Chapter three – Methodology.
- Chapter four - Critical Analysis of Empirical Results.
- Chapter five – Summary, suggestions for further research and Conclusion.
- Bibliography.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 The Development of Brexit: Connections and Disconnections

The referendum of the 23rd of June, 2016, is conventionally regarded as the spotlight of Brexit. This historic event, if viewed as a separate political occurrence, has the potentiality of producing a reductionistic perspective that can hamper a vast understanding of the subject (Chochia et al. 2017). So, while the referendum represents a phenomenal epoch in the history of UK-EU relations, the event was a manifestation of decades of uneasy relations between the UK and the European Union; thus, the Brexit campaign is an accumulation of a long term process rather than a single political occurrence (Troitino et al. 2017). To this extent, a full appreciation of Brexit is better gleaned within the context of the development of the relationship between the UK and Western Europe.

The pursuit of European integration had been skeptically welcomed by Great Britain. This was manifested during the reign of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Union's foremost predecessor. The ECSC was formed in 1951 to facilitate economic integration in Europe through trade. This was after the six founding members (Belgium, France, Netherlands, Luxemburg, Italy, and West Germany) signed the Treaty of Paris, to the exclusion of Britain in the same year (Goncalves, 2017). Although the former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill had previously advocated for the Council of Europe to foster cooperation in the region, but the idea of integration through ECSC was rejected by Great Britain for the fear of supranational authority.

The British delegates that embarked on negotiations prior to the formation of the ECSC reneged on their interest after raising the preconception that a level of national sovereignty submission would be required. Then, the Labour Cabinet Minister Herbert Morrison argued that the Durham miners would not agree with such arrangement, a suggestion which was

followed and led to the dismissal of the idea of participating in European integration (Chung and Kim, 2019). Britain also took the view that such integration would undermine its exceptionalism as an erstwhile world power, and it cherished its partnership with the United States and trade with other commonwealth nations more than any economic benefits Europe would deliver. Consequently, the UK opted to maintain its independent destiny outside of Europe (Shnapper, 2017).

However, as the coal and steel sectors of the state began to wane, while the search for markets for British goods heightened, Great Britain soon began cooperation with the community for the purpose of funding its receding coal and steel sectors for revitalization. This was to enable the French and German markets to open their doors to producers in Britain. Still, the United Kingdom nurtured the fear that the federation of Europe, proposed by France, would predispose the welfare state and its high-tax paying companies to unfavourable competition with the lower-cost operating firms in Europe (Emerson, 2017). Thus, in 1955, when the road to the Messina Conference was opened for a broader organization, the UK ignored the path, by rejecting the request of the French Prime Minister Guy Mollet to join the politically-motivated European common market and custom union. As a result, when the Treaty of Rome was signed in 1957 to give birth to the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC) and the European Economic Community (EEC), the UK organized Austria, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, and Norway in 1959 to develop an alternative idea around the European Free-Trade Association (EFTA) (Emerson, 2017).

Following the formation of the EFTA, the economic growth of the member states declined, such that it was at its lowest level of 2%, as against the EEC that stood at 6% (Emerson, 2017). This outstanding economic performance of the EEC propelled a repentant mind from the British leadership to consider making an application to join. Meanwhile, the rules made at the formative stage were difficult to change by future member states that were

absent; and the structure of the community had been constructed to deliver more advantages for the founding six, than it would benefit Britain. Consequent upon the British lessons of the decline in the growth rate, its application for EEC membership was made by the Tory government under the Prime Minister Harold Macmillan on July 23rd, 1961 (Jorens and Strban, 2017). The application was met with stiff resistance, as the French Prime Minister Charles de Gaulle vetoed it on the ground that the British membership would pose a threat to the development of the Franco-German alliance, and that the size of the UK as a country would undermine the influence that France had hitherto enjoyed in the EEC. The move was again vetoed in 1967, based on the suspicion that Britain was not European enough (Jorens and Strban, 2017). This caused a perception of the EEC towards the UK as the ‘Reluctant Europe’. As cited in Costigliola (1992), de Gaulle revealed that the United Kingdom was not satisfactorily “European” in her outlook, and still too closely tied to the USA”. He conceived the UK as the American ‘Trojan Horse’ that will hasten the American penetration into the European common market (Dedman, 2006), and as a potential hindrance to the finalization of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the EEC.

However, following de Gaulle’s abdication of power in 1969, the UK under Prime Minister Edward Heath thought the only obstacle to its progression into the bloc has been eliminated, and sent its final application that officially made the UK an EEC member on 1 January, 1973. This membership brewed a split within the Heath-led Conservative party and the Labour party, and made the UK a very complicated and difficult member. The way of financing the EEC and the model of operating the Community, and the suggestion to harmonize value-added tax (VAT), spurred disagreements from some disgruntled parties in the UK, which led to the insistence of the government to apply the VAT policy at the level of state (Chochia et al. 2017; Tendra-Wlasczuk, 2018). The Labour Party under the leadership of Harold

Wilson afterwards pushed for a renegotiation of terms with the EEC, and such brought about the Dublin summit of 1975 that only applied minor changes.

With the emergence of Margaret Thatcher as the new Conservative leader in 1974, the membership of the UK in the EEC was severely questioned, such that it led to a referendum in 1975 — just two years after its admission. The referendum was organized by the Wilson Labour Government that had campaigned for one (with a Eurosceptic edge), but became pro-EEC once in power. The Labour had become interested in the European cooperation, and on that basis switched its position. Though the Thatcherites were pro-EEC, the split within Conservative and Labour parties led to the option for the first referendum. Thatcher herself was opposed to the idea of referenda, seeing them as “devices of dictators and demagogues” (as cited in Chochia et al., 2017, p. 127). The referendum was advisory due to the nature of parliamentary sovereignty in the UK and would need the endorsement of the British government to take effect. However, the government gave room for the expression of public opinion; and it thus, chose referendum as a way of understanding the public satisfaction level towards the ascension of the UK to the EEC. The 1975 referendum campaign saw the support of the majority of political figures to remain, while those that objected to staying lacked leadership. The absence of public representatives for those that wanted the UK out of the EEC meant that there was no substantial resources and that made the campaign much more difficult (Chochia et al., 2017). As Euroscepticism had not permeated deeply to cause the British march out in 1975, 67% of the populace voted to stay in the referendum that asked for the UK to stay or leave the European Community. All the administrative regions and Northern Ireland with the exception of the Western Isles and Shetland supported the move to stay in the European community.

This, however, was not the dead end for the pro-leave campaign. The EEC model of integration was the type that made the UK social policies subservient to the European law. The receipt of lower social protection by part-time workers, who were mainly women, was

criticized by the European law, even the UK's Employment Protection law of 1978 was alleged to be discriminatory in operation. This was conceived by the UK, who has been reluctant towards political, social, and economic integration of Europe, as an encroachment on the national sovereignty (Dedman, 2006).

The initiation of the European Monetary System (EMS) in 1979 was refuted by the Thatcher government. The EMS meant that members of the community would operate one currency and that the European Central Bank (ECB) would be more powerful than national central banks (NCBs), a proposition that the UK refuted due to the prominence of its Pound Sterling (GBP). This episode of the UK-EEC relations was largely defined by the confrontational position of Thatcher, who immediately donned Eurosceptic attitude against the EEC's attempt to undermine the UK's sovereignty (Gifford, 2016). Meanwhile, about 70% of the EU budget was claimed to be going to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) as argued by Varnasca (2016). And as Britain did not consider agriculture to be its mainstay, it felt it was an unfavourable commitment for the UK. This ushered in frosty relations that were aggravated in the 1980s, prompting Margaret Thatcher in 1984 to negotiate for a better deal of the EEC's budget in the form of the cut down in the amount to be paid by Britain - a move that brought in a rebate for the UK. So intense was the quest to withdraw from the EEC that it became the centrepiece of the 1983 general election campaign. The Labour leader Michael Foot put the withdrawal agenda as the fulcrum of his campaign manifesto against Thatcher, though he lost (Kim and Hong, 2015).

Britain's continuous refusal also played out when the Single European Act (SEA) was instituted in 1986 (Chochia et al. 2017). The SEA came up with stringent arrangements to create a common market that would allow the free movement of goods and services within members of the community without trade barriers. Investments in the form of money and the migration of people from one EEC country to another for study and work without visa

application, and the reduction in the rate of border checks, were what the SEA focused on to actualize by 1992. All these stood as a form of betrayal to the British government. In fact, the centralization of power in Brussels was seen by the UK as an affront against the state power (Gonclaves, 2017). As described by Thatcher, the EEC was a “super-state exercising new dominance from Brussels” (Powel, 1998, p.30 as cited in Daddow et al, 2019, p. 11). Thus, the UK opposed the European political and economic unification, and preferred cooperation, but it came with deep internal division within the Conservative party, contributing to the loss of power for Thatcher.

In 1990, when John Major replaced Thatcher, he declared his vision of less confrontation with the EU. He emphasized his diplomatic methods of including the UK in the membership of the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM), which was a part of the European Monetary System (EMS). This was with a view to bring about monetary stability and reduce the variation embedded in exchange rates in preparation for the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Meanwhile, the foremost suggestion of the UK that a unique form of single currency that was market-based hard European Currency Unit (ECU) be used was dispelled to accommodate the German-proposed institutionally regulated EMU. The UK conceived this as a great threat to its financial competitive advantage that the phase formed another basis for the pervasiveness of Euroscepticism within the Conservative party (Goodwin et al., 2020). This growing Euroscepticism could no longer be managed by the John Major government, to the point that an outright rejection of the Maastricht Treaty, which was supposed to set the tone for the formation of the European Union was called, with the request for a referendum in the parliament to allow people to also decide their position on the treaty escalating. The UK then became divided, such that groups began to emerge against the involvement of the UK with the EEC. Some media groups began to fuel movements that led to the emergence of the Referendum Party, Anti-Federalist League, and the European Foundation. Following the

collapse of the overvalued pound sterling below the ERM limits, the UK bowed out of the ERM on 6 September 1992, which it was technically not ripe for. This caused the absence of the UK to numerous negotiations of the Maastricht Treaty that ushered in the European Union (Chochia et al, 2017).

When the Treaty of Amsterdam was signed in 1997 to review a number of reforms at the European Council, the UK objected, arguing that it was still titling in a federalist direction. The emergence of the Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair changed the direction of the UK to a pro-EU one. He was to ensure the ‘Europeanization of policies’ that would agree with the single market, the ERM, and the EMU that would operate from the position of the UK with regards to national sovereignty (Gifford, 2016). But his attempt to rebuild the relationship with the EU was soon soiled by the imposition of a ban on the export of UK beef into the EU owing to the mad cow disease that surfaced in the late 1990s. They also battled (especially with Luxemburg) over the importation of the British chocolate into the EU. This was because France, Italy, Spain, and Belgium rejected the popular British brands, like Cadbury and Mars Bars, arguing that the British chocolate contained vegetable oil, instead of only cocoa-butter. This hostility continued to grow, even as the British population lost confidence in the EU project (Wintour & Syal, 2016).

In 2007, disagreement ensued over the Lisbon Treaty as the UK did not welcome the European constitution that would allow for a European president and foreign minister. The absence of the Labour leader and Prime Minister Gordon Brown at the Lisbon Treaty meant that Brussels would become the centre of the European power (Gillingham, 2003). The missing of the public signing by the UK Prime Minister continued to fuel discomfort on the part of the EU, as they wondered how Gordon Brown would miss what he had bargained for. The inclination to leave the EU grew when the financial crises hit Europe between 2007 and 2008, and then the Eurozone sovereign debt crisis which surfaced in 2010 and lasted beyond

expectation (Schnapper, 2017). The resultant effect of this was the huge financial burden on the UK, and how the European Central Bank (ECB) continued to reel out an unlimited bond buying programme for Southern Europe, namely, Italy and Spain. More so, the British people grew weary of the refugee crises of the Middle-East, the influx of a huge number of immigrants into Germany, Greece, and Italy in 2015, thereby giving more problems to the European citizens and institutions (Schnapper 2017). This propelled a high level of migration from the Eurozone for greener pasture. The presence of immigrants from these states was considered as a threat to UK nationalism by the Eurosceptics, and the fear of losing jobs by the British citizens grew. This ongoing economic unrest meant that the UK would try all possible measures to shield its economy, and in a bid to protect its financial sector, the Prime Minister David Cameron vetoed the EU treaty in 2011, and promised to embark on the renegotiation of the UK membership should he win in the next elections (Balch and Balabanova, 2016).

During this time, the UK Independence Party was against negotiation and it had maintained its hard-line position for complete withdrawal from the European Union. Having secured another election victory in 2015, Cameron adopted the EU referendum as an election pledge in order to head off losing votes to UKIP, and to unite the Tory party. He embarked on the renegotiation process in which issues such as welfare payments for migrants, financial security, and the ease for the blockade of the EU regulations by Britain were brought to the table. Cameron announced the outcome of the negotiation and then slated 23rd of June 2016 as the day of a referendum for Brexit. The referendum turned out to be in favour of the pro-Leave camp, who were able to pool 51.9% of the 30 million votes (Schnapper 2017). England, Wales, and above 38% of Scottish electorates voted to leave, while the Northern Ireland strongly voted to stay (The Electoral Commission, 2019). Consequently, the Brexit vote marked the historic withdrawal of the UK from its long-time involvement with the European Union. This was followed by the resignation of David Cameron and the emergence of Theresa May, who

officially instituted the British request to leave the EU by invoking the Article 50 of the Treaty of the EU (Troitino et al, 2017).

2.2 The Politics of British Immigration: A Critical Review

The inflow and outflow of people into the British soil have over time pulled the strings of criticisms from different groups, which have translated to the development of several political and legal mechanisms for regulating immigration. This is actually geared to limit lawful immigration, so as to curtail pressure on the economy, politics, and the demographics of the state.

From the late 18th century to the turn of the 20th century, the politics of immigration in Britain was largely defined in terms of the Jewish exodus from Eastern Europe. The adoption of anti-Semitic policy in Russia in the late 1890s, which saw heavy influx of Jews into Britain, created a more confrontational era in British immigration (Packer, 2017). Following the death of Tsar Alexander II in 1881, the new regime in Moscow embarked on Russification and an orthodoxy policy that subjected the Jews to inhumane treatment in Moscow, Kiev, and Kishinev (Gainer, 1972). Such persecution culminated in the influx of the Jews into Western Europe and the Americas. Great Britain was one of the countries that opened doors for the Jews, having allowed about 100, 000 of them to settle in the East End of London (Packer, 2017).

As Lipman (1954) avers, not only did the Jews that landed in England live in a state of squalor, they were also either semi-skilled in tailoring, shoe-making or completely deficient of skills with desperation for work. The burden of survival propelled them to take up jobs with lower wages – something which the British working class considered as a depletion of opportunities for them. This, coupled with the Jewish population increasing by 50% later in 1905, was perceived by the British middle class as a contributor to the high level of

unemployment in the late 1880s and economic weakness to the indigenous population strength of Britain (Lipman, 1954). Thus, alien immigration emerged as a political issue for the Conservative who had gained parliamentary seats through the support of the anti-alien political class (Pellew, 1989).

Thus, the right-wing politicians, predominantly the Tory Members of Parliament (MPs), mobilized the media, English workers who feared that they might lose more jobs, and the public against the new immigrants. The restrictionist MPs exerted pressure on the Robert Cecil Conservative (Tories) government that did not have a clear understanding of the racially motivated moves of the Major Evans-Gordon-led movement. As a result, the British Brothers League (BBL) was established in 1901 by Stanley Shaw of the Middlesex Regiment together with Samuel Forde-Ridley and Major William Evans-Gordon who was the MP for Stepney. This caused a division in the House of Commons, where several Conservatives pledged support for the BBL. The BBL maintained its strongholds in Shoreditch, Bethnal Green and Limehouse. Such strongholds became an impetus to stage protests in the form of marches and petitions in the East End of London, tagged 'the Great Public Demonstration' with brutal tones like 'wipe them out' and 'down with them' (Glover, 2020). It spread the popular sentiment that the Jewish immigrants were the main cause of economic problems in Britain, employing that as a political instrument for anti-immigration law. The BBL leadership used several editorials especially the Manchester Evening Chronicle to voice out that the government would not have the country made the dumping ground for the scum of Europe (Bloom, 1992).

The call for control culminated in the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration (1902-03), which was chaired by Lord James of Hereford. The discussions on the anti-immigrants law generated heated debates amongst the commission members and the country, with the Permanent Secretary of the Home Office, Kenelm Digby, and Lord Rothschild putting up minority reports against the law. The future Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, opposed the

move of the Conservative government, and crossed to the Liberal Party after so much criticism.

According to him:

It will commend itself to those who like patriotism at other people's expense and admire imperialism on the Russian model. It is expected to appeal to insular prejudice against foreigners, to racial prejudice against Jews and to labour prejudice against competition; and it will no doubt supply a variety of rhetorical phrases for the approaching election... (The Times, 31 May, 1904 cited in Bird, 1981).

The report and criticisms notwithstanding, the Aliens Act was instituted in 1905 to curtail the incessant movement of the Jews into the United Kingdom. The Aliens Act was the first of the United Kingdom's modern system of immigration to curb foreign entry (Vicenzi, 2010). It attracted the condemnation of the socialist group, which differed on the basis of ideology, and also caused a division within the Liberal Party over moral and practical implications (Girvan, 2018). While many Liberal politicians with larger number of Jews in their constituencies subscribed to the caution on immigrants, Winston Churchill and Charles Dilke came in stack opposition to the Aliens Act. The Aliens Act did not proscribe the movement of immigrants from the Indian subcontinent due to the colonial affinity they had with India, and it was not until after the First World War (WWI) that it included migrants from the South Asian subcontinent (Rozina, 2002). The Act meant that 'leave to land' would be disallowed for migrants without capacity to support themselves. This led to a situation where immigration officials had to work with health officials to screen immigrants and confirm if they met requirements. With the emergence of a new Liberal government, the Home Secretary enjoyed the discretion over the Immigration Board to allow immigrants to dispute refusals. This did not change so much in the anti-immigrants law. The press was granted the privilege to attend board meetings and in 1910 immigrants were permitted legal assistance.

Further restriction on immigrants was initiated in 1914. Parliament hastily enacted the 1914 Aliens Registration Act before the First World War (WWI) to restrict movement into the UK. It got royal assent on August 5, with the Crown saddled with the power to admit, treat, and deport aliens by Order in Council (Thornberry, 1963). This Act did not only mandate foreign-born residents to show registration cards, it also imposed the forfeiture of British women's nationality should they marry men born outside the British nation. Evidence of identity became compulsory for every person entering into the UK, and those over the age of 16 were instructed to register with the police (Trubowitz, 2012). Amidst the restrictions, the British nationalist sentiment grew to propel the formation of an anti-immigration organization, the Britons, by Henry Hamilton Beamish in 1919. The Britons disseminated literature on anti-Semitism and promoted propaganda using published handbills (Lebzelter, 1978).

The rise in unemployment caused the intensity of industrial unrest and racial fracas in the post-immediate WW1, which informed the move to grant the demands of the British workers in the country's labour market (Reinecke, 2009). The unrest was largely influenced by the happenings in the United States and Australia in which the immigrants were seen as being the cause for diseases and public health crises (Taylor, 2016). It was against this backdrop that the Aliens Order of 1920 emerged. In 1920 the Aliens Order was initiated as a restrictive instrument under the 1919 Alien Restriction Act, and it was to prevent huge numbers of the refugees that suffered from the horrendous destruction of WWI from landing on the British shores without a passport stamp, while immigrants searching for job opportunities were mandated to register with the police (Girvan, 2018). This Order limited the nature of works to be secured by the immigrants, so as to avoid the jobs of the British workers being snatched away. It was also to prevent the invasion of criminals and the revolutionaries that escaped the effects of the Russian Revolution. This regulation was tightened to include fines, deportation, or incarceration for any immigrants (both old and new) that failed to maintain compliance to

registration or condition of landing on the British soil (Reinecke, 2009). As an example, the failure of Abraham Nyman, a sixty-eight year-old Russian Pole that had lived in the UK for more than forty-years, is a case in point. Nyman had lived without registration, but he was imprisoned for two months when he was caught, and later held for four months in the British prison during the period of his deportation arrangement (Reinecke, 2009).

With the existence of the Aliens Orders, there was still an inflow of visitors at the Wembley Exhibition who came in by air. The traffic into the British soil was made almost every day that the number hit about 535,674 in 1937 (Home Office Statistics, 1959), with about 11,000 European refugees coming in from Nazi Germany and civil war in Spain. The appointment of immigration officers for border checks further prevented the admission of immigrants, though over 15,000 children still migrated from Germany to take refuge in Britain. The heinous acts of the Nazi regime in Germany made refugee organizations and British public opinion to exert pressure on the British government to provide refuge to large numbers of children (Pistol, 2020). In November, 1938, the parliamentary debates led to an agreement that children must be backed by personal or institutional financial guarantors, with a condition to return when the war was over (Taylor, 2016).

In the midst of the Second World War, the British government allowed immigrants from colonies, while those perceived as enemy aliens from Europe, namely Germany and Italy, were confined. The colonial immigrants constituted the colonial troop large part, and they were African, Arab, and Indian seamen. Despite the confinement of enemy aliens from Europe, over 160,000 refugees came into Britain from Poland and joined the Allied forces (Donmez and Sutton, 2020).

After the WWII, the number of immigrants in the UK has increased to the point that one in seven was born outside of the UK (Lowe, 2019). This was due to the infrastructural

facilities, like a solid transport system and the new institutions that were installed. By this time, opportunities had multiplied in Britain such that the UK needed more labour to address the shortage of workers in the labour market. The state made the Polish Resettlement Act of 1947 which was to accommodate the Polish soldiers and their families that were exiled. Thus, in 1947 the MV Ormonde drove in about 108 migrant workers who were received without criticism. This elicited action of the British trade unions to ensure that the Polish immigrants were educated and retrained in consonance with the labour market demands of Britain. Trade unions compelled the Ministry of Labour to choose prospective Polish employees from the Polish Resettlement Corps (PRC), so as to avoid undue pressure on the British market (Błaszczuk, 2017). The political economy connection of this was to strategically use immigrants in reviving the ailing British economy.

However, with the arrival of the MV Empire Windrush from the Caribbean with about 500 migrants in 1947 there was another criticism against the influx of immigrants (Lowe, 2019). The decision of the Canadian Government to create its own citizenship laws in 1946 forced the British Labour Government to enact the British Nationality Act (BNA) of 1948 (Miles, 1989). The BNA was characterized by cross-party consensus without any debate. In this case the majority of the British political class worked with the aim that the British subjects should not forfeit their citizenship status through the law. Their plan was to allow immigrants to exercise rights to a limited proportion, and the position did not connote total freedom of entry. Under this Act, the residents of the former British Empire now had the right conferred on them as subjects and could travel to Britain without any restriction, and such immigrants were granted the rights to stay and work. This caused the movement of over 300,000 from the West Indies, 140,000 from Pakistan, and over 170,000 from the African continent (Lowe, 2019).

The full social, political, and economic benefits of citizenship enjoyed by Commonwealth immigrants were soon contested and received hostility from the British public (Gallup, 1976). According to Hansen (2009, p. 2), the BNA was a “largely misinterpreted piece of legislation” that transformed Britain into a multi-ethnic state. With the arrival of 500 Jamaicans, the Minister of Labour, George Isaacs, raised conversation in Parliament hoping that “no encouragement will be given to others to follow their example”. These public reactions meant that the Labour and Conservative governments needed to put up measures to restrict further immigrants (Hansen, 2009). Thus, in 1950, a special committee of ministers was constituted that recommended instant constraints on coloured immigration into Britain.

The British Cabinet opposed the immediate limitation on immigrants but still argued that colonial immigration must be controlled gradually. This was followed by the summoning of the Home Secretary, Lloyd George, by Churchill’s cabinet in 1954 to draft a bill of restriction for parliamentary debate. The early 1950s saw the Conservative and Labour governments focus on open door policy for the permanent movement of the old Dominions citizens. They encouraged the emigration of British citizens to New Zealand, Canada, Australia, South Africa, and Rhodesia. The spate of terror by the communist government of Hungary that saw the loss of lives in 1956 caused about 200,000 people to flee from Eastern Europe to the West. The UK government rose in its magnanimity to bring in about 30,000 migrants from Hungary. This set the pace for more refugees’ inflow from Eastern Europe, especially from the Suez crisis. Meanwhile, the British immigration officers were less than 400 and that mounted pressure on the British immigration system (Chochia et al., 2017). The pressure on the immigration system prompted the need to tighten control by the joint Labour and Conservative governments, especially after the racially-induced black attacks in Nottingham and in the Notting Hill section of London (Chochia et al., 2017).

The Nationality Act 1948 which allowed for the movement of people from the Commonwealth nations soon caused the number of migrants to be higher than expected, moving from 2,550 in 1959 to 58,300 in 1960, and it brought about another debate on the parliamentary floor to set up legislative control. The decolonization of British colonies soon changed the trajectory of British immigration politics from the differentiation between the British subjects and aliens to that of the UK citizens and the colonies (Girvan, 2018). The migration from newly independent colonies was to stimulate the economic growth of the UK in the post-war era. Notwithstanding that, migrants faced serious scrutiny on their entry and worst still racism. The growth of the non-white population in the UK fueled racial tension, as attested by 73% in polls of the British public favouring restriction on immigration (Girvan, 2018). The pressure on the Conservative Government led to the establishment of the Commonwealth Immigrant Acts in 1962, where it redefined its British citizens to exclude people from the colonies and restricted the right of residence (Donmez and Sutton, 2020). This was also occasioned by the wide social margin between the British colonial power and its erstwhile colonies. Migrants without the British passport and those without citizenship by birth were also restricted.

Immigration grew to become a critical political discourse during the 1964 elections, with both parties maintaining strict measures on immigration. As the Labour party had access to power through electoral victory, the new administration issued a White Paper and called for a stricter measure of immigration control. This was one of the decisions made in line with the Conservative government (Trubowitz, 2012). A deportation clause was activated for the first time against the colonies, and immigrants were required to get a work voucher before they would be allowed on to the British soil, a process that was very difficult. The stricter dimension of the immigration policy was the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1968 that aimed to prohibit the migration of Commonwealth of Nations countries. This was facilitated by the

public statements made by a Conservative MP and opposition Shadow Cabinet member, Enoch Powell, as a protest against the Kenyan acceptance into the UK. This was amplified by the image painting of the media, using comparative explanation of how racial riots could ensue in Britain like the US. The Labour government which introduced the 1968 Commonwealth Immigration Act did so as a reaction to the fear of the public of black immigration, and to tame the labour force of migrants (Rose 1969; Sivanandan, 1982)

The 1968 Act applied more stringent conditions to being the British Commonwealth citizens, except those with connection to British grandparents. The politics of this was to institute the denial of the black and Asian citizens to come and settle in the country. By the end of the 1960s, Britain started experiencing inflation, with a level of 25% in the early 1970s. The political nature of immigration meant that both the Conservative and Labour governments would not relax control on immigration. In 1971, the Conservative government of Edward Heath leaned on the popularity of the immigration issue and passed the Immigration Act of 1971. This withdrew British citizenship from numerous people living in Britain. The joining of the European Economic Community in 1973 was followed by the confirmation of restrictions on Commonwealth citizens, while the privilege of immigration was opened to Europeans. The Immigrant Acts of 1973 then gave rights to some migrants known as ‘partials’, with the work permits replacing work vouchers that were graded based on the employment prospect of applicants. The British Labour government then embarked on an immigration policy that allowed immigrants from the largely white Europe, while distorting its democratic beliefs by restricting movement from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and America. Officers aiding immigration were liable to seven years imprisonment with about GBP 400 pounds at the time (Girvan, 2018). The two major parties, both Conservative and Labour, exploited the Commonwealth immigration issue to settle political scores and gain electoral footholds in the state. This generated so much political anxiety, even as the coming in of some commonwealth

citizens persisted in an illegal way. The UK membership in the EEC meant that a relaxation must come to its immigration policy towards the EEC states. The EEC encouraged free movement of people from one geographical location to another within member states nations. So, by operation, the EU citizens were separated from other migrants.

The British Nationality Act of 1981 tightened the control of immigration with a series of debates on citizenship (Gonclaves, 2017). The migrants from the Indian subcontinent were trooping into Britain on the basis of marriage to undermine the stricter conditionalities to settle in the UK. This generated some controversies but it was later announced by the government that everything was under control. The aftermath of the Falklands War in the late 1980s brought about an increase in the application of individual asylum, and it shifted the trend of British immigration policy from European citizens to refugees and asylum seekers (Girvan, 2018). The manually operated Traffic Index for landed immigrants was replaced with a new system that was computer-based. Due to political instability, natural disaster and crises, migrants sought to circumvent the strict immigration laws and rode on the asylum legislation to break into the UK and its labour market. This brought about a cutback in the asylum funding from the British government. This also moved the state to come up with the Asylum and Immigration Act of 1996 that set up punitive measures against illegal asylum seekers. Migrants with falsified information and claims were sought after and arrested.

In 1992, the UK signed up to single Europe framework for immigration control. The net migration has always been in favour of the number of outsiders migrating into the UK, both on a short and long term basis. The new Labour government deployed the immigration policy as a strategy to change the nature of the UK's labour market to a more flexible one that allowed for an increase in the rate of employment during economic growth and vice-versa (Somerville, 2007). By 1997, the EU framework became operative and asylum seekers would have their applications processed in the first European nation they arrived in (Chung and Kim, 2019).

The Home Office of the UK under the new Labour administration made a white paper 'Fairer, faster and firmer' that proposed the modernisation of the immigration system. This approach helped in the expansion of detention. This was to relax the stringent conditions a little. The detention center was to serve as a replacement for the removal center through the refugee integration programme of the UK (Troitino et al, 2017).

From 2004 to 2009, the Tony Blair and Gordon Brown administrations came up with some changes in the immigration law. Specifically in 2004, when the 8 Eastern European countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) joined the EU, Tony Blair expressed fear over the growing politicization of issues of British immigration, and asserted thus:

In a world of global interdependence our policies on migration cannot be isolated from our policies on international development or EU enlargement...This should not become a party-political issue. That would do real damage to national cohesion. It is above all an issue to deal with, not exploit (As cited in Donmez and Sutton, 2020:674).

The political climate created by the immigration policy clearly shows why the Conservative party based its manifesto of the 2005 General Election on the proposition to delink from the United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention (Bale, 2008). The expansion of the EU structure in 2004 and 2007 shifted the restrictions and EU citizens were given the opportunity to come into Britain for work. The new Labour government used immigration policy to regulate competitiveness in the UK. In order to actualize this, the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) was founded in 2007 to advise the government on migration and labour supply. This was also followed up with the introduction of the Points Based System (PBS) in 2008.

Wadsworth et al., (2017) argued that the number of immigrants from EU countries stood at 0.9 million, in which about 1.5% and 1.8% constituted the share of the EU population and the working age respectively. The increase in the number of immigrants was acknowledged by the Office for National Statistics (2016), which asserted that “between 2003 and 2004, immigration increased 15% reaching a record high at the time of 589,000”. This expansion-driven influx was envisaged by the UK government to lead to the arrival of about 15,000 workers (Home Office, 2005). But surprisingly, the number of migrants who registered as workers in the UK had skyrocketed to 430,000 in 2006 and 683,000 in 2007 (ONS, 2016). The migrants from Poland dominated a larger percentage, having about 70%, and when Romania and Bulgaria joined the EU the same year, the British government placed them on employment restriction so as to control the effects on the labour market. This period ushered in a form of transformation powered by technology. The e-border immigration policy surfaced so as to beef up the intelligence and security aspect of the state. There was the development of biometric identification and electronic monitoring tags for immigrants, while the issues related to trafficking were documented (Girvan, 2018).

In 2008, the concerns of the British public were mainly three, with the economy being the first and immigration and unemployment being the second and third respectively (Balch and Balabanova, 2016). The ‘Points-Based System’ was used to score potential migrants and permitted them on the basis of their qualifications and what they would likely contribute to the development of UK. This system introduced the 5-tiers format to tighten the immigration policy amidst the financial crises of 2007-2008 and the Eurozone crisis of 2010 (Lowe, 2019). Then, students who travelled to study were restricted from staying and were required to return to their countries immediately after their program, with the exception of countries in the EU. In fact, the Eurozone crises necessitated migration from Portugal, Italy, and Spain, all of whom came into Britain due to the free movement granted by the EU.

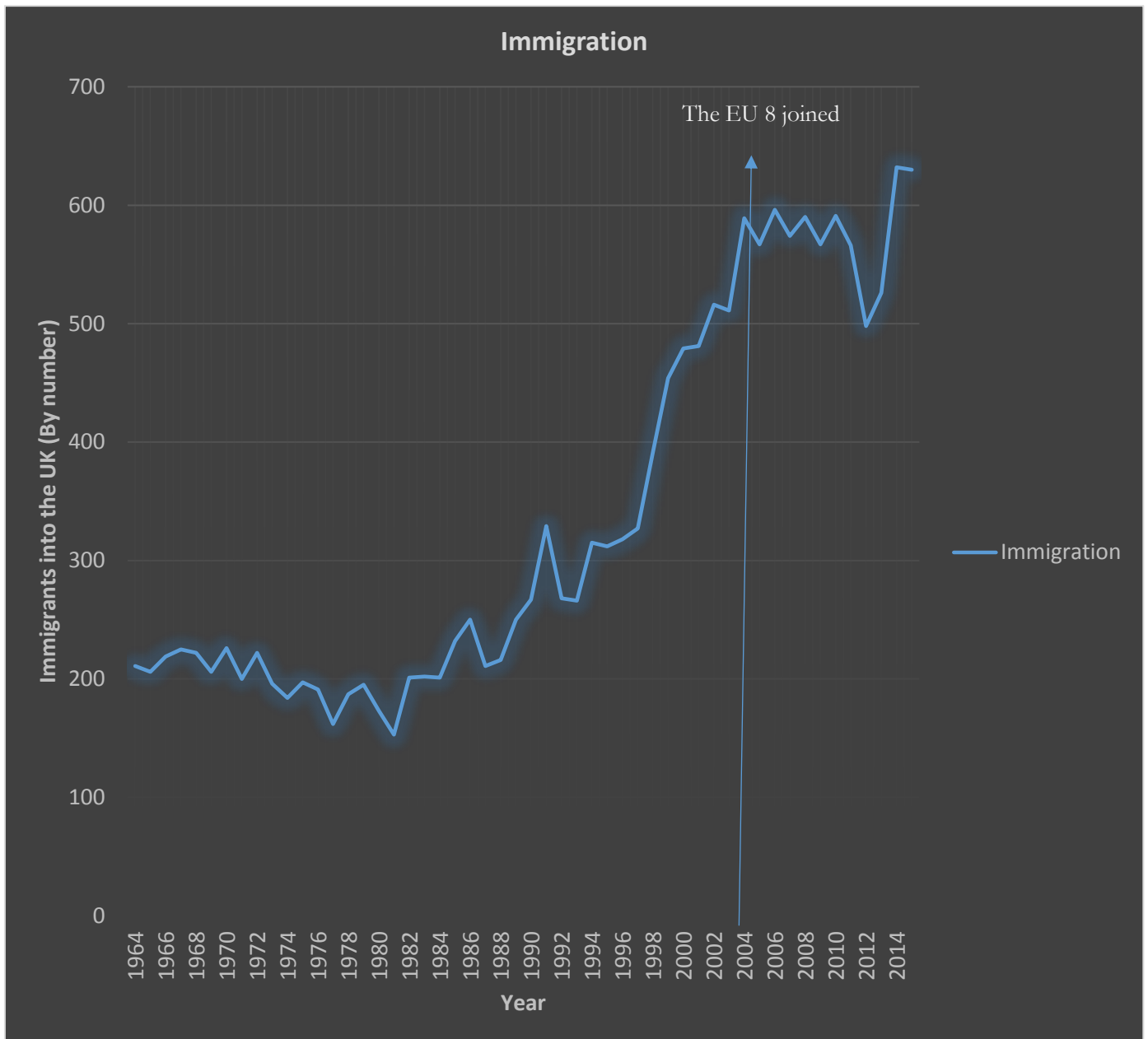
In 2010, the Labour party had failed the electorate's expectation on immigration issues. Some voters had thought that the government was only working aggressively for immigrants, bankers, and other people's benefits instead of doing for the good of the public (Bale et al. 2010). It was these flaws that the Conservative party strategized to exploit in the 2010 General Elections. The projected inflation, being the effect of the 2008 recession, became an impetus for the new Coalition government to embark on an immigration policy with a flexible labour force. This generated tough questioning for the party for its five-year period in office. In 2011, David Cameron pledged to reduce the net migration just as they experienced in the 1990s and 1980s. Also in 2012, Theresa May, who was the Home Secretary, emphasized the need to reduce mass immigration from non-EU countries and submitted that it would be impossible to build a cohesive and united Britain if more immigrants were permitted into the UK (Donmez and Sutton, 2020). Thus, between 2010 and 2019, there were one hundred and twenty-nine (129) legislative changes made on immigration policy. Specifically, in 2012, the government created a more hostile environment for immigrants, as they were set out to send back immigrants with no right to remain. The failure of the government on immigration reduction generated other questions for the competence of the Conservative party during the 2015 General Elections (Partos and Bale, 2015). By 2015, the total number of UK immigrants had amounted to 630,000, out of which about 277,000 (44%) of them were non-EU nationals; 270,000 (43%) were EU nationals; and 83,000 (13%) were UK citizens (Office for National Statistics, 2016). This was way above the number of those that left the UK in the same year (297,000).

The charts in Figures 2.1 and 2.2 below are explanatory of the international migration into the UK between 1964 and 2015, and the migration based on citizenship into the UK between 1975 and 2015. These constitute the dynamics of the British immigration politics as a background to the subject of this research, being the way the media framed the immigration

issue to appeal to the conscience and the opinions of the public during the Brexit campaign. Figure 2.1 is a confirmation of Wadsworth et al.'s (2017) assertion that the membership of the EU8 in 2004 sparked another episode of the Brexit process. It was characterized by the movement 589,000 people, out of which 130,000 were from the EU countries as shown in Figure 2.2. More importantly, the chart in Figure 2.2 shows the close margin between the migrants from non-EU and that of the EU. In 2014 and 2015, for instance, the number of immigrants into the UK from the EU alone was 264,000 compared to 287,000 for non-EU in the same year, while that of 2015 was 270,000 and 277,000 for the EU and non-EU respectively.

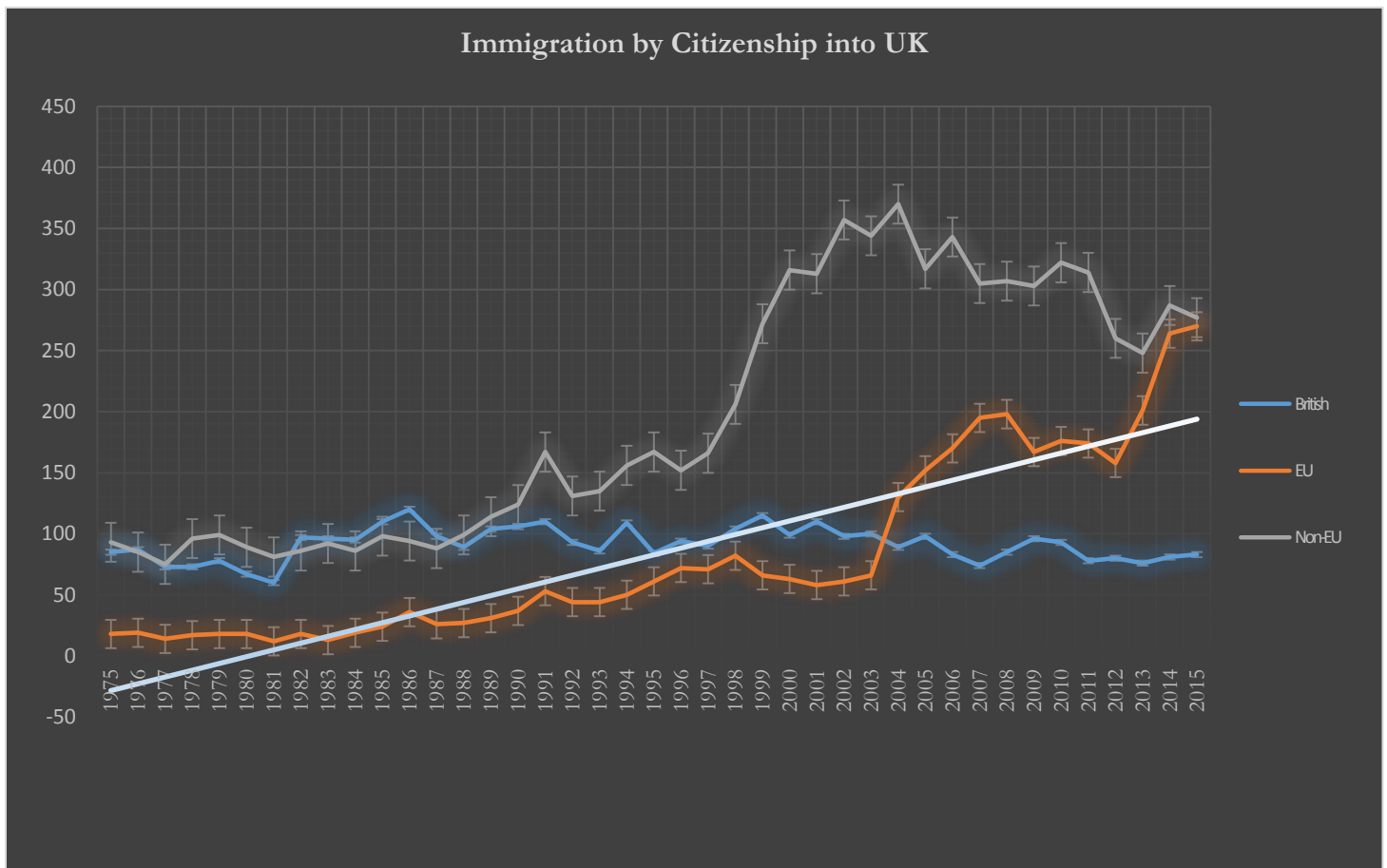
In 2015, immigration continued to play a crucial role concerning the membership of the UK in the European Union. The political class, Coalition and Conservative governments fully built their political strategies on the number of immigrants from the EU (Godwin and Milazzo, 2015). They vigorously engaged the media to make immigration a big deal. The Eurosceptics were promoting narratives to reduce immigration, and David Cameron towed the same path in 2014 to criticize the Labour's approach to immigration, and claimed that the non-European immigration had been whittled down, as against the media propaganda that it increased (ONS, 2018). In 2015, a shift towards EU immigrants became the main focus of party manifestoes. Theresa May averred that the rate of immigration from Europe was becoming alarming, and that it was unsustainable and so needed to be checked. It is almost uncontroversial to state that the successful vote to Leave during the Brexit vote in 2016 was underlined by immigration. Then the media framing analysis must have been conducted to elevate this aspect of migration to appeal to people's opinion, as will be seen in chapter four of this work.

Figure 2.1 **UK Long Term Immigration (1964 to 2015)**



Compiled in 2021 based on the Office of National Statistics (2016) data.

Figure 2.2 Immigration by Citizenship into the UK (1975 to 2015)



Compiled in 2021 based on the Office for National Statistics (2016) data

2.3 Theoretical Framework: Media Framing and Related Perspectives

Having emerged from the interpretative field of sociology in the 1950s, framing theory has risen to become one of the prominent theoretical frameworks in political communication and policy research. The origin notwithstanding, Bateson (1955/1972) was the first scholar to ascribe the modern application and meaning to it. Bateson (1955/1972) sees framing as a psychological concept that defines a pattern of thought in an attempt to understand the messages that are being constructed. His intellectual inputs were presented through the illustration of two mathematical set theory: the Venn diagram and the picture frame. The diagram has a twin function; first of which is to include all functional elements that fall within the circumference of the diagram, and exclude all elements that are without the diagram; and the second is as a picture frame, it is to organize the way people perceive reality, by systematically convincing them to give attention to what is within the frame, but to ignore what is outside (Ardevol-Abreu, 2015). These psychological dynamics were later developed and adapted to the field of communication by Erving Goffman (1974), who modified it to be a social framework for organizing the experience of communicator to the audience.

It is a theory whose main thrust rests on the communication of information based on professionally crafted narrative structures to organize thoughts around a specific subject (Ardevol-Aberu, 2015). The construction and presentation of issues, narratives and experiences in specific contexts is a common phenomenon in all human endeavours. This is reflective of the importance of emphasis, and how it is communicated to make glaring some certain aspects, while downplaying other parts (Dahinden, 2006). This portrayal of information and issues in certain evaluative style is framing.

A frame according to Goffman (1974, p. 21-22) is “an interpretative package that enables individuals to make sense of issues by turning meaningless aspects into something

meaningful”. This means that the classification, labelling, and interpretation of experiences in a way that would make sense to the audience for genuine engagement is one thing that individuals actively do. These three phases of actions constitute framing, which are often used to “locate, perceive, identify, and label” information. According to Gamson and Modigliani (1989), frames are instruments that are fashioned to aid the way experiences are organized, and how meanings are ascribed to events. This definition consolidates on the initial explanation by Goffman (1974), by itemizing five separate devices for framing – metaphors, exemplars, catchphrases, depictions, and visual images, all of which are critical to conveying information in a specific context and that actualize the aim of amplifying certain thoughts at the expense of others.

Entman (1993) came up with the most recent and popular conceptualization of framing and called for the need to have a more structured and universal definition of the term. His definition of framing is captured under the prism of four elements that include: defining a specific issue, suggesting its root causes, recommending possible solutions and ascribing moral evaluations. This was with the view to stretch the benefit beyond the walls of the social sciences. In his words:

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 (Entman, 1993, p.55).

From the above, a frame is an attention grabber: a tool that is employed in drawing the attention of the audience to the emphasized aspect over the other aspects. Entman (1993) expatiates further that there are no strict rules that mandate the presence of all elements for framing to occur. This means that his definition is insightful and can be the guide for what framing entails as a framework of analysis. Framing dissects complex issues through the development of some schemas that associate more weight to them in order to persuade people

to think in a particular way (Chong and Druckman, 2007). Cultural symbols, beliefs, and values are often leveraged to organize and structure narratives that are appealing to the public (Van Gorp, 2007).

Relating this theory to media, therefore, connotes that framing is a set of systematized thoughts that are embedded and organized in news stories or narratives to roll out certain explanations about an account, in order to understand ‘who is doing what’ and the purpose of such action. This explains why Tuchman (1978) conceives of the media as a window whose frame is capable of bringing limitation to the perception of social reality through a constructed piece of opinion that is elevated to downplay the effectiveness of others. In framing, the news media carefully sifts some aspects of reality and places much emphasis on them to distort multiple realities around the specific subject. This reverberates with Bernard Cohen’s (1963, p. 13) popular excerpt on the role of media in setting the agenda for the society and moulding it into a certain structure that, “the press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.” This reveals the power of the media in prioritizing issues by making some more important than others.

Scholarly research on framing has attempted to expand the perspective beyond journalism and communication. It has created a wave in the direction of media and politics. Gamson and Modigliani (1989), Chong and Druckman (2007), and Hopkins and Mummolo (2017), among others, are some of the scholars that have steered the movement. Chong and Druckman (2011) did not only provide a useful definition of media frame, they delineated and applied different systematic ways in which information and arguments are framed in media coverage of political news. Another remarkable work was that of Gamson and Modigliani (1989). Their study elucidated the need to look beyond the notion that media discourse changes

public opinion, and that what should be important is the realization that media discourse and public opinion are quite synonymous as they interact with one another.

An important aspect that cannot be overlooked in articulating the framing analysis is the Agenda-setting theory. McCombs et al., (1997) attribute the framing theory to the second level of the agenda setting theory. Agenda setting for them is the process by which the media shape the cognitive thinking of the people through the selection of the kind of information or news the people should hear, watch, and read. It is a psychological control mechanism by which the media carefully selects what news should be passed on to the public and structure such information to align with the objective in focus (Sanchez, 2002). This is why McCombs et al., (1997) called both agenda setting and framing analysis integrative models.

Framing theory reinforces the power of the media in political communication. It is expressive of the significance of the news media in setting the national agenda and formulating public opinion. It argues that the media plays a prominent role in determining the political behaviour of an individual by serving as the constructive mechanism for manifestoes and the distributive tools for political ideology (Gitlin, 1980). The process is subtle but simple. Facts are existing within a polity, but such facts are often interpreted by people based on the prevalent ideological bents, and socio-cultural contexts. This is what the media does in framing: presents structured news to favour a point and capture the mind of the people in terms of interpretation (Brosius and Kepplinger, 1990). Political messages are framed by the media, which goes a long way to change the public's views of reality. This theory stands in stark contradiction to Klapper (1968) whose minimalist influence thesis posits that the influence of the media in determining and changing the political behaviour of voters is not very strong. Framing theory rests on the assumption that citizens are made to reason on public issues based on the way the media construct them, and sometimes use them to manipulate how they engage with messages selectively (Newton, 2006).

With a thorough explanation of the theory of framing, one significant question that should briefly come to mind is, ‘what is the link between framing, media, and Brexit?’ Although this study seeks to examine how the media framed immigration within the context of the Brexit campaign, but such empirical justification will be flawed without sound theoretical linkage of these concepts. And it is this particular aspect that the following paragraphs will explore.

The link is not an ambiguous one. It simply tells of how the media framed messages for the Brexit campaign. Media framing as a theory speaks to the systematized communicative strategies that the UK news outlets adopted to set the frameworks and interpret Brexit-related issues. This is not limited to the dissemination of relevant information to the mass public on the Brexit discourse, but it extends to the style, pattern, direction, and pictures which the media adopted to either make people to opt for ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ in the referendum of June, 2016. A connection can be made if one considers the argument of McCombs (2014), who posits that to analyse media framing, one must take a careful look at: how stories’ headlines are presented and organized; the frequency of issues dominating Brexit; and what the lead stories are. This means that there is a need to search for Brexit related stories in the related newspaper articles to understand dominant phrases and their patterns of presentation by the news media.

Sogelola (2018) paints the work of the media in framing Brexit issues as the major factor that caused the divide in the vote of people along the Leave and Remain campaign. She avers that the main argument for those that supported Brexit and those that opposed it were subsumed under three important categories (immigration, sovereignty, and economy) that were created by the media. Based on her survey, the issue of economy was at the topmost rank of the Brexit agenda, constituting about 33% amongst other issues on Brexit, some months before June 2016, but the tide changed by May, having dropped to 28%. The media could be said to

be at the center of such alternation, as it framed immigration in a more disturbing way that made the priorities of the public to be strongly influenced.

Goodwin et al. (2020) argue that Brexit voters were largely influenced by the messages framed by the media, and the public's understanding and evaluation of the political issue was influenced by how the media depicted them. The media rode on the popular nationalist sentiment to present issues around Brexit to the British people. The media was well aware that immigration issue was part of the dominant problems of the UK as a member of the EU and it sponsored news in that direction (Lowe, 2019). The media defined the frames for immigration, economy, and sovereignty. Reporting on immigration was rampant amongst the pro-leave media, who popularized concepts like 'take back our country', 'democracy', 'taking away our jobs', 'control' etc., through the analysis of speeches of political leaders and the publishing of opinionated articles. Daily Mail, The Guardian, and The Sun did not relax on churning out their daily contents to make some words repetitive. According to Firmstone (2016), The Express communicated its grievance through a top-notch article with 'Get us out of the EU' slogan. This mirrors the steps of Balch and Balabanova (2017), who stated that framing as a framework is used by the media to identify, examine, and interpret discourses by taking into consideration their context.

2.4 Media Analysis of Brexit and Immigration: An Empirical Review

The referendum of June 23rd 2016 was the *fons et origo* of the official process of exit of the British people from the 65 year relationship they had with the EU. This phenomenal event records that Britain is the first member state of the union to become dissident towards the EU project of deepening integration in Europe. It then signposts the weakness in the federal model of integration that the EU instituted in 2000 and mirrors the consequence of admitting a

reluctant partner into a project that seeks to bring about unity among a complex and heterogeneous collection of human societies (Van-Mol and de-Valk, 2016).

The exodus of Great Britain from this most cherished regional bloc created a sharp divide between different parties that supported the Brexit campaign and those who rejected it. The most assertive of all the groups was the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). Hayton (2018) argues that the UKIP was established in 1993 mainly to spearhead the withdrawal of the UK from the EU. The basis for this was to convince the British people of the impending danger of immigration into the UK from the EU member states on the economy, labour market, and the British workers all together (Walter, 2019). Not only did the UKIP prioritize the immigration discourse during the Brexit campaign, issues around immigration were presented by some of the UK's news media, so as to make the public conceive it as a fundamental problem (Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart, 2007). As argued by Abrahams and Travalgino (2018, p. 311), in the Brexit vote, "an important focus of the campaigns was how to deal with the apparently too high level of immigration".

It is not uncommon for the citizens of a particular country to feel threatened by outgroups, especially when they envisage the consequences on employment opportunities and other socio-cultural implications (Stephan and Stephan, 2000). Hobolt (2016) also reinstated the fact that the challenges European integration is facing, that have culminated to watershed events like Brexit, are products of anti-immigration and anti-establishment sentiments that are gradually gaining momentum in the West. Further asserting that the outcome of the votes "reveal stark demographic divides, as the less well-educated and less well-off voted in large majorities to leave the EU, while the young graduates in urban centres voted to stay" (Hobolt, 2016, p. 1260). No doubt, this sort of segmentation between those who feel side-lined by the forces of globalization and mass migration and those who welcome such developments remains

one of the factors responsible for the increasing support for Eurosceptic parties on the radical right and left across Europe (Hobolt and De Vries, 2015).

Thus, immigration issues represent one of the agenda of the Brexiters. Specifically, the immigration issues were fueled by the analysis of different news media to construct the presence of EU nationals in positive ways (for the 'Remain' party) and negative ways (for the Leave camp) in either discouraging or driving the Brexit process respectively (Walgrave and De Swert, 2007). This connotes that Brexit and immigration are two inextricably linked issues. The connection between Brexit and immigration has been explored in extant literature (Buchanan, Bethan Grillo, & Threadgold, 2003, Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart, 2007; Balabanova & Balch, 2010; Balch & Balabanova, 2016; Chung and Kim, 2019), which have all identified the immigration issue as a dominant denominator, and it is in this realization that this study engages in a critical review of empirical studies on Brexit and immigration, more specifically to describe how immigration was framed with a comprehensive approach. An approach that identifies how immigration frames were linked to Social welfare, Labour market, Law and order, Terrorism, Turkey's threat, Moral value and National identity by the British media.

The study of Walter (2019) provides a methodological approach to the subject of Brexit and immigration. Walter's methodological approach is unique to the degree that he adopted inferential statistics in manipulating content analysis to understand the role of media. His work focused on the logistic regression analysis of 19,367 Brexit related news stories between the period of June 1st, 2015 and June 23rd, 2016. To produce reliable results, Walter (2019) carefully selected the UK's popular and leading news sources, whose articles are read by over 10 million readers every day, to test the relationship between the negative presentation of the EU citizens (especially on migration issues) and the type of news media that presented such Brexit news. His findings reveal that there was no construction of immigration (being

represented by the term EU citizens) as it was not very rampant amongst news outlets. He also argues further that outlets with long stories had more tendency to mention immigration but such negative connotation dwindled with time. Thus, there was no significant relationship between Brexit and the presentation of immigration issues during campaign, as it was not visible.

However, Walter's (2019) study is fraught with some unanswered questions especially when it comes to the subjective nature of the Brexit immigration discourse. Though he employed quantitative analysis to aid his automatic content analysis, which has strength in terms of processing and analysing a large amount of data, but on this subjective issue around Brexit, human beings will work out a better job of interpretation and decoding complex meanings and sentiments around these kind of issues.

Tendera-Wlaszczuk (2018) undertook a study on the origin and causes of Brexit. He traced the foundation of Brexit to the administration of Prime Minister Tony Blair when he made a swift move in 2003 to allow for the total free movement of the new member states of the EU into the UK. According to him, immigration played a prominent role in the successful Brexit referendum and informed the decision of the people to vote for leave in the future because of the increase in the inward flow of the EU nationals into the UK that posed a threat to the earning power of the British workers (Tendera-Wlaszczu, 2018). This position bears corollary with the expression of Nickell and Saleheen (2017) that "a very high inflow of workers into the UK and its significant impact on employee's pay level was an important issue" in Brexit. Tendera-Wlaszczuk (2018) expatiates further that the direction of the Brexit campaign was steered by refugee crises that hit the Middle East and some North Africa nations in 2015. Such occurrences informed Angela Merkel's actions to allow European borders to be opened to immigrants from these war-torn zones (Syria especially) for over a million to enter the shores of Europe. The pressure that this brought upon Britain was the Eurosceptic view that

the immigrants from these countries into the UK were not properly managed, profiled, and curtailed by the EU, and this was capitalized on by the media to influence the campaign for Brexit. To him, the economic cost of the immigrants was amplified by the media, in which negative effects were associated with the campaign. He concluded that the decline in the British trust for the EU wobbled between 2006 and 2016 from 36% to 20% as a result of the media style of reporting immigration related issues (Tendera-Wlaszczuk, 2018).

In 2018, Sogelola attempted to dig into the study by researching on how the *Daily Mail* newspaper set the agenda and framed immigration issues on Brexit. She used the metric of the number of words to analyse the prevalence and emphasis placed on the subject of immigration. According to her, the emphasis put on the word immigration by the news outlet rounded into 23.8%, as compared to economy that was 16.6%. She argued further that the word was carefully and subtly inserted in some cases, and other instances deliberately narrated to make the UK nationals vote alongside the leave camp. Specifically, the stories were crafted to mean that immigration was inimical to the British economy, and that it would be that the scarcity of resources at the time could be adduced to the presence of the EU nationals in Britain, which will likely become a door to cart away the British resources and deliver them to the hands of the migrants. Sogelola (2018) was of the opinion that different catchy headlines with some key words, like 'hand out', hardworking, and sneak, were all used to paint a horrendous picture of how the EU nationals will illegally make inroads into the UK to take control of the economy. She concludes that the language of British pro-leave leaders were echoed through the news media that amplified immigration in the context of the Brexit campaign (Sogelola, 2018).

The study of Chung and Kim (2019) is worthy of reference. They employed sentiment analysis to see how the media, political parties, and leaders framed Brexit issues to gain followers. They also subscribed to the view that a majority of the 52% of the British public voters that voted to leave the EU did so on the basis of the sentiment they shared with regards

to the dominant Euroscepticism that grew strongly in the UK, especially England. This Euroscepticism according to Chung and Kim (2019) was triggered by the concern the UK people had on migration and national sovereignty over the effect of leaving the EU common market.

Goodwin and Milazzo (2015) stressed that Euroscepticism had existed in the relationship between the UK and the EU. They argued that during the campaign, the media systematically disseminated information on immigration to pull bigger effects. It is worthy of note that this information is going to media consumers who are already heavily exposed to the Eurosceptic sentiment. Goodwin and Milazzo (2015) further opined that the UKIP, which won the European parliamentary election in 2014, aimed at brewing public agitations over the issue of immigration. The public had been exposed to at least forty years of Eurosceptic coverage, and this sped up the immigration stories in the news and made the public perceive the migration from the EU to be strong threat to the sovereignty of the UK.

Balch and Babalanova (2016) examined the positioning of the EU and how it is presented by the media within the context of Brexit and immigration. Their work was informed not by the quest to analyse the campaign for or against Brexit, but to seek an explanation for the pre-existing conditions that degenerated into debates on the Brexit campaign. It was with this objective that they discovered that immigration and European integration constituted a serious problem for Britain. The conception of these factors, according to them, were done by the media to generate a complicated outcome for the relationship between Britain and Europe. They argue that the rise of anti-immigration politics in Britain is a by-product of prevalent nationalism that changed the attitudes of the British people towards foreigners in their land. To produce a more robust analysis for their study, Balch and Balabanova (2016) looked into the economic and political conceptualization of integration, with respect to the years 2006 and 2013, and compared how framing for free movement was connected to the way the EU was

viewed. As an economic space, they argued the EU was constructed as a single market by the media in which free movement was considered in terms of the outcome of the cost and benefit (utilitarianism and economic nationalism), while the second period according to them witnessed a drop in nationalism and propagated free movement as a transnational good that is geared towards domestic development. They concluded that European integration and immigration came out differently at different times, with different meanings ascribed to it by the press within the period of study.

2.5 Gap in Literature

Literature abounds on Brexit and immigration. Interestingly, most of the literature (e.g., Inglehart and Norris, 2016; Clarke, Goodwin, and Whiteley, 2017; Abrahams and Travalgino, 2018; Neil et al. 2018; Vlandas and Halikiopoulou, 2017; Walter, 2019) argued on the role of media in framing immigration in the Brexit campaign. Most of these brilliant works at best, and as earlier highlighted in this chapter, identified popular issues and frames linked to immigration such as labour market, social welfare, and law and order. However, little attention has been paid to how extensive media coverage of immigration played out. This study attempts to systematically look at media frames that targeted immigration in selected British national newspapers during the salient period before the referendum, more specifically, to describe how immigration was framed with a comprehensive approach that empirically defines how complex the immigration issue was during the campaign. And in carrying out this objective, the analysis set out to construct the immigration issue around the frames of labour market, law and order, terrorism, social welfare, national identity, moral values, and the Turkish EU membership threat. This is the gap in literature that this study seeks to fill.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the logic of inquiry for this study. Methodology in research is very important, as it helps to simplify the protocols of conducting and analyzing the study for readers' comprehension in a very systematic way. Thus, the design for the study is being identified with justification; the method of gathering relevant information is also captured here; and the selection of the sample size, the rationale for doing so, and the techniques involved in selecting the sample are all provided. It also states the study population, the area of study, the research instruments that are adopted in the course of the study, and the method that was used in analyzing the data collected.

3.1 Research Paradigm

All social research is conducted under the prism of the connections between ideas, social experiences and social realities (Ramazonoglu and Holland, 2002). The connections interact together to impose how concepts and theories will be operationalized, and how events will be organized for interpretation. These highlight the need to identify the philosophical assumptions for this study that, first, explain the particular way of looking at the discourse of media framing of immigration during the Brexit campaign, and second, articulate how ideas around the subject can be understood (Blaike, 2000).

To this extent, this study is guided by both idealistic and constructivist paradigms. This is because the research question, 'how the media framed immigration in Brexit campaign', exists within the spectrum of subjectivism rather than objectivism (Grix, 2002). On the first aspect of the research paradigm, which has to do with the way of looking at media framing of immigration during the Brexit campaign, the presentation of issues and emphasis on the subject are largely driven by the different ideological dispositions of campaign actors and supporters

that determined the directions of the news media towards Brexit and immigration. This is why this study is ontologically idealistic (Blaike, 2000). Ontological idealism speaks to the paradigm that argues for the existence of multiple social realities (Blaike, 2000). For instance, as Chong and Druckman (2011) argue that there are no universal approaches and steps to identifying frames, this study also rests on the assumption that the identification of salient Brexit issues and the isolation of certain attributes of immigration frames cannot be reduced to one reality, as they can be influenced by the cultural understanding, personal experience, and other environmental factors of the researcher. This position is mirrored in Miller and Rice's (1967) position that all factors that influence dispositions, including the system and context, must be taken into account when assessing it.

How this study came to the knowledge of complexity of the immigration frames in the Brexit campaign and made sense out of it for readers' comprehension is very crucial. This portrays the epistemological perspective of this research. As the second aspect of the research paradigm, it borders on the organization of ideas and knowledge on the media framing of immigration in the Brexit campaign. Research can either be epistemologically constructivist or epistemologically empiricist (Zukauskas et al. 2018; Easterby-Smith et al. 2008; Blaike, 2000). A constructivist epistemology refers to knowledge that is derived from social phenomena based on the personal reasoning and interpretation of the researcher, while the empiricist epistemology is knowledge derived from demonstrable facts or experimentation (Zukauskas et al. 2018; Blaike, 2000). Thus, the criteria for judging the adequacy and the legitimacy of media framing are determined, not by external reality or independent reasoning, but by the actual interaction of the researcher with news articles on Brexit and immigration (Crotty, 1998).

As a strategy, the study will be deductive. This is because the theory of media framing is being constructed, and from such theory observation will be made on how media developed frames on immigration issues for Brexit (Grix, 2002; Blaike, 2000). In other words, this study

seeks to construct the ‘how’ of the media framing of immigration along the lines of the analytical frameworks of social welfare, labour market, law and order, terrorism, Turkey’s possible EU membership, moral value and national identity, by matching them with data to understand the immigration issues around the Brexit campaign.

Consequently, while this study seeks to pursue an objective result using systematic techniques, the reality of the subject of Brexit immigration framing cannot totally maintain objectivism by standing aloof from subjectivism, as operationalization of concepts and interpretation of events are defined and construed with this study’s contextual understanding of the subject.

3.2 Research Design

The research design for the study is cross-sectional and qualitative. It is cross-sectional because it is a one-shot study that gathered data on the required information at one point in time (and in the case of this study, from May 23rd 2016 to June 23rd 2016). Social research, especially longitudinal and experimental, is often conducted in three phases (pre-test, intervention, and post-test) as a way to test the consistency of findings (Blaike, 2000). Such a design is not suitable for this type of subject. Cross-sectional design is often used to measure variations in the dependent and independent variables without random allocation to groups. And such measurement is conceived as post-test, given that the event has already occurred (Blaike, 2000). In this case, Brexit voting has already occurred, and this study collected its data for analysis at one point in time as a form of post-test that will help one to understand the activities of the news media with regards to the construction of issues to appeal to the votes of the UK people, either to support or oppose the membership of the UK in the EU, against the backdrop of immigration. This one-time approach presents an opportunity to give an adequate explanation and add to the existing body of knowledge in the study of Brexit and media framing

More so, the study is qualitative. The hallmark of qualitative study is that it describes the subject in the form of ‘what’, ‘how’, and ‘why’ patterns to uncover trends in thoughts and opinions, and drive deeper into the concerned problems (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). In this study, therefore, the qualitative feature is defined by the fact that it is an investigation that seeks to answer the descriptive question of how the media framed the immigration issue for the Brexit campaign. Thus, this design fits the subject matter, given that this study examines the role of media framing of the immigration issue and Brexit, even as the cross-sectional design permits intensive analysis.

3.3 Procedures for Research Design

What is central to this study is the analytical framework of framing. While the definition has been captured in chapter two under the theoretical framework, it is also important to indicate here that it is crucial to the design of this research. As Tuchman (1978, p. 19) argues that a frame ‘organizes everyday reality’, so also it is required in political research to give insight to unfolding strips of events (Gamson and Modigliani, 1987), and utilized in capturing how political issues are interpreted. To successfully arrive at reliable and valid conclusions on how the media framed the immigration discourse in the context of the EU-British relations, there is a need to clearly demonstrate how this study designed and operationalized the frames that will capture the problem. Thus, this study relied on classical works in the development of frames around the Brexit immigration issue. Particularly, the approach of Chong and Druckman (2011) was found useful in this process.

According to Chong and Druckman (2011), there are four steps that should be followed in the identification of frames. The first step is the identification of issues or events, which helps a political communicator to describe a frame in the context of a specific occurrence. In this case, the researcher first identified ‘immigration’ as a specific issue, and one of the

dominant issues, in the Brexit campaign process. The identification was possible after exploring relevant literature on Brexit, in which immigration appeared as a recurrent issue, and was thus marked as a political issue that deserved further inquiry. This was probed further to ascertain the functional specification of immigration within the Brexit campaign, and how it was promoted by both state and non-state actors (especially the political class and the news media) in the UK to draw the attention of the public.

The second step according to Chong and Druckman (2011) is the isolation of specific attitudes. These specific attitudes can either be the characteristics or the causal attributions of the frames. In applying this to this study, this work isolated seven distinct causal attributions in the immigration discourse, namely; social welfare, labour market, national identity, law and order, Turkey's possible EU membership, terrorism, and moral values. These causal attributions became the thematic frames for immigration in this study. These attributions were thematically defined, rather than leaning towards the use of an episodic approach. The thematic approach speaks to the application of a wide-angle lens to the coverage of issues by the news media, while the episodic focuses on individual case studies (Iyengar (1991) as cited in Benjamin, 2007). This research was not built around the episodic character of these frames, as they would have reduced the scope to mere presentation of single events, rather than the more elaborate observation that would have been achieved in thematic frames by concentrating on trends of issues over time.

The third step is to inductively create a coding scheme for the initial frames identified (Chong and Druckman, 2011). With regards to this study, this research work explored already existing research and academic works as the starting point and identified frames that had been pre-identified. The pre-identified frames were uncategorized and unorganized associated concepts and terms mostly used in describing immigration issues for the political gains of state actors in the Brexit campaign. These terms, littered across literature (Morrison, 2019; Balch

and Balabanova, 2010, 2016; Lindenberg, 2017; Horne, 2018) in different forms, were later organized into categories and frames through the application of logical thinking for operationalization judged to be suitable for the study. As a process, the categorization of four frames—social welfare, labour market, terrorism, and law and order—utilized the above stated process, in which the complexity was examined to capture literature that argue on different ideas. Though some words and terms were not explicitly stated, insight was employed to develop each frame from associated terms in literature on framing (Gamson and Modigliani, 1987). After this, the coding for each frame was done by associated terms and their tones. The coding was manually carried out. In contrast to the automated coding using computerized techniques, manual coding gives substantial room for flexibility to discover more frames. As a result, Morrison (2019), Balch & Balabanova (2014), Balch & Balabanova (2010), and Lindenberg (2017), among others, were consulted for associated terms and tones denoting pressure on public services, increase in the prices of housing, the rise in the NHS waiting list, the fear of schooling and housing for future generations, the UK's government cutbacks, and the enrichment of welfare by immigrants were grouped and coded under the social welfare frame. For labour market frame, this work organized the frame from literature (Bennet; 2016; Balch and Balabanova, 2014; Poole & Richardson, 2006 among others) and examined tones, terms, and words related to employment and wages. Job creation by immigrant, job loss by British workers, and cut in wages were all subsumed and coded for the labour market frame as well. On the law and order frame, this study utilized all terms reflecting protection of lives and property of the UK people from European immigrants. Here, Fenton (2016) and Balch and Balabanova (2010) were explored on the Bulgaria and Romanian admission, Poole and Richardson (2006), among others, for indicators on the violation of law such as the predisposition of British women to sexual assaults from immigrants, human trafficking, and terms that can strengthen law and order. All these were pieced together to build the law and

order frame. Deriving insight from Cottle (2000), Mamdani (2002), Gove, Johnson, and Stuart (2016), and Horne (2018), this work spotted trends of campaigns on the global rise of terrorism, and how the British people were in pursuit of protection against Islamophobia. Securitized fear, panic about terrorism, and the advantage of intelligence sharing were all captured and organized to coin the terrorism frame.

While the above four frames were developed from complex terms and concepts predefined in the literature, this study further dissected news stories to discern some complexities embedded in newspapers, and other academic literature, and discovered three more frames—national identity, Turkish membership, and moral values. These were coined from subtle tones and insinuations of words rather than explicit terms. These frames were deliberately developed to capture other aspects of discussions that might not be obviously analysed in newspapers. Such identification would provide deeper insight into how framing can be carried out to convince concerned audience. The coinage of the latter frames for coding was in consideration of the words produced by the different political elites and organizations of UK politics, which were indirectly mentioned in newspaper articles. For instance, when the prevalence of thoughts around moral values, rightness, pursuit of fairness, equality, and the rights of citizenship were noted, and the need to end discrimination was recognized, they were defined and coded as the frame for moral value. The insinuations on Turkish membership into the EU were indirectly implied by factions, and such were leveraged on. The promotion of the position that there are prospects of Turkey joining the EU, and the free travel options that could result were all subtle opinions teased out and coded for the frame on Turkish factor. On national identity, the need for Britain to protect and restore its socio-cultural and religious heritage repeatedly emphasized in some news stories brought this frame to limelight. The openness to trade and European integration shouldn't be at the expense of Britishness or continue to cause fractured communities in the UK, as this could lead to marginalization and raise a serious

national identity question. Concerns related to these and many more were all grouped and coded for the national identity frame.

Before we go any further, it is important to state clearly that codes (0) and (1) were assigned to each news story read. Code (1) denotes the presence of any of the categorized frames, while code (0) means the absence of the frames in the news story. For all stories that were organized under frames, the research work assessed them for validity. Validity here means the relevance of the story to any of the immigration frames developed by this study. Validity was further coded. In situation where stories were judged as valid (any of the immigration frames present), they were assigned code (1), and if judged to be invalid (all of the immigration frames absent), they were coded as (0).

The fourth step is to select the sources for content analysis. In this study, this research selected prominent British newspapers that covered the Brexit stories of immigration between 23rd of May, 2016 to 23rd of June, 2016. Although the study borders on media, but the choice of streamlining to news articles as units of analysis was based on the availability and convenience of news outlets compared to other types of media outlets. This does not mean that published articles would not be used at all; rather, they will help as supportive evidence of the findings of this study.

3.4 Data and Sample

This study used the media outlets in the UK as the study population, and it used a primary source of data collection to gather specific information on immigration from the UK's popular national newspapers. The use of primary data is important because it directly captures how immigration effects were being presented to the Brexit voters, and as such becomes easy to understand the political leaning of the media (Walter, 2019). The data were primarily the UK's newspaper outlets that are commonly read across all the four independent states

(Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and England). The justification of the UK newspapers as the sample data instead of all media channels is based on the ease of access and convenience, as newspapers are always published and made publicly available. More so in the UK, newspapers have tangible audience and influence, as a matter of fact, most television and radio stations tend to review newspaper articles daily.

These national newspapers were extracted from the LexisNexis academic database. It was a computerized method of search that gave more advantage to access information on Brexit and immigration online rather the manual that would bring limitation in accessing information (Walter, 2019). The articles were then searched by using two relevant keywords, ‘Brexit and immigration’, that were presumed to be embedded in relevant newspaper contents. The generated results were then filtered based on the search category for Brexit news written in the English language in the British newspapers. Results were further filtered based on the date range beginning from May 23rd 2016 and ending at June 23rd 2016. The study settled for this timeframe because the weeks leading to the vote are salient, as campaigns on both sides (of the leavers and those who want the UK to stay in the EU) were intense and loaded with all the details to be communicated to the mass public using the power of the media. Our focus was specifically on Brexit-based newspapers articles produced online. The second filtering generated about 320 news stories, but some of these stories are duplicated as the LexisNexis database has the capacity to extract the same story from a particular UK newspaper but from different online sources. This meticulous approach reduced all articles to one-hundred and four (104). The stories examined were the ones in the following UK national newspapers: The Independent, The Guardian, The Times, The Sun, Evening Standard, Financial Times, Daily Telegraph, and The Observer. It is important to emphasize again that prominent newspapers such as Daily Mail, Daily Mirror, Daily Express, and Daily Star are not included in this study because they were on unavailable in the database at the time of this research. Furthermore, the

sampling technique used in this study was a purposive non-probability sampling, as it sifted relevant information from the LexisNexis database using the key terms, and the choice of the newspaper was based on how engaging their activities were at the time period.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using content analysis. All the one hundred and four news stories were read thoroughly for proper understanding of contexts, tones, and words that could fall under the categorized frames. Not only that, the study went a step further to understand how the newspaper stories read were favourable for either the pro-Leave group or the pro-Remain group, or the neutral camp. All these positions were coded. The presence of any of the tone was coded with (1), while the absence of any was coded with (0). Such identification was instrumental to the further organization and categorization into general themes for coding.

A computer program, specifically Google Sheets, was used to organize and code the data. This was further documented, presented, and summarized for proper understanding. For the purpose of descriptive analysis and presentation of frames' frequencies and percentages, each of the news stories read was coded with (1) where valid and with (0) where found not to be valid for the subject of immigration and one of seven of its frames. The coding on the Google sheet was then followed by a succinct thesis of each story and how it was framed to captivate the British voters to either support the Brexit course or be persuaded to support the stay camp.

3.6 Reliability and Validity of Research Instruments

This study is hinged on the use of systematic techniques to collect media data on the topic of Brexit and immigration and to analyze these appropriately. As a result, the approaches taken to arrive at a valid description of the major frames of Brexit immigration are reliable. This then comes with the notion that the method adopted in searching for data from the

LexisNexis database can generate consistent results under the same circumstance of Brexit immigration discourse. The validity of this measure leans more towards high validity, given that the method accurately measured the seven frames for Brexit immigration.

Overall, the analytical goal of Brexit immigration frame description was achieved without compromising the appropriateness, consistency, and transferability of the findings of this study. Thus, this research relied on data that can be reproduced by another researcher.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter analyses and discusses how selected UK national newspapers showed that immigration was highly featured during the Brexit campaign. It does not intend to analyse the effects of media framing on the outcome of Brexit vote. It presents the descriptive data results for this study, so as to set the tone for the actual content analysis. It reveals that before the 2016 referendum, relevant literature and media outlets captured immigration as a critical source of problems for Britain's existence in the regional system of the EU. National newspapers, especially The Independent and The Guardian, have framed immigration discourse under the seven identified factors: social welfare, labour market, Turkey's possible admission to the EU, law and order, terrorism, moral value, and national identity. Thus, the next paragraphs deal with descriptive analysis and discussion of how immigration was presented in the news media by the two main groups (Leave and Remain), and the neutral bloc, with mixed analysis of the seven frameworks.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Brexit Immigration Frames

From the 104 news stories selected for analysis, 66% were valid. And as Figure 4.1 below shows, out of all the valid stories, The Independent accounts for almost one-third of the articles that engage with immigration discourse up to the Brexit campaign in June, 2016. Its level of engagement with these stories is so extensive that the sum of the coverage of the least engaged two newspapers (Evening Standard and Financial Times, having the same proportions) is not up to half of The Independent.

Figure 4.1: Percentage of Newspapers on Immigration

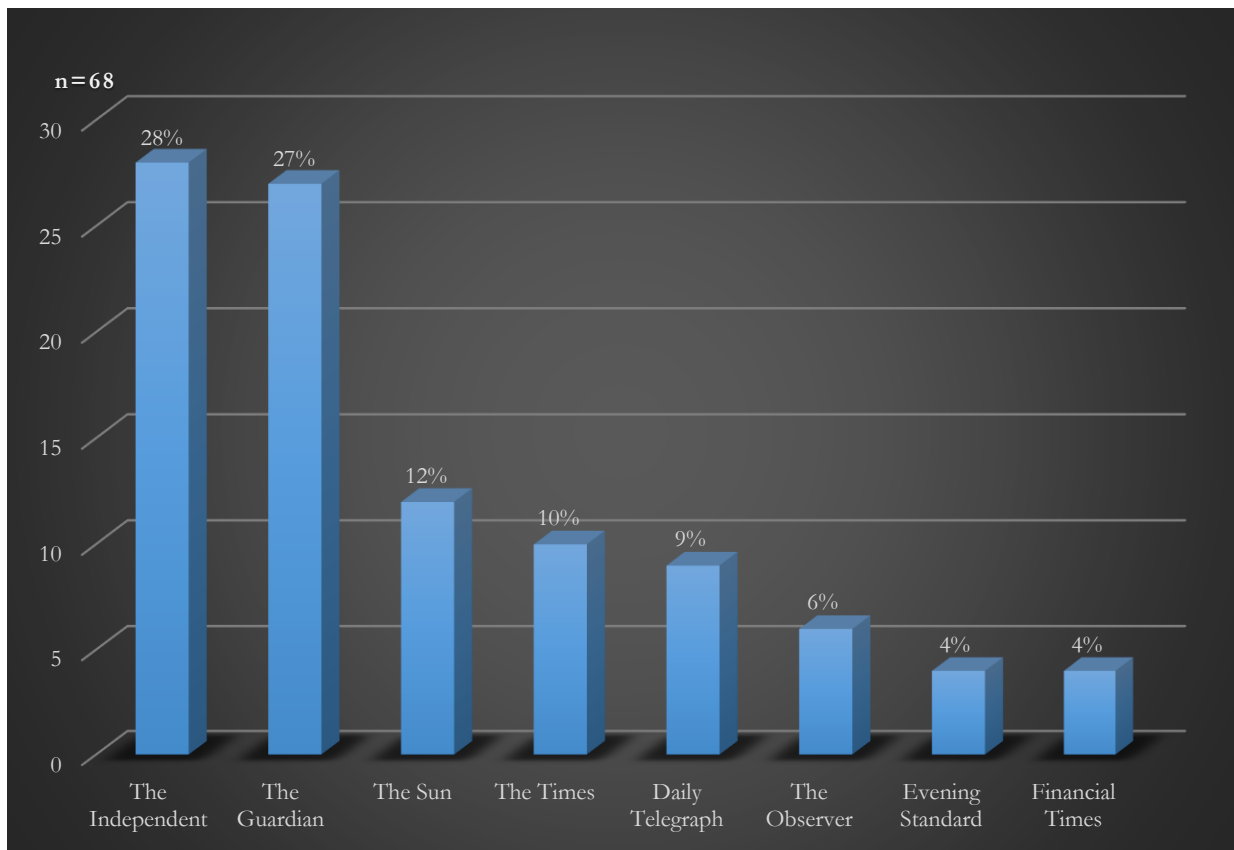


Figure 4.2: Brexit Tones of Newspapers on Immigration

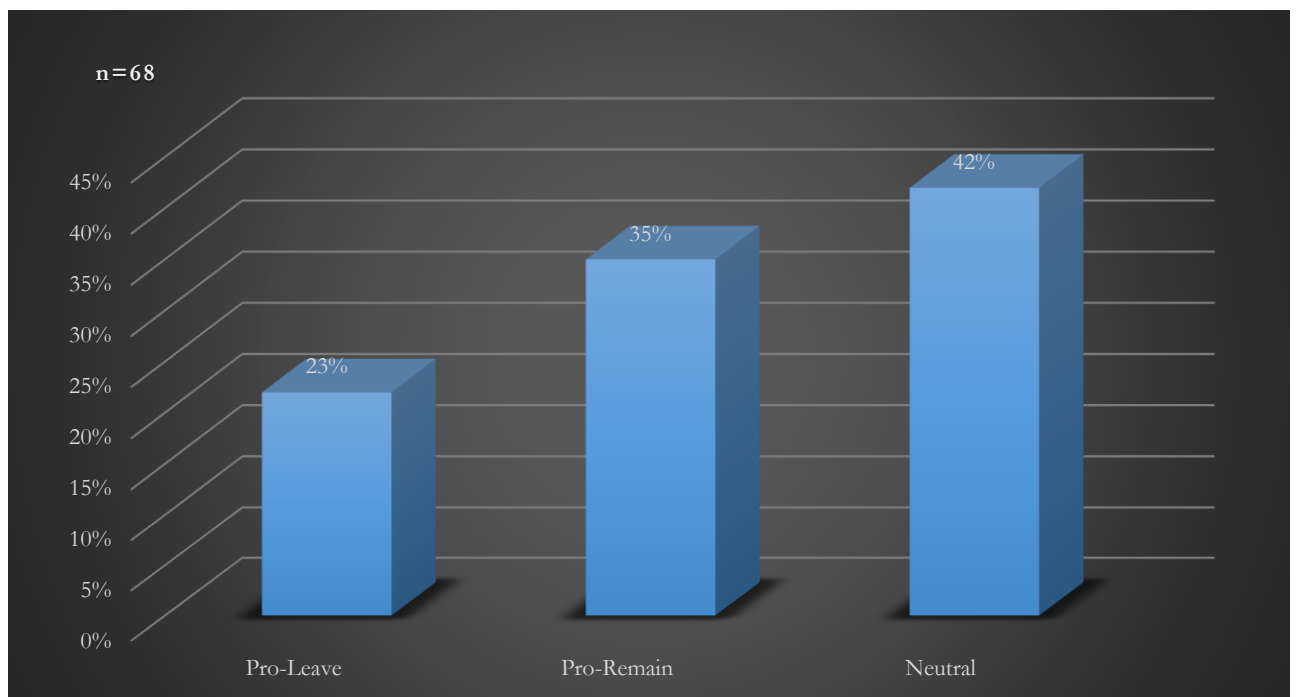
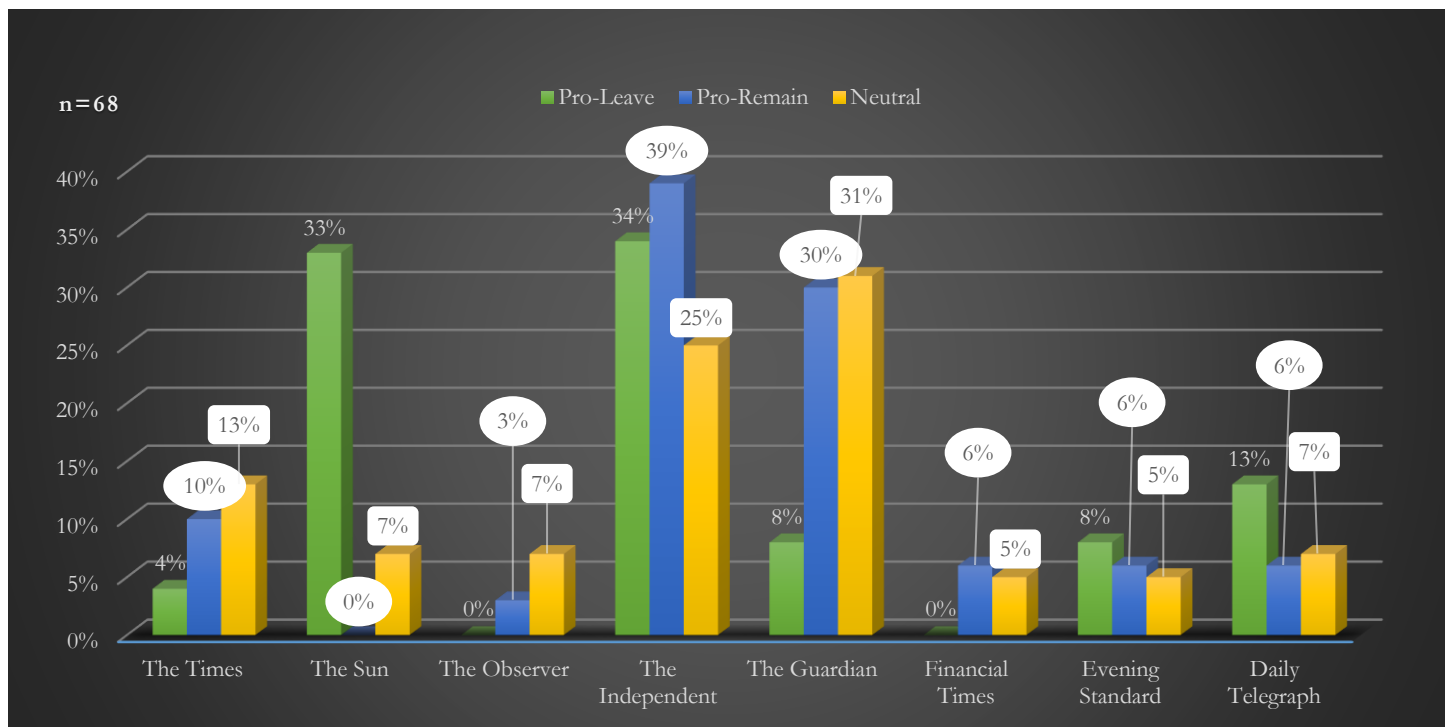


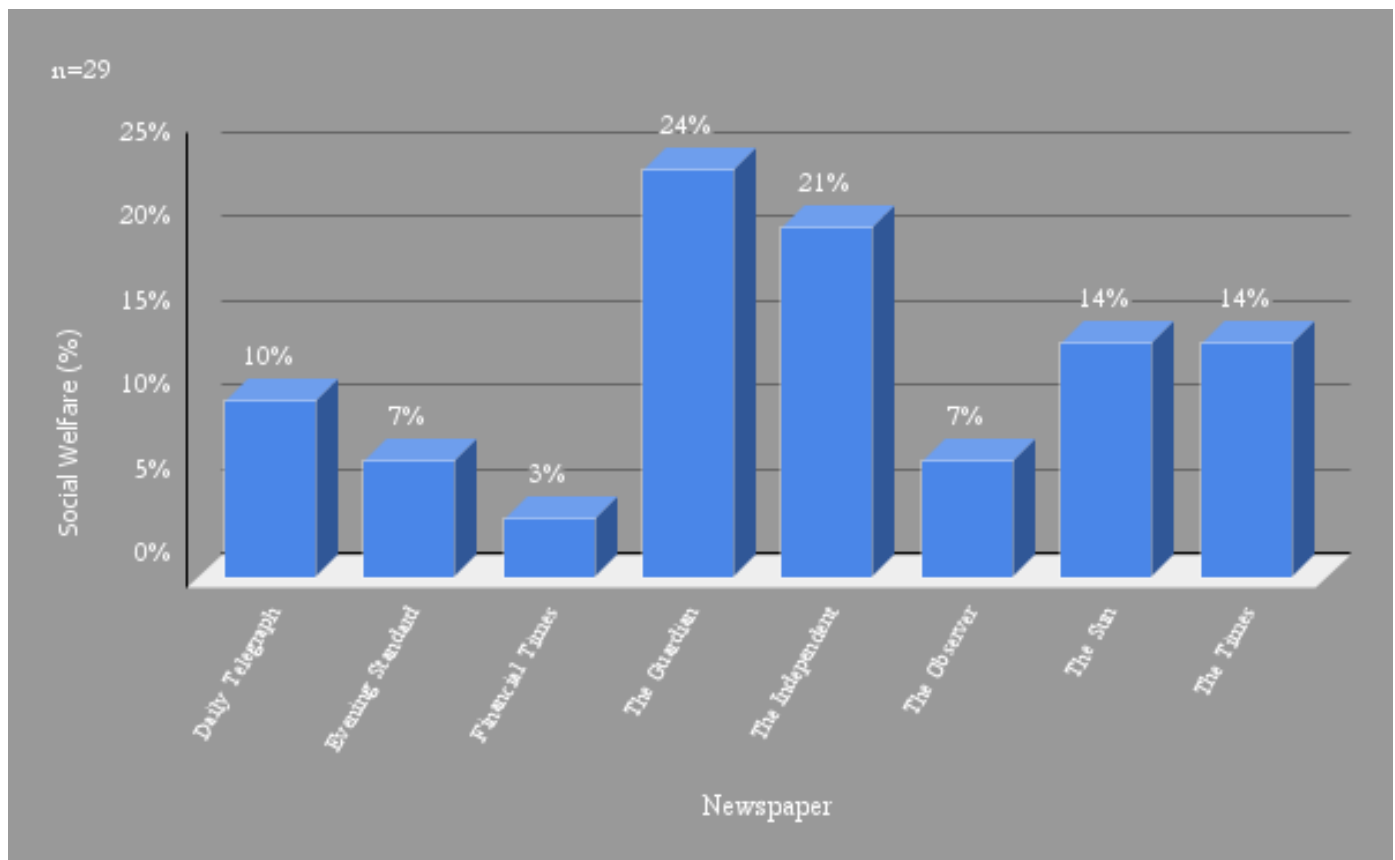
Figure 4.2, above, shows the percentage of stories falling within each category of tone. Selected UK national newspapers that framed immigration stories in a favourable tone to the Leave group are in minimum proportion compared to those stories that support the Remain and neutral groups. This means that they carved narratives that were favourable to the Leave camp to win over more audience using any of the seven analytical frames identified in the course of the study. While the news articles that portray their stories in a way that appeals to the Remain camp accounts for about one-third, most of the news stories – 42 percent – used the neutral tone. The neutrality of their tone represents an attempt to bring balance to the two opposing parties on Brexit.

Figure 4.3: Data Distribution of Newspapers Based on Brexit Tone



As the figure 4.3, above, shows, six newspapers, except The Observer and Financial Times, are included in the pro-Leave stories. The Sun and The Independent account for equal shares of the pro-Leave stories, and between them they account for fully two-thirds of the pro-Leave stories. The Guardian and *Eveving Standard* also have equal shares of stories that are favourable to the Leave camp; but the two combined could not pull up to one-third of pro-Leave news articles. Regarding news stories that were favourable to the Remain camp, The Independent and The Guardian take the larger shares, while The Sun is excluded. Five newspapers shared 30% amongst themselves - the value which does not make up half of The Independents' and The Guardian's. Also, all selected newspapers can be found to be engaged in news stories that are favourable to the neutral side, but The Independent and The Guardian maintained their balanced stand at a wider margin to the others, while others have their proportion in sparing meaures.

Figure 4.4: Newspapers Using Social Welfare Frame



In Figure 4.4, even though all the newspapers participate in framing the social welfare into their narratives, not all news stories use the social welfare frame in their articles. The news articles that include elements of the social welfare frame are less than half of the sixty-eight valid UK news stories selected for this analysis. Out of these twenty-nine social welfare stories, The Guardian and The Independent maintain a wide margin in line with the leading positions they attain in the context of the overall data. But in this case, they make up 45% of the stories crafted on social welfare. As the remaining newspapers have unequal shares, the Financial Times only has a peripheral engagement with the social welfare discourse.

Figure 4.5: Brexit tone for Social Welfare Frame

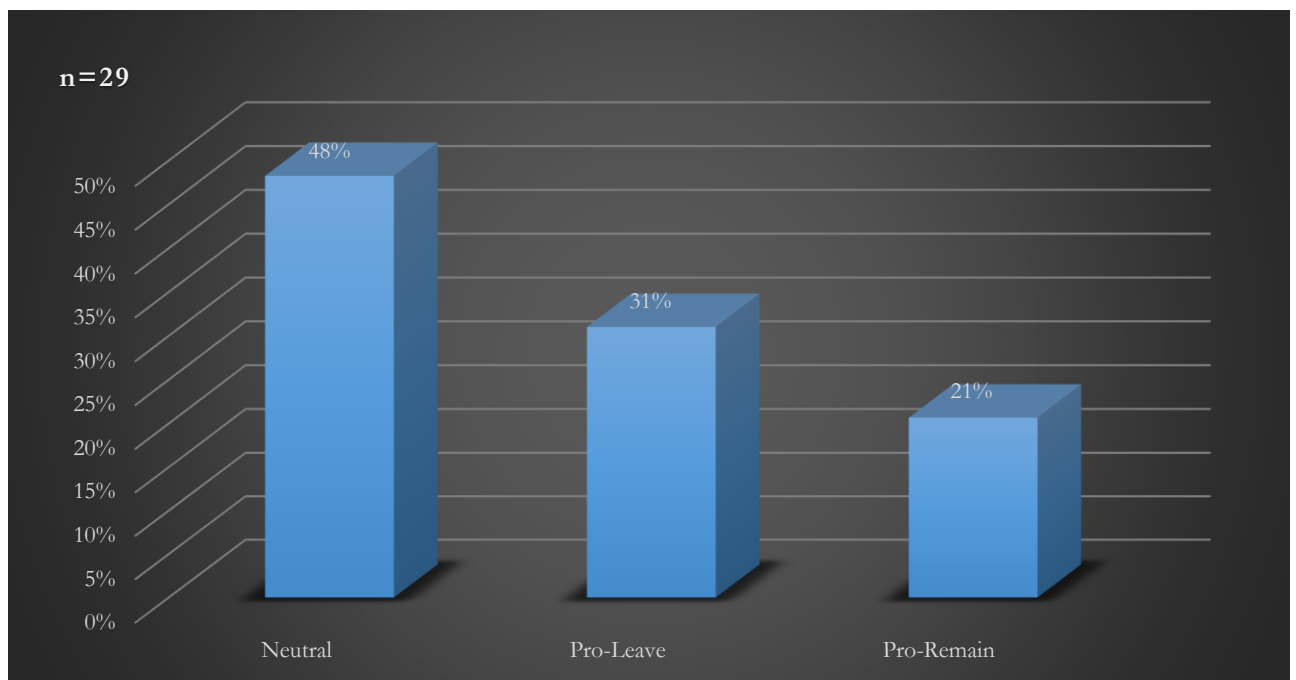


Figure 4.5 above is indicative of the fact that most of the selected news articles that featured the social welfare frame curate stories with tone that appear to balance opinions on Brexit. This means that nearly half of the news stories appear to balance arguments that were favourable to neither the Leave nor the Remain camps. Although the frequency of stories that create narratives that appeal to the Leave camp in pro-Leave tone emerges next to the neutral tone, but its share is less than one-third of the types of tone used in relation to the social welfare frame.

Figure 4.6: Newspapers using Labour Market Frame

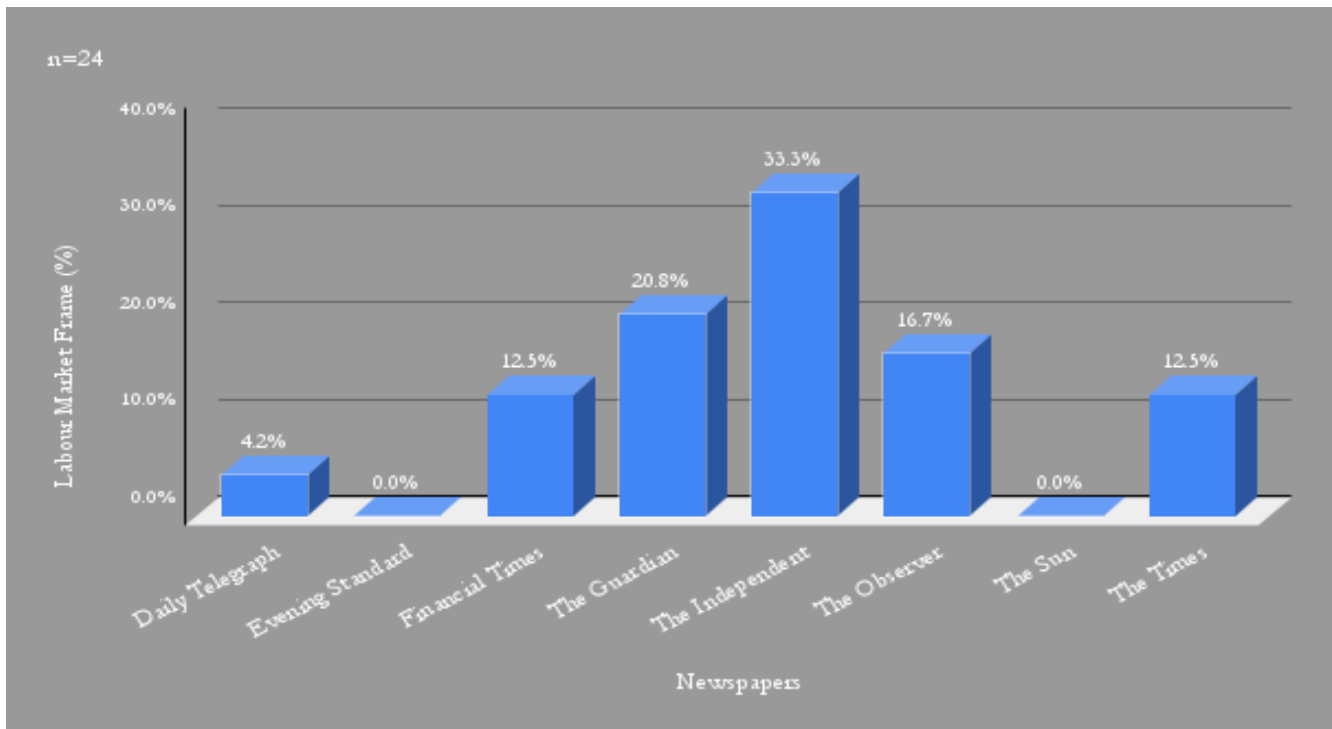
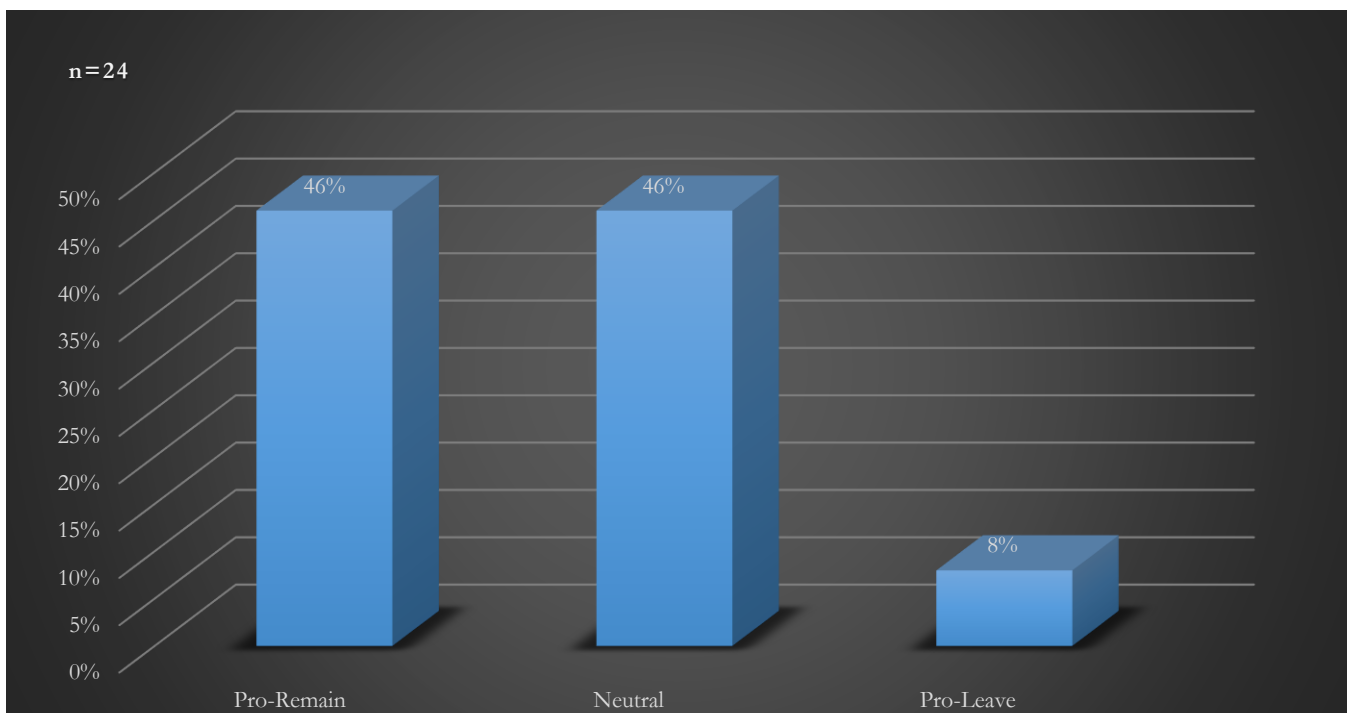
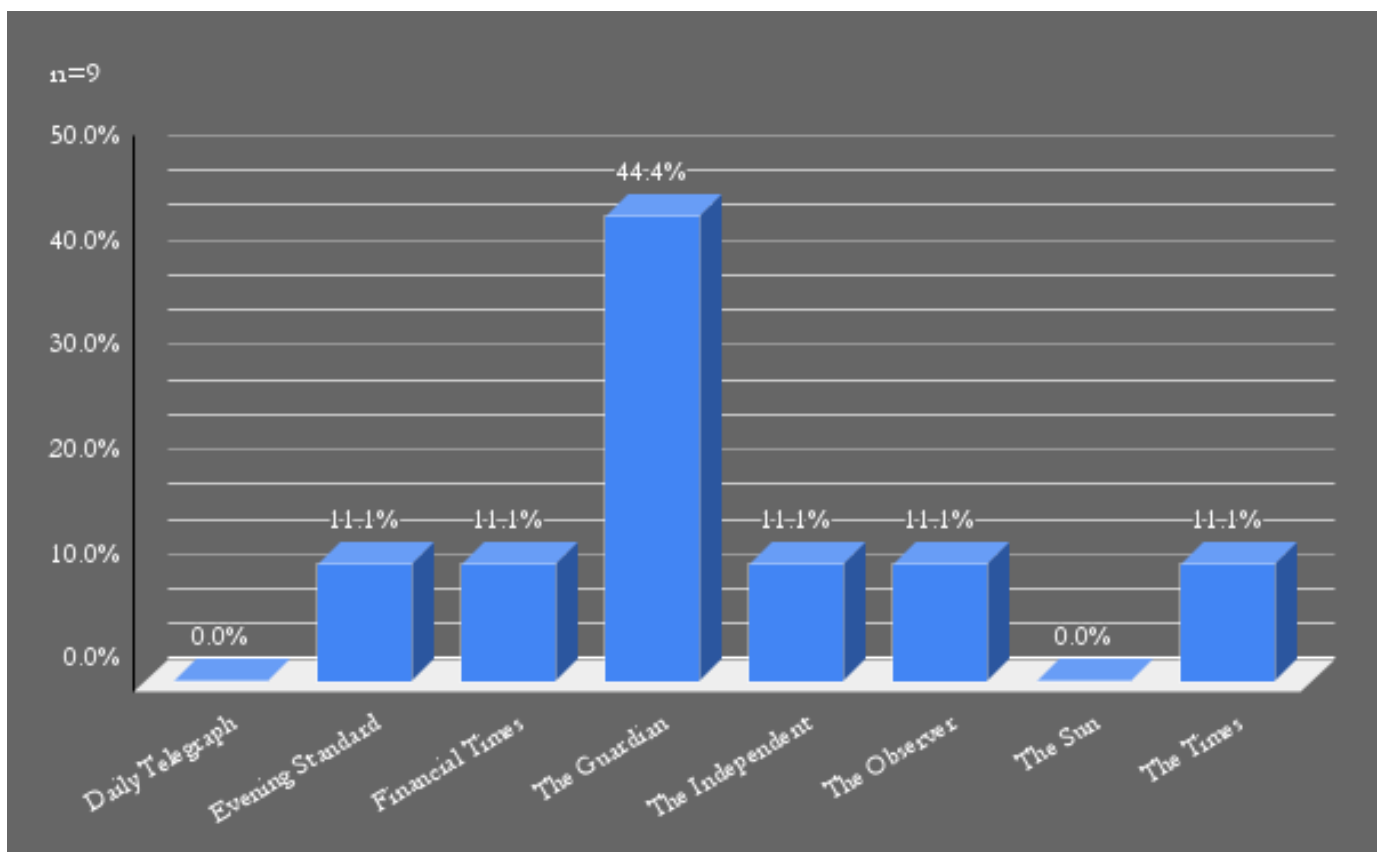


Figure 4.7: Brexit tone for Labour Market Frame



As shown in Figure 4.6, about 36% of valid news articles report the labour market stories. While *The Evening Standard* and *The Sun* are the two newspapers that do not report on the frame, *The Independent* constitutes exactly one-third of the stories developed to reflect the labour market issue. It is also important to observe in Figure 4.7 that the Remain group happens to enjoy an equal proportion of narratives to the balanced tone. The equality of their shares means that a negligible number of news articles weave stories with elements of the labour market frame in such as a way that reflect the Leave group position.

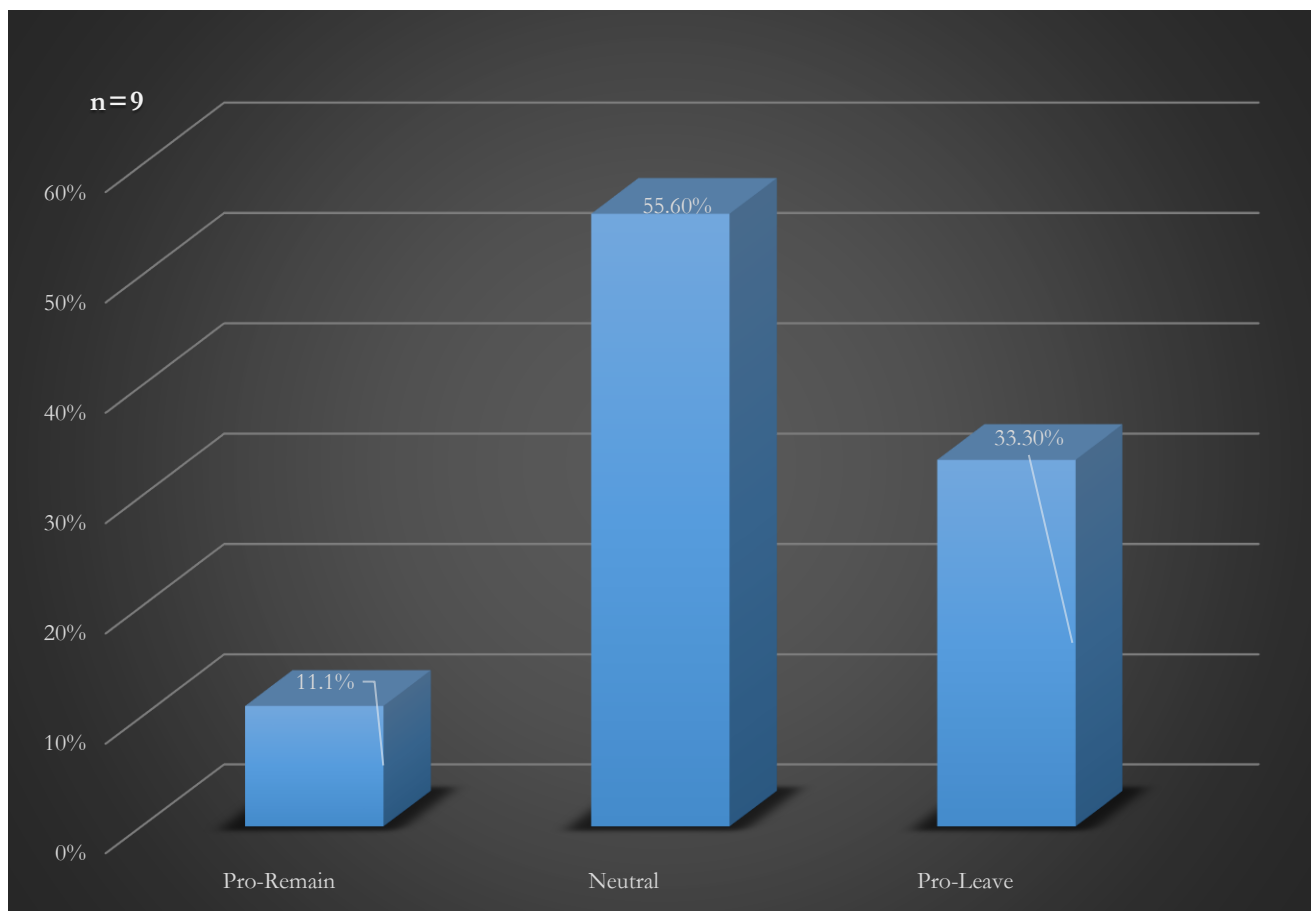
Figure 4.8: Newspapers using Terrorism Frame



In Figure 4.8, just a few news articles (a half above one-ninth of valid news stories) engage with stories that situate terrorism within the context of immigration discourse during the Brexit campaign. Of these stories, *Daily Telegraph* and *The Sun* are not involved in the development of news stories around the subject of terrorism. But the extent to which *The*

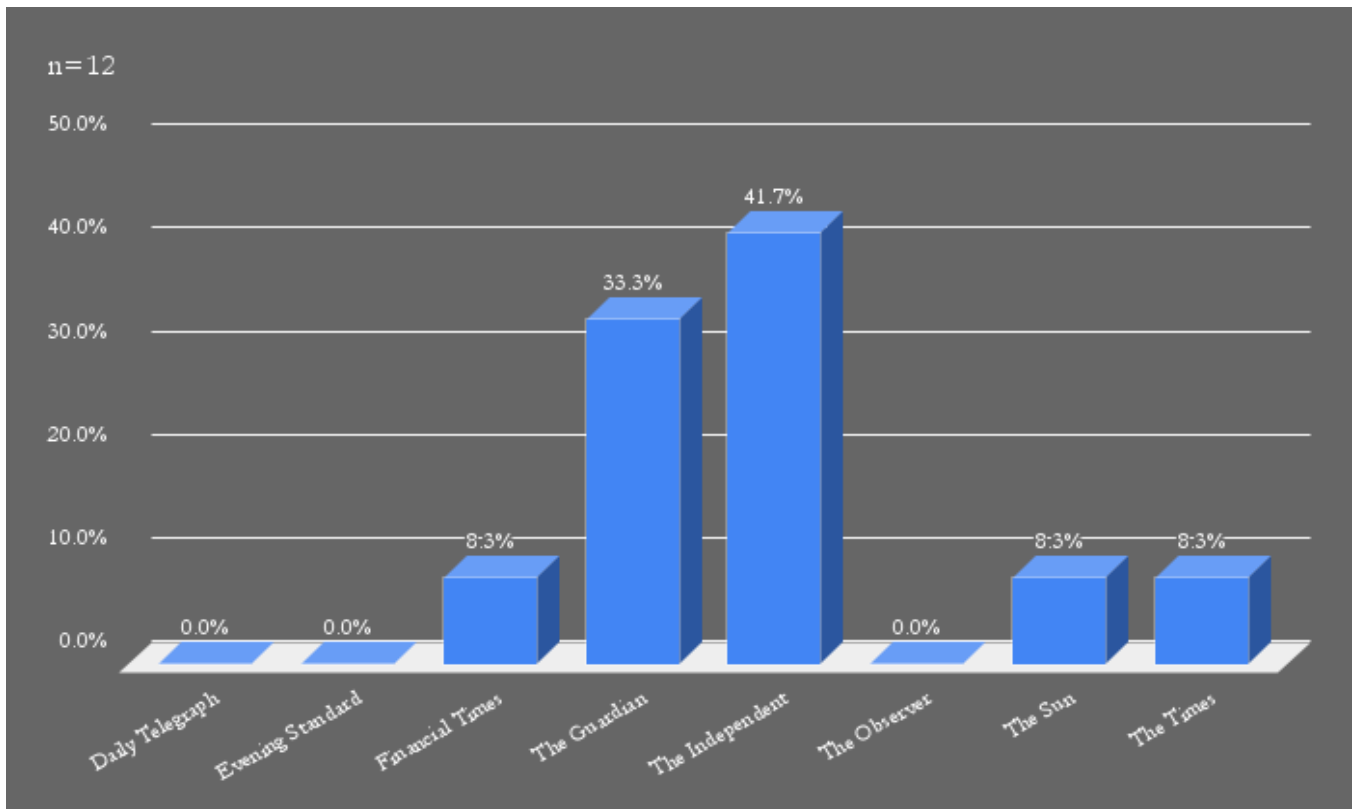
Guardian leads in terrorism news stories relative to all other newspapers becomes noticeable in the sense that its proportion is equivalent to all news stories crafted from any four of Evening Standard, Financial Times, The Independent, The Observer, and The Times combined.

Figure 4.9: Brexit tone for Terrorism Frame



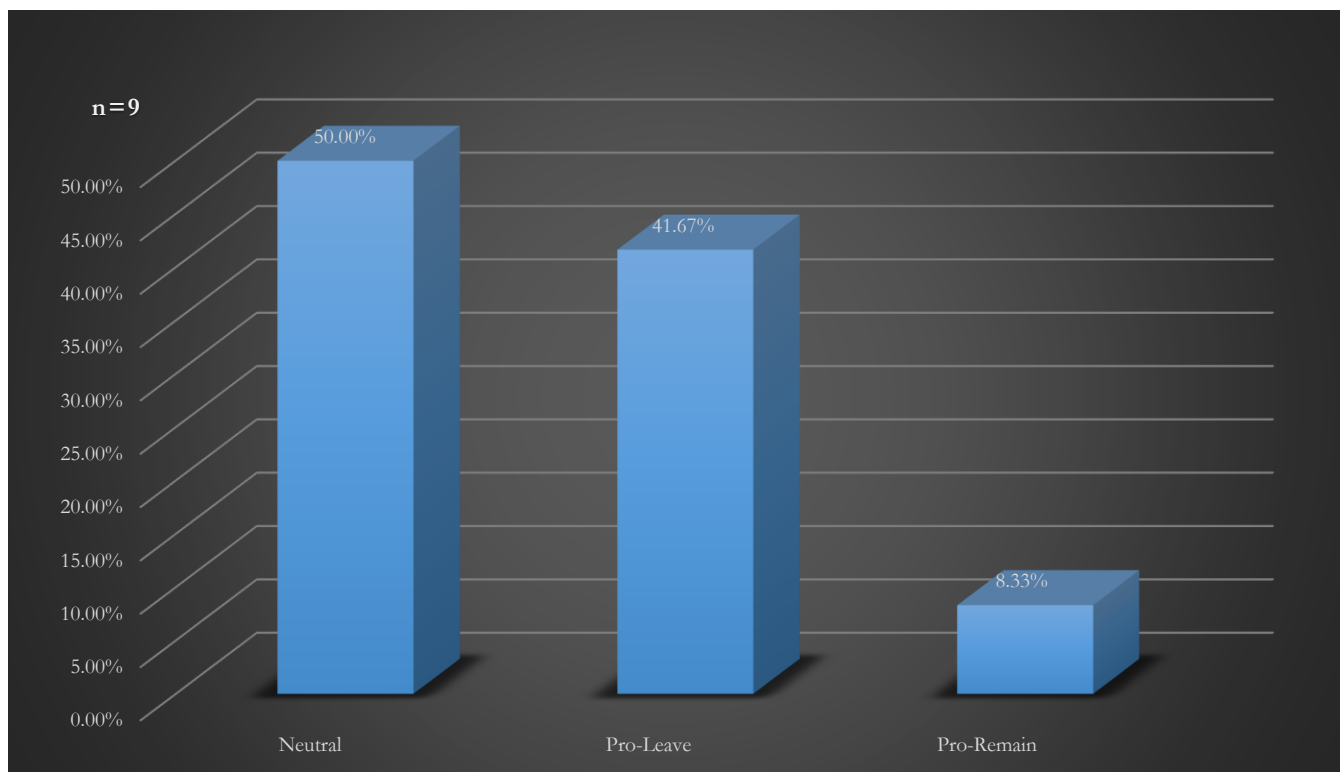
As seen in the figure above, news articles do not significantly feature terrorism to make people remain in the EU; rather there is a concentration of effort on the need to make people have an objective view on terrorism as a factor in immigration and the Brexit campaign. This concentration is evidence of the fact that close to two thirds of terrorism-related news stories crafted narratives to not obviously align with any of the two groups.

Figure 4.10: Newspapers using Law and Order Frame



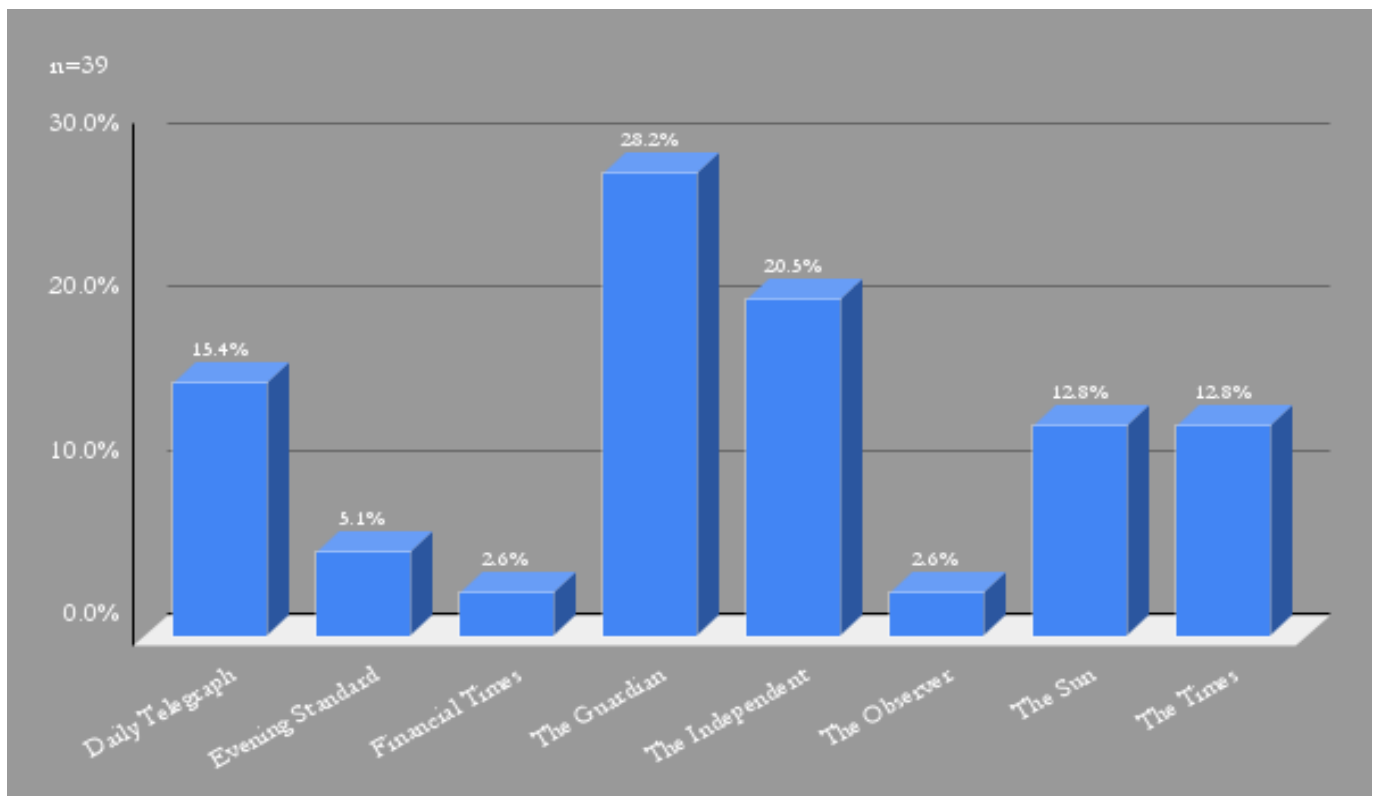
In figure 4.10, five of the selected newspapers use their news stories to engage the law and order frame on immigration during the Brexit campaign, while three newspapers (Daily Telegraph, Evening Standard and The Observer) exclude themselves from stories on the law and order frame. Three of the newspapers that construct stories with the frame have equal shares, all of which, if added together, do not have value that is near to The Guardian (second in rank). The Independent has stories with the law and order frame that account for more than one-third of all news stories with the frame.

Figure 4.11: Brexit tone for Law and Order Frame



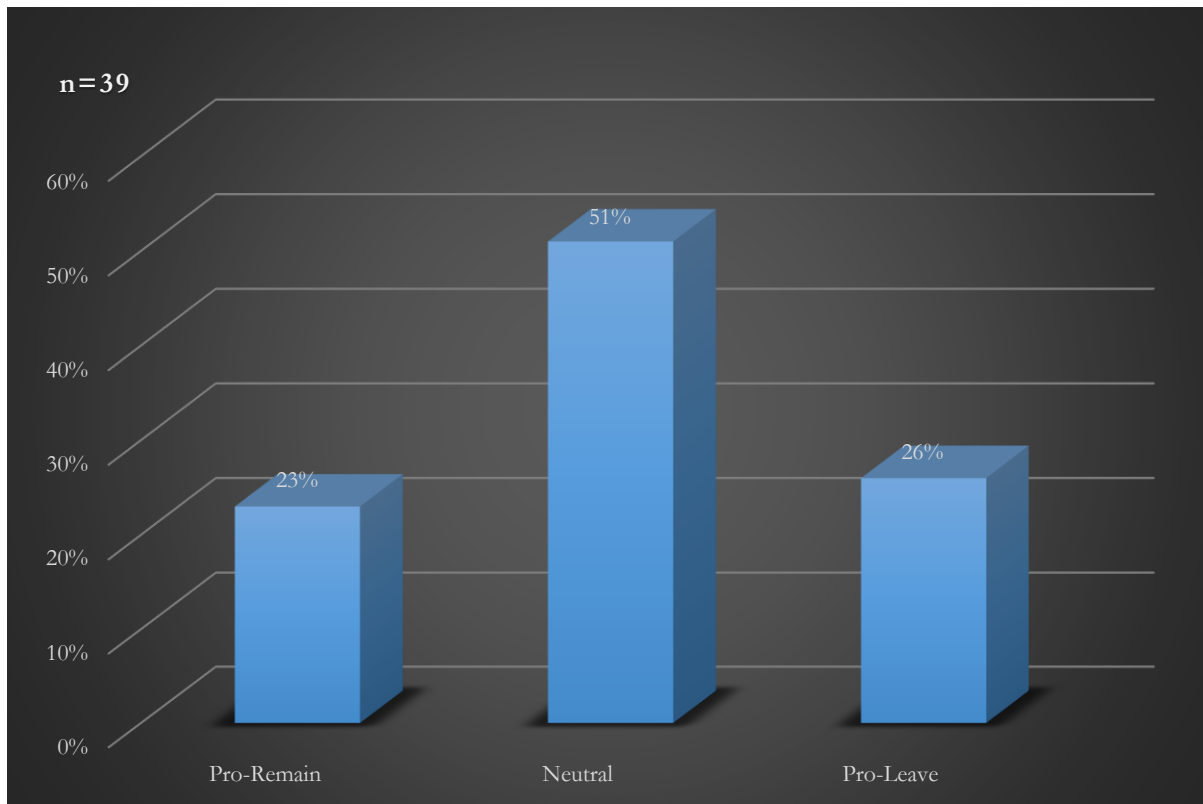
As captured above, the majority of the news articles that address the law and order subject appear to take the view to be factual in their analysis of immigration prior to the referendum. Those whose narratives align with the pro-Brexit group nearly have close to the average in their value compared to stories that appear to be leaning towards the Remain group, which are very low.

Figure 4.12: Newspapers Using the Moral Value Frame



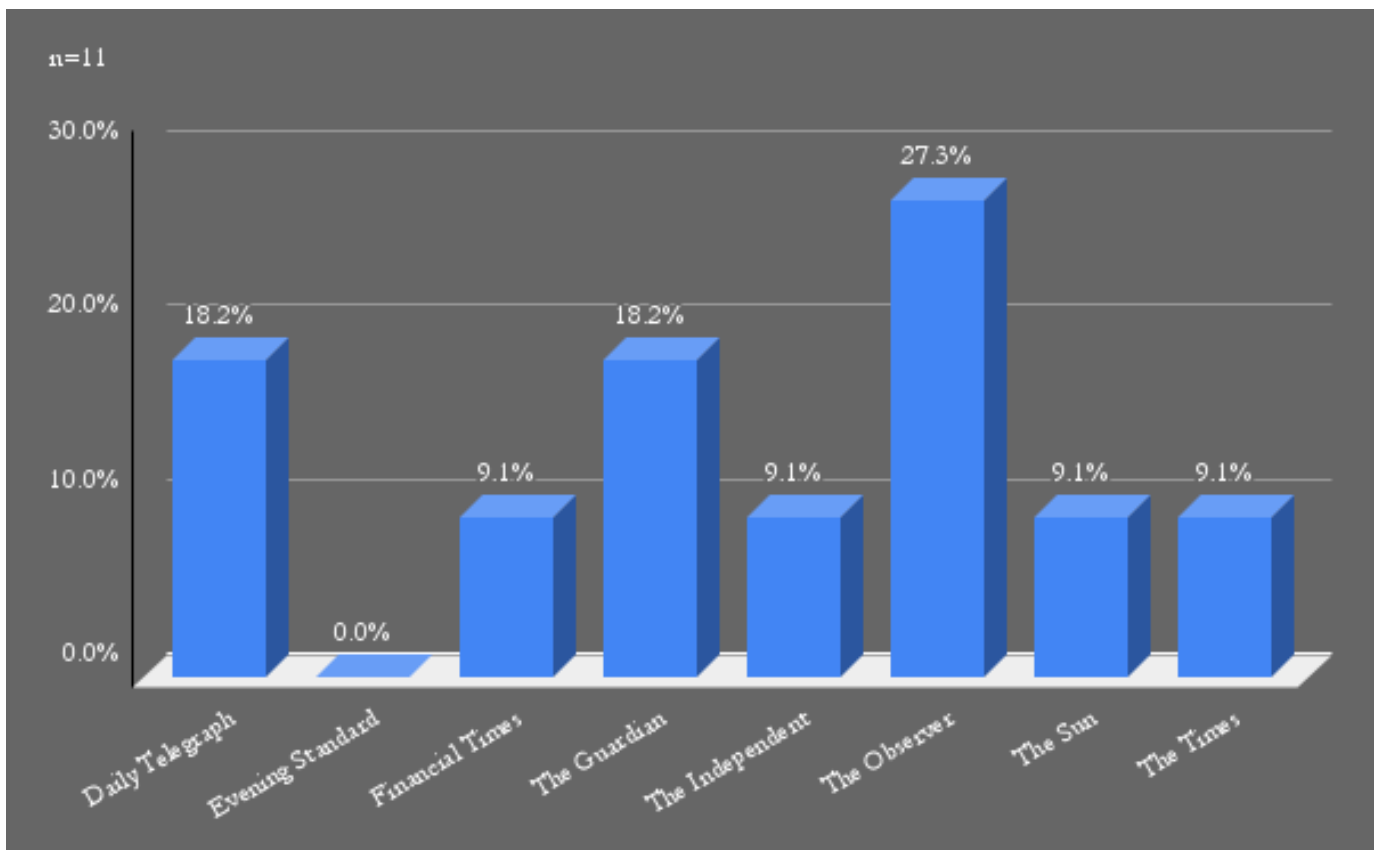
The chart in figure 4.12 shows that Financial Times and The Observer have the least of proportion of stories crafted with elements of moral value. The Guardian takes the lead in this case, accounting for 28.2%.

Figure 4.13: Brexit tone for Moral Value Frame



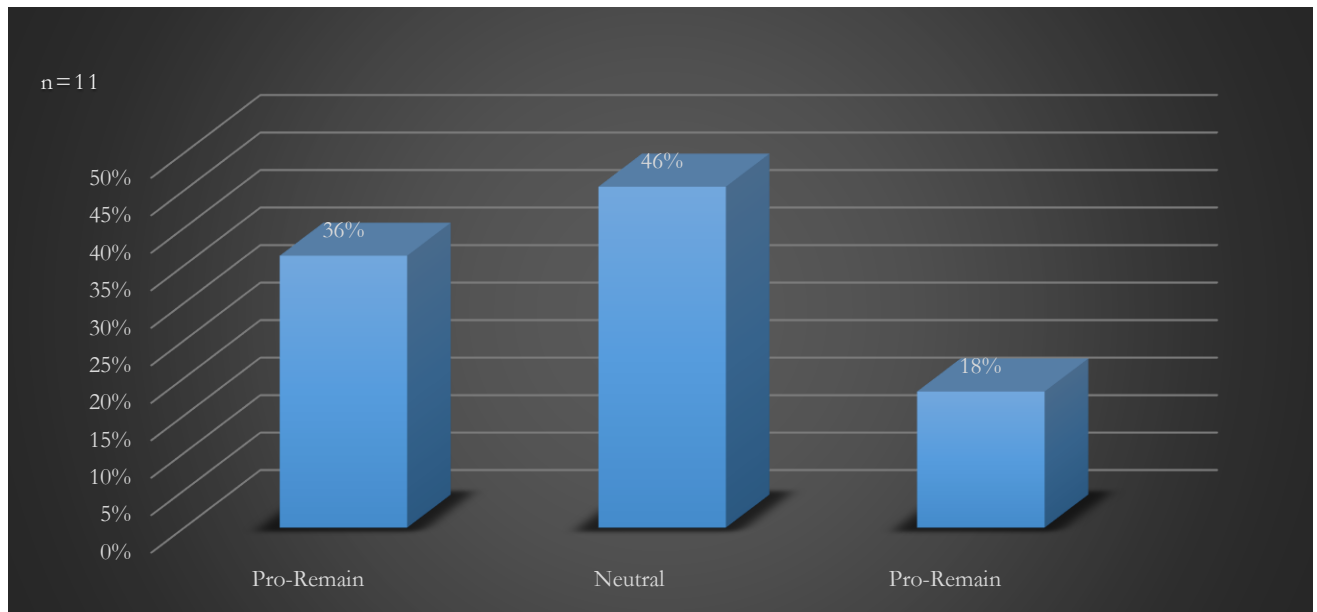
The distribution for moral value tone in figure 4.13 shows that only 23% of the news articles were favourable to the Remain group, a proportion that is lower than articles constructed with neutral tone. Even the articles with Pro-leave tone have competitive proportion with the Pro-Remain counterparts. This reveals that there was a close margin between articles aligning with pro-leave and pro-Remain groups.

Figure 4.14: Newspapers using National Identity Frame



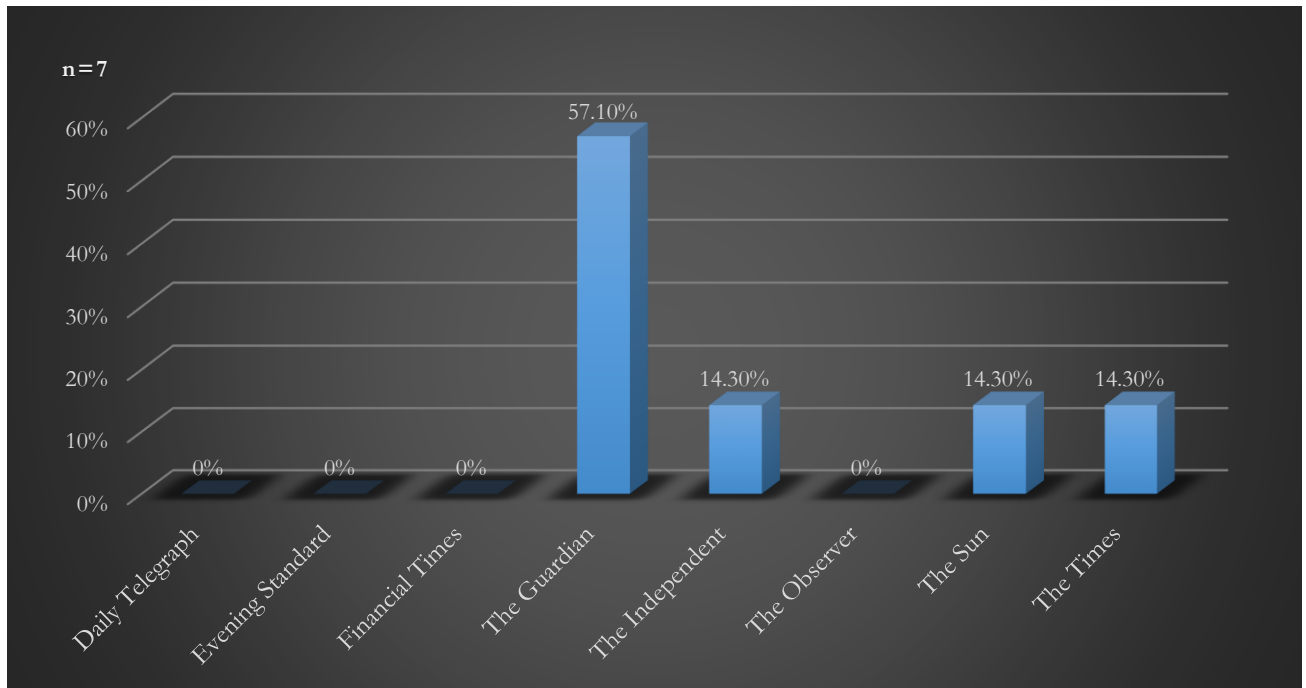
From figure 4.14 above, only 16% of all valid stories discuss the issue of immigration in relation to the national identity frame. On the distribution, articles from Evening Standard do not create stories on the subject of national identity. However, four of the newspapers (Financial Times, The Independent, The Sun, and The Times) have equal shares of national identity stories; and together they account for more than one-third of all stories on national identity frame. While both The Guardian and Daily Telegraph account for the same value as the aforementioned four, The Observer leads and stands out with its share almost equivalent to one-third of articles that capture national identity frame.

Figure 4.15: Brexit tone of National Identity Frame



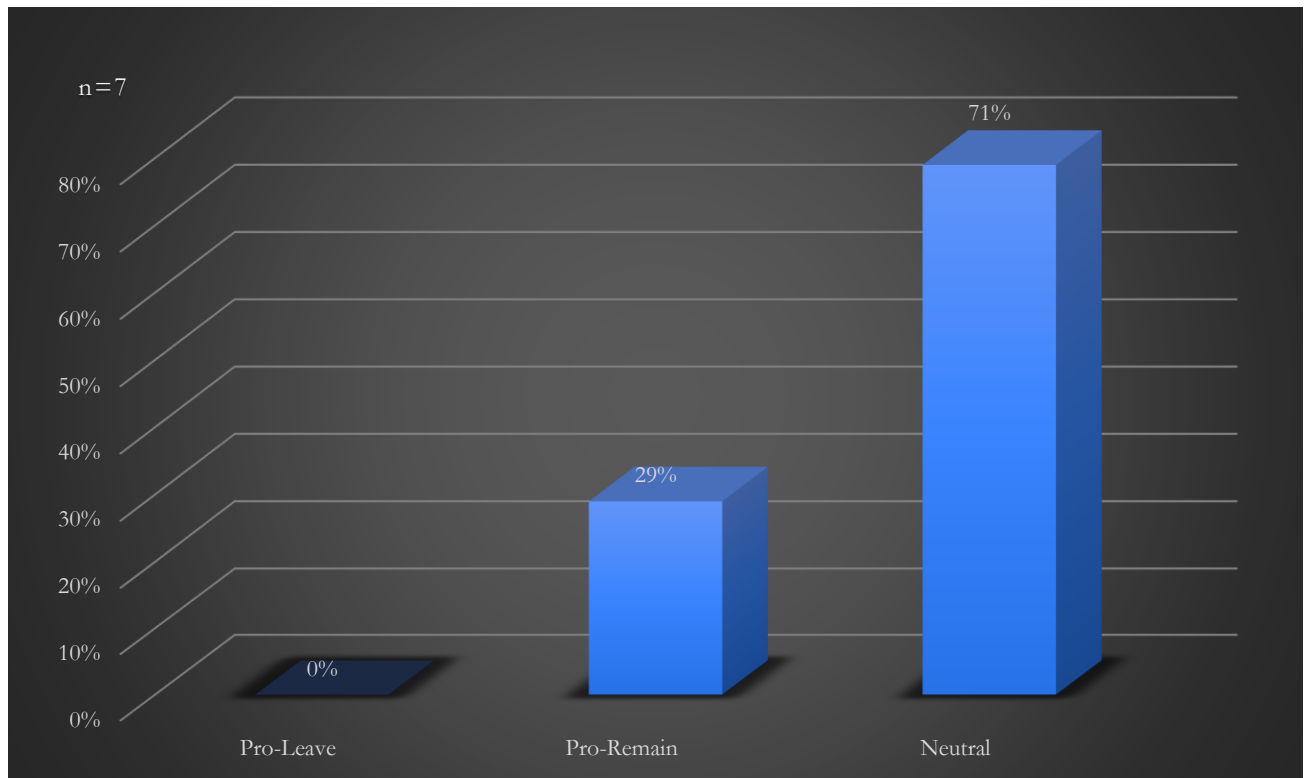
In figure 4.15, news articles that employ balanced tone take the lead over those that use narratives favourable to the Remain and Leave group respectively.

Figure 4.16: Newspapers using Turkish Membership Frame



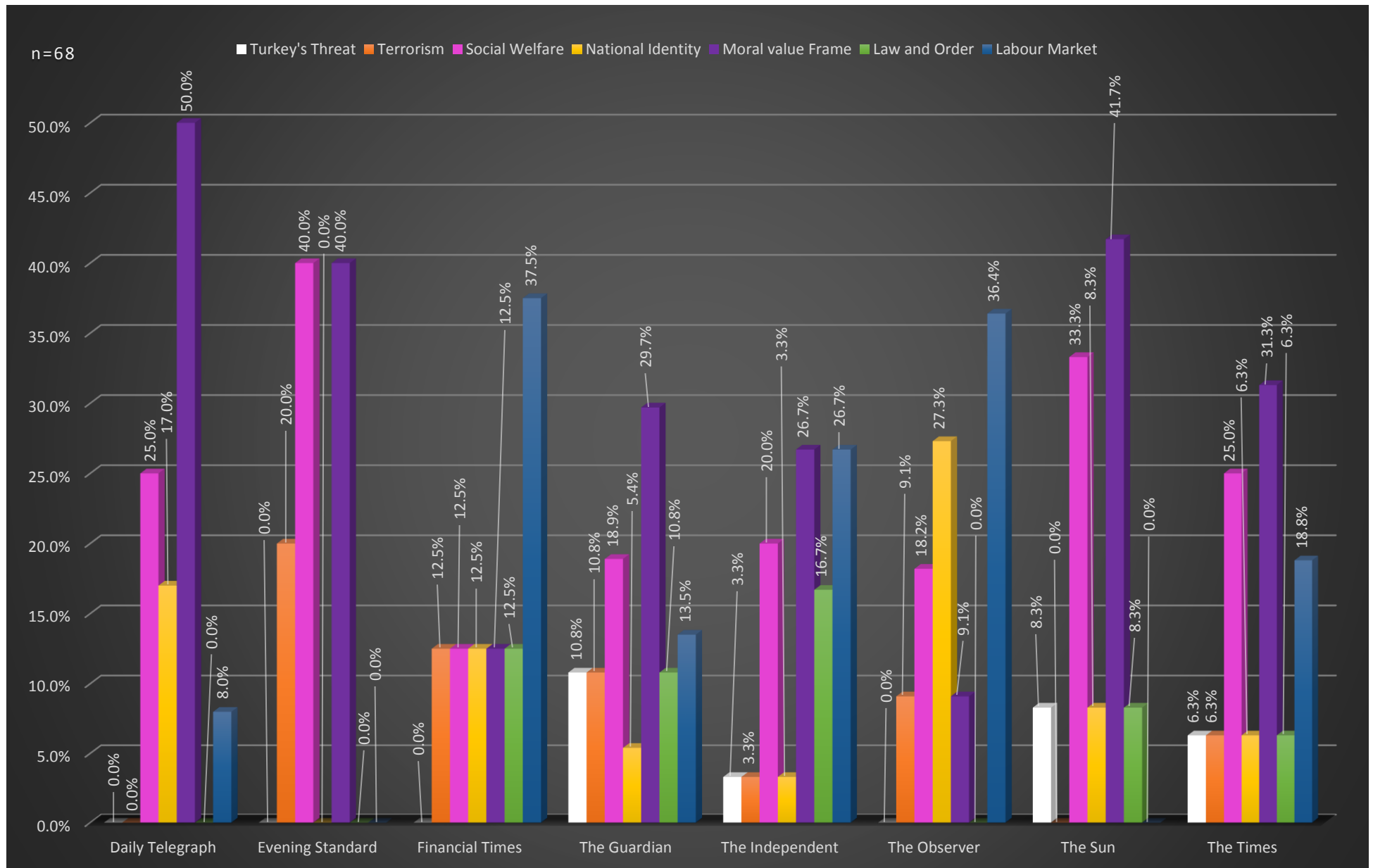
From figure 4.16, four newspapers do not include narratives in the direction of possible membership of Turkey into the EU. However, the share of The Guardian constitutes more than average of all article on Turkish membership. It is important to add that the frame is not prominently discussed in news articles as much as other frames examined in this study.

Figure 4.17: Brexit tone for Turkey Membership Frame



In figure 4.17, over two third of the news stories on Turkish membership try to balance position between the Leave and the Remain camp, while a very tiny proportion of the stories capture narratives that are favourable to the Brexit camp.

Figure 4.18: Distribution of Frames across Selected Newspapers



As shown in figure 4.18 above, none of the Daily Telegraph's news stories appeal to the Turkey's threat, terrorism, and law and order frames, while exactly half of the news stories for the newspaper are based on moral value frame. The social welfare, labour market, and national identity stories in the Daily Telegraph combine to form the remaining average of the news stories developed by the news outlet on immigration concern for Brexit.

On the other hand, the social welfare and moral value story lines dominate the Evening Standard, with each having equal share, and accounting for more than two thirds of all frames. Such a distribution means that stories on Turkish threat, national identity, law and order, and labour market are not featured in the Evening Standard. For Financial Times, labour market issues are more critical, which is why over one-third of the stories are crafted on the controversy of how the British labour market would be affected with or without Brexit. It does not address the Turkey's threat frame, but it engages other stories in equal proportion. The Guardian seems to have interest more in the moral implications of the Brexit, with little attention given to the national identity question. This is similar to The Independent approach, which gives equal distribution of stories for Turkey's threat, terrorism and national identity. The news outlet creates more space for moral value and labour market stories, both of which have equal share and a little above average of the whole stories.

For Observer, the Turkey's threat and law and order frames do not feature in the news stories, and the majority of the news stories are anchored on labour market and national identity, with the proportion of the former being over one-third. The Sun concentrates more on moral value frame and social welfare, with each having over one-third of the stories. The rate at which it engages Turkey's threat, national identity, and law and order frames is equal, but such dedication is to the exclusion of terrorism and labour market frames. The Times gives credence to moral value as well, with just a little less than one-third of all its stories. It engages

all frames in its stories, and with the Turkey's threat, terrorism, national identity and law and order frames having even distributions.

Overall, moral value frame is the most engaged of all frames across all selected newspapers, with Observer being the outlet that engages it in the least. The same can easily be said for social welfare whose lowest proportion across all news stories is seen in The Observer's stories. On the other and, Turkey's threat frame is the least of all frames utilized by news outlets to convey their opinions of Brexit and immigration to the people. Thus, moral value and social welfare frames are extensively used by newspapers to justify their reasons to ensure alignment towards or against the Brexit within the context of immigration.

4.2 Qualitative Analysis of Brexit immigration Frames

During the campaign that led to the Brexit referendum, news articles use stories to promote issues that can ignite the sensational move towards either the 'Leave' or 'Remain' camp. Such tone appealed to different methodologies. These methods revolved around the use of facts, use of panic messages, personalization of issues, negative and sensational use of tabloids, poetic renditions of supposed effects, and juxtapositions of issues. Two or more of these methodologies were trickily woven into each of the frames to portray EU immigration as either a cataclysmic or beneficial phenomenon. Each frame was systematically constructed by each of the two main groups, while the neutral camp also framed issues by maintaining a middle ground for the purpose of balancing views. In view of this, this study analyses each frame and discusses how they were constructed.

The Social Welfare Frame

Playing on the social welfare frame was common amongst pro-Brexit and 'Remain' camps. This was realized using economic indicators to demonstrate the projected costs and

benefits of Brexit on the UK's social welfare conditions after the referendum. The key point in this context was the forecast of the potential contraction inherent in the UK economy, which can shrink the social welfare of the state in the face of uncontrolled EU immigration.

Predominantly, The Sun, The Independent, and Daily Telegraph were the news media that took the front-seat in framing the immigration of the EU citizens into the UK as a horrendous one. They adopted repetitive strategies to show that the welfare rights enjoyed by EU immigrants would plunder the social welfare system of the UK if it remained with the EU (Davies et al. 2016). This was expressed in one of The Sun's editorials that "*unless the deluge of migration is halted, we will be forever playing catch-up. The NHS will not stand a chance... What will she have? No house - all gone to immigrants - and saddled with big debts if she goes to university*" (Harwich, 2016). It also connects with The Independent, which modeled the argument of the leader of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), Nigel Farage, that the presence of EU immigrants has 'put so much pressure on schools, hospitals, and housing', and other infrastructure in the UK (Wright, 2016). This construction reflects the application of a panic message, and the claim that a Brexit vote would lead to a reduction in the pressure on the social welfare of the state. It extends to the use of narratives of political elites like the former London Mayor Boris Johnson to propagate the opinion that the influx of EU immigrants would continue to stifle welfare benefits unabated. They averred that the loosely regulated British social security system that gave some (limited) welfare rights to immigrants meant that so much pressure would be on the welfare of the country if UK remained with the EU (Davies et al. 2016).

An invocation of this analytical strand is also evident in how news media favoured the pro-Brexit camp to dispel the former Chancellor of the Exchequer and First secretary of state George Osborne's argument that the UK economy would contract by 6% if Brexit was successful. They regarded such analysis as 'worthless and unbelievable', being produced out

of conspiracy (Asthana et al. 2016). They argued that the inflow of foreigners has caused a rupture in the system to the point that minority ethnic communities are continuously consigned to worsen economic conditions. Brexit-backed media supported this argument by predicting that a minimum of 3 million EU immigrants will be added to the UK population by 2030, and that such an increase would come with some economic costs such as the erosion of resources, and high demand for housing that can create serious housing problems for future generation of Britons. This style of framing showed the UK as the welfare capital or headquarters for EU citizens from poor countries, and that open borders would continue to undermine the social welfare system of the UK people.

The Independent explored facts by showing the rise in the trend of immigration. It leaned on the comparative analysis of the net-migration for both 2014 and 2015 to drive home the point. Here, they lined up the fact that the net migration for 2014 increased from 308, 000 to 330, 000 in 2015 because of EU immigrants, leaving an all-time high difference of over 20, 000 (Cooper, 2016a; Wright, 2016). They also portrayed that the National Health Service (NHS) might not guarantee its sustainability till 2030, except with Brexit that would have made a net contribution to be used for its development. These portrayals cannot be disconnected from the past methods of the UK conservatives to use images of immigrants as parasitic in tabloids to canvas for the Eurosceptic sentiments (Innes, 2010). It is a by-product of economic cost analysis on the effects of intra-EU migration (Balabanova and Balch, 2010).

In contradistinction to the pro-Brexit camp, some media outlets amplify the utilitarian dividends of being in the EU to lure Britons to vote to remain. The Guardian, The Times, and the *Independent* were the major outlets that constructed logical stories to convince the audience. “*Staying was the most realistic thing to do*”, The Guardian (2016) argued in one of its stories. News media argued to the benefits of EU immigrants in the UK through Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) figures that showed that EU immigrants had paid

more than £2.6 billion in income tax and national insurance. And such payments have helped in the improvement of child benefits, NHS services, and social welfare in general.

The ‘Remain camp’ embarked on the trivialization of pro-Brexit by spreading the forecast of George Osborne that Brexit would trigger push-up in house prices in the UK. Utilizing factual analysis, the media weaved in the figures of the NHS to dispute the claim that EU immigrants were putting pressure on the social welfare of the state. According to them, over 130, 000 EU-born health professionals (doctors, nurses, and care workers) were pivotal to the stability of the UK’s healthcare services (Cooper, 2016a). An aspect of the use of facts was the presentation for clarity that the net-migration for EU citizens had never been close to that of non-EU immigrants. This pilloried the ‘Leave’ camp on the distortion of facts, as the non-EU figures stood at 188, 000 and way above the EU-immigrants figure.

The deployment of personalization methodology was noticeable among the pro-EU camp. An example was how Alexander (2016) in *The Guardian* recounted his personal experience to refute the narratives of the Pro-Brexit camp.

Take the NHS. I've visited more hospitals in the past nine months than I have in my previous 40 years. Have I seen queues of migrants at the door of A&E? No. What have I seen? Emergency admission units and rehabilitation wards full of frail, older people, who end up in hospital because they've had a crisis and who can't be discharged because the support is not available for them at home or in the community. (Alexander, 2016; *The Guardian*, June 26).

This quote connotes that the pressure on the social welfare of the UK was due to the increase in the ageing population and the level of divorce among young couples in the UK. The elderly sit at home, placing more demand on health services, while the split in a home means that two houses emerge instead of one. These phenomena were regarded as the leading causes of housing crisis and a receding social welfare system in the UK, rather than EU immigrants.

The neutrality tone on social welfare emerged more from *The Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, and *The Observer*. These news media tried to maintain a level of objectivity through the

presentation of facts before fear. It presented the advantages and disadvantages of EU immigrants in the UK and how it affected the social welfare of the state. The media maintained that the pressure on the social welfare was due to the failure of government policy to address critical public service issues. It saw the ‘no housing for future Britons’ as exaggeration. According to Cooper (2016b) migration from the EU actually helped the UK out of an economic conundrum, as over 78% of working-age people from the EU were young and less likely to need NHS services. They argued that controlled immigration needed to be in place, but Brexit was not the absolute solution to the deteriorating social welfare in the state.

Labour Market Frame

News outlets, especially Daily Telegraph, The Times, and The Independent, used the arguments of Brexit backers to push narratives on the labour market situation in the UK. This began with the criticism that the EU’s free movement into the UK was disastrous to the employment and wages of British workers. Echoing Tories’ Eurosceptic campaign was marked by exaggeration, one of which was the notion constructed in The Independent that “uncontrolled immigration is forcing down wages for British workers” (Lichfield, 2016). The Eurozone crisis was made as one of the strongest views for the discontent in the British labour market. EU immigrants were presented as those who tried to seek refuge in the UK from the crisis, and by implication caused an increase in unemployment in the UK. They argued that immigrants from the EU countries, who are automatically granted access to work and live in the UK, have opened the door of exploitation for big companies to keep wages down, and enhance job losses in the state (Chu, 2016). They rode on popular sentiment shared by the Leave advocate Paul Stephenson that *“the EU is good for people in power, including multinational corporations and world leaders. That doesn't mean it is good for British people”* (Asthana, 2016; The Guardian, 26 April). This sponsored the scaremongering mission of the

Leave group. Brexit was seen as the best option to deal with the incongruent nature of the British labour market.

The Times did the job of repeating the promises of Michael Gove and Boris Johnson for four different times in a 2-page article of 645 words (Elliot, 2016). This was with the ultimate aim of projecting the Leave group's position to attract more audience.

Migrants coming from the EU to work or study would be assessed on the basis of their skills and admitted only if Britain had identified a shortage within a particular industry...After Brexit, the automatic right of all EU citizens to come to live and work in the UK will end, as will EU control over vital aspects of our social security system...Those seeking entry for work or study should be admitted on the basis of their skills without discrimination...To gain the right to work, economic migrants will have to be suitable for the job in question. For relevant jobs, we will be able to ensure that all those who come have the ability to speak good English...

The above four quotations reveal the level of dedication of The Times to frame the labour market issue for the pro-Brexit camp, and the way the media managed to weave immigration into the news agenda. The Times and other pro-Brexit media took a reductionistic view of the employment characteristics of the EU workers in the UK. It did not take into consideration the full configuration of the EU immigrants. It neglected the immigrants that moved into the UK for study and family, but overemphasized the threats of the EU immigrants to jobs in the UK. EU immigrants were portrayed as disadvantageous to those with basic academic qualification, and manual and routine white collar jobs. *"High level of EU migration means that the British workers are 'forced to compete' with millions from abroad for employment"*, The Independent (22 June, 2016) averred. Such alienation was critically constructed to gain more followers from angry losers in the British labour market. They argued that the influx of EU immigrants into the construction and unskilled services had brought a shedding off of the UK bottom 10%.

The projected immediate recession and job loss by the former Governor of the Bank of England Mark Carney, and the warnings on the reduction in the GDP by the Treasury and the

long-term economic shocks were discountenanced by The Independent and some news media in alignment to the Leave group (Chu, 2016). The persuasion also appealed to the juxtaposition of the historical past to dispel the claim of The Treasury in The Independent. As captured by Rentoul (2016):

The Treasury, after all, concluded in 2003 that we should not join. Now, the Treasury, the Institute for Fiscal Studies, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) all agree that the economic consequences of leaving the EU are negative.

Daily Telegraph also popularized the story that the prediction of Osborne that Britain was “playing with fire” was not actualized, as it was still one of the fastest growing economies in the world (Bartholomew, 2016). “Brexit would leave us no poorer, and could even make us more prosperous”, The Independent echoed.

On the other hand, the Remain camp’s narrative argued that belonging to the EU was a beneficial phenomenon—something that helped to make a better labour market— and has contributed to its growth and development. They refuted the Leave camp’s view that EU immigrants generated problems for jobs in the UK. But that immigration was a new normal created by globalization, and that the UK needed to adjust to it rather than severing its relationship with the EU. This was shown in The Independent news by Moore (2016) that:

That couldn't be more wrong. International migration is a permanent feature of a globalised and interconnected world that tolerates extreme inequalities of wealth and opportunity...immigration and economic vitality go hand-in-hand. People flock towards centres of opportunity and this fuels growth and job creation.

John Stone (2016) employed the same news platform, The Independent, to suppress the pro-Leave argument on the EU keeping down wages to create another conception. He averred that the global financial crisis was the main factor that kept down wages and not the EU immigrants into the UK (Stone, 2016). In refuting the pro-Brexit campaign, The Guardian,

(May 22, 2016) also narrated that “European workers have brought in tax income and economic growth far outweighing their costs, and that their presence has not led to significant job losses or wage cutting”.

The Remain stories surfaced in newspapers in different forms. One of such was the use of a country case study like Scotland. This method emphasized that the EU was a blessing to Scotland as it helped in creating development projects that generated more jobs in the rural communities, especially Na h-Eileanan an Iar. A Leave vote was campaigned against because it would threaten the worker’s long fought rights. Glackin (2016) wrote in The Times, “...*The problem with immigration scaremonger in Scotland, including Tom Haris, is that they ignore the economic evidence as well as the nation’s specific future need*”. This was probably triggered by one of the editorials in Gazette (2016) that “for every pound Scotland pays to the EU, £20 comes back”. It was on such basis that The Times communicated the Scotland phenomena by making reference to Tony Mackay’s research outcome that “*immigration is beneficial to Scotland: it's been important in filling jobs outside the Central Belt. I don't believe there's been a significant adverse impact on wage and unemployment levels in Scotland*” (Glackin, 2016).

Another method of framing in this case was the reliance on facts and figures. Gacklin (2016) made reference to the 2015 research of the Labour Force Survey to alleviate the fear of job loss in the UK. This was done using Scotland as a case study. According to the research, 92% of those working in Scotland were UK-born, while the remaining 8% were non-UK born. Half of the 8 percent are from the EU, and the other half are from elsewhere (Gacklin, 2016). Although it was acknowledged that 16% of the workforce in the entire UK were not born in the UK, and that the EU immigrants filled close to three hundred thousand jobs in few years before Brexit, but this did not amount to problem creation for job opportunities in the UK (Gacklin, 2016). The case of Scotland was well chorused by analysts to favour the Remain

camp. Research had shown that the working class category of Scotland would reduce by 3.5% in the next two decades; and it became the justification that more foreigners, especially citizens of the EU, were much needed to ensure further vibrancy of the Scottish labour market.

The Independent's news story of June 22, 2016 was straight in its approach to criticize the ignorance of the pro-Leave group on immigration, and sought to educate the UK people of the global realities. This began with an educative position that immigration discourse represents one of the lunacies that has eaten the politics of the UK so deep in recent decades. The people's grievances on immigration that surfaced in the context of Brexit were seen to be borne out of the popular sentiments shared by Nigel Farage, Donald Trump, and Marine Le Pen, and The Independent criticized that. It argues that job loss mainly occurred to low-skilled workers, and that was a product of the fast-growing globalization and innovations in technology and not EU citizens' movement to the British soil. In its expression:

Contrary to the appalling ignorance of the British public, immigrants for the most part don't take the jobs of natives, clog up public services (which, after all, they help to fund through their endeavours), or commit extensive crime...Vote Leave say we should "take control". What this means is: slow the world down, so that it is more like yesterday, in which your life wasn't disrupted by modern economic forces. But nobody can slow the world down, least of all by leaving the EU. Immigration from within the EU accounts for only half of net inward migration to Britain...

With a few days to the EU-Britain referendum, a New York-based journalist Kasperkevic (2016) took to The Guardian and prosed the comedic sayings of the British-American comedian John Oliver to persuade British people to vote a 'No' for Brexit. Oliver, in his lampooned expression said 'Britain would be absolutely crazy to leave' (Kasperkevic, 2016). Kasperkevic (2016) amplified the job aspect as advantageous for the UK natives when he used the phrases of Oliver that 'if it stays, it can reap all the benefits while still being a total dick about everything'. He warned that the dismissal of the warnings of the Bank of England's, IMF's, and PWC's pundits would not only produce negative impacts on the GDP of the UK,

but that it would cause ugly decline in the available jobs in the UK. Though the ‘EU is not perfect’, Kasperkevic (2016) argued, but the narrative that the ‘EU citizens in Britain were taking jobs’ remained poisonous for a wrong reason, he submitted.

Another method used by the Remain camp was the polling system in which a survey of the Tech London Advocates (TLA) demonstrated how Brexit was highly opposed vis-à-vis the labour market condition and owners of the means of production. One of the architects of this construction was Hern (2016), who used The Guardian newspaper to reveal how inimical Brexit would be in terms of the damage that it held for the digital community of the UK. Hern (2016) used his narrative to unveil how 87% of the members of the TLA favoured staying in the EU, so that a grievous destruction on the structure of labour market would be prevented. Only 3% of TLA membership subscribed to immigration having negative effects on jobs in the UK, while the remaining 10% did not have a clear stance (Hern, 2016). They feared that Brexit would generate a stifling effect on overseas employment — what can be strong enough to make life difficult for business owners, especially those with international outlook — as they will be denied direct access to foreign experts. Hern’s (2016) style of countering the pro-Brexit campaigners’ position can be captured in the next quote: “...*Leaving the EU would make it harder for British companies to reach customers in EU countries; harder to find and employ the necessary talent from overseas; and harder to convince international companies to operate in the UK at scale...*”. The fear of the digital community that opportunities and talents might be depleted from London, and be carried to Berlin, Paris, and Stockholm was presented by Hern (2016). This means that digital specialists like data scientists, analysts, project managers, software developers with global reputation, will likely become scarce as they would not be attracted anymore from across the world (Hern, 2016).

The neutral position on the effect of Brexit on the labour market was still pushed by newspapers like The Independent, The Times, The Observer, The Guardian, and Financial Times. The central point of this school was that the (potential) distortion of the labour market should not be totally attributed to EU migrants in the UK, but as a result of both internal and external factors to the UK. The external factors were largely derived from the globalization agenda of the world, while the internal factor was attributed to inappropriate governance and regulatory policies in the UK. While all of these media outlets attempted the presentation of a balance view, some were less critical than the other, tilting more either to narratives that were favourable to Leave or Remain group.

It was in The Independent newspaper that Cooper (2016) deployed a balanced presentation, even though the factual analysis appeared to favour the Remain group. He unfolded the hypocritical stance of the ‘Vote Leave’ leaders who had *ab initio* argued that they did not need immigration at the center of debate to win the referendum. Cooper (2016) dissected that ‘*Dominic Cummings, the group's campaign director, said two years ago that the campaign's "one essential task" was to reassure voters that leaving would not be bad for jobs and living standards*’. Cooper (2016a) further described the return to immigration factor on job status as unfortunate. The net migration of 333,000 in 2015 was used to counter the argument that the EU citizens that came in were just slightly more than the non-EU citizens, and that it was not migration of EU citizens that has led to bad economy for the UK (Cooper, 2016). At a point in the narrative, Cooper (2016a) acknowledged that EU immigrants were increasing and got more jobs, but his overall argument showed that economic benefits which outweighs the negative effects can be accrued from continuous EU membership. He then capped his analysis by arguing that the masses should not be carried away by bias and exaggerated debates on the EU referendum, but that they should rather ask underlining questions like ‘will leaving the EU

lead to the break-up of the UK?', 'Will we gain or lose jobs by leaving the European Union?'. This type of critical thinking will help them end up with the rational decision on the vote.

The Times (2016) in trying to maintain a neutral stance on the Brexit decision, was preoccupied with using a reminder message to make known the promises of the leave campaign on immigration, and argued that their ideas were largely pro-Brexit. The story of Michael Gove and Boris Johnson on how they admitted that EU citizens would still be allowed in the UK “*only if Britain had identified a shortage within a particular industry*”, were used (Elliot, 2016). This news story outlined both the positive and negative statements made by the Leave group. It showed that the Leave group still favoured the Australian style points system. However, Elliot (2016) objectively used the Migration Watch UK’s prediction to dismiss the claim that the Australian system is “*thoroughly unsuitable for the UK*”. He went further to show that the Remain party’s argument that the promise to remove VAT on energy bills for the poor household was not realizable, and have no positive implications on the British labour market (Elliot, 2016).

Like Elliot (2016), Stubbington (2016) used a personalization story to project neutral opinion of Brexit in The Times (2016) as well. The story of a 24-year-old Bulgarian, Lyumbomira Georgieva, who was enjoying clothing line work in the UK was used. He argued that “hard evidence that immigration from the EU has harmed the economy is elusive”, as businesses were only in panic because of the fear of losing easy access to European labour. According to Stubbington (2016), Georgieva showed that “the big problem in the UK isn't the people from European countries...” “We are here to work, not to get benefits. All the people I know from Bulgaria have jobs”, she said. This shows that migration from EU countries constituted a part of the problems, but not substantially a threat to the British labour market. In fact, Stubbington (2016) took the view that there were no substantial statistics, even in

academic literature, that can ascertain the impacts of EU migration on the employment stature of British citizens. Stubbington (2016) presented the Leave position on Brexit that “a Bank of England study last year showed a 10% increase in the proportion of immigrants was associated with a 2% drop in pay among unskilled service workers”. He concluded that controlling immigration is better than reducing EU immigration through Brexit.

With a critical examination, Sriskandarajah (2016) took to The Guardian in analyzing balance of views of the impacts of EU immigration, and how it should influence Brexit. He used a historical comparison to achieve the neutral stance, as he averred that “*a Brexit based on reactionary fear would be wrong in 2016*” (Sriskandarajah, 2016). This is because the EU migration in the last decade contributed to the feeding of the British economy and expanding of its labour market. He portrayed that the phenomenon was a two-way thing, as over 1.8 million UK migrants were also found living in the EU. To substantiate his point, Sriskandarajah (2016) made reference to the fact that citizens of Eastern Europe who came into the UK for work opportunities were more likely to move to small towns and the peripheral areas of the country, and this however, culminated in straining the capacity of the government in those areas. But overall, Sriskandarajah (2016) argued that the impacts of EU migration ‘has been hugely positive’. On such basis he posited that there was a need to have EU free movement (though controlled) if the UK wanted its economy to continue to grow. Sriskandarajah (2016) wrapped his argument by asserting that the UK should manage the flow of people in a coordinated and constructive way.

Law and Order Frame

One other way in which the British national newspapers sought to set agenda for the public was through its involvement in framing the connection between law and order and immigration. Media outlets styled the Brexit campaign by enflaming messages on immigration

in the press. Either in support of the Leave or the Remain, the main comments in this context showed that news outlets publicized messages that see EU immigrants as a threat to law and order, or as *sine-qua-non* to the development (Taylor, 2017). This was typically raising the old issue as a new one (Koster and Reinke, 2017).

This frame was scantily used by news media, given that only four newspapers selected for this study were found to reference it. However, the law and order frame was a key and sensitive issue in EU immigration, whose potential effects for Brexit were framed by both the Leave and Remain camp to influence public opinion. The two main camps were preoccupied with the protection of lives and property of the UK people, reduction of criminality, and a wreck in the maintenance of law and order.

For a fact, The Independent appeared to be the only one news outlet out of all selected media that stylishly wove in the crime dimension to favour the Leave camp. The emphasis was that the free movement rules that permitted EU citizens into the UK without restriction ushered in both criminals and terrorists, and had predisposed British women to all forms of sexual assaults (Sogelola, 2018). Thus, Brexit was constructed in The Independent as an action that was capable of obliterating the support of UK for the heinous policies of the EU that exposed the British borders to a high level of smuggle and human trafficking (Wright, 2016). Wright (2016) also made reference to the words of the Leave leaders to persuade the audience. The weaving of Boris Johnson's quote in his story demonstrated that he took a pro-Leave tone in the course of the Brexit campaign. Wright (2016) wrote, "*Mass immigration is still hopelessly out of control and set to get worse if we remain inside the EU, going on with disastrous open borders.*"

It was conceived as an attempt to undermine Britain's right to ensure the protection of law and order, if the EU remains the ultimate decider of those who come in and out of the UK.

In essence, the leave camp argued strongly that Brexit will give the UK the right to deport criminals outside the international court. Brexit will, therefore, help the UK government to take justifiable actions against the European criminals in the state by deporting them to their respective nations for future security.

On the contrary, the Remain camp refuted the Leave camp, and projected that a successful vote to leave the EU would mean that a restriction on free movement would be the doorway for the unaccountable increase in underground migration in the future. The narrative that strain and disharmony had been imposed on the UK communities, and that EU immigrants in the UK had fueled division in the state, was sought to be corrected by the news media that favoured the 'stay movement'. The Independent (2016) also published an editorial to debunk the crime effect of Brexit popularized by the political class. As captured in the story, "*Contrary to the appalling ignorance of the British public, immigrants for the most part don't take the jobs of natives, clog up public services (which, after all, they help to fund through their endeavours), or commit extensive crime.*" (The Independent, (2016, June 22). It showed that from research carried out prior to the Brexit campaign, only a fifth of British citizens claimed that EU immigration had made their own lives grow to a worse level. Such evidence provided it the audacity to say that, "*immigration is very hard to control while our economy is growing in the modern age. And a brutal clampdown on immigration would deprive this country of talent that is precious, and criminalize the noble ambitions of people across the world*".

Mortimer (2016) went further to use the confrontation of female Brexit campaigners against Nigel Farage to canvass for the British people to stay in the EU. This was an engagement in The Independent. She showed that the call by women for Nigel Farage to apologize for his comments that UK women were prone to sexual assaults from EU immigrants. The New Year's Eve sexual attacks in Cologne were condemned not to be the basis for the

promotion of criminality propaganda. This made some Leave group campaigners to feel uncomfortable (Mortimer, 2016).

The mid-way, neutral school argued that migration is largely economic rather than being crime-motivated. In relation to Brexit, the school believed that more honesty from respective campaign leaders would cure the fear that immigrants would come to the UK to perpetrate social vices, sexual assault, and wreak havoc on the smooth maintenance of law and order in the nation. This is what the Financial Times moderately promoted during the Brexit campaign. It was Groom (2016) who used his news story with objectivity in the Financial Times to forge the link between immigrants and breakdown of law and order in the UK. He used the analogy of Donald Trump in building the wall to prevent Mexican citizens from illegally entering the US. Though he saw this as an attempt by the former US President to curtail criminality in the practical sense, as Mexicans were well-known with all sort of social vices, but he also warned that *“tension can rise when immigration is rapidly cut in the modern age”* (Groom, 2016).

The flip side of his moderation can be manifested in his expression that *“migration brings economic benefits to receiving countries.”* He drew examples from cases that *“incidents such as sexual assaults on women in Cologne at New Year, and fears that migration facilitates Islamist terrorism mingle with longstanding anxiety that migrants are competing for jobs and housing”*. It was on this basis that he concluded that the reason why EU citizens migrated to the UK was not to commit crime and make lives and property insecure; rather it was, in consonance with modern motivation, to search for a higher quality of life that will deliver better jobs, and protect them from war and insecurity (Groom, 2016). The argument is validated by how Indian graduates who moved to the United States in search for a better life have been the movers and shakers of the Silicon Valley. This resonates with the position of Weaver (2016),

who while using The Guardian maintained a tone that appealed to none of the two dominant groups. For Weaver (2016), *‘foreign prisoners are increasing in the UK, but it should not be explained as the reason for the increase in criminality’*. In sum, newspapers advocated that while some EU immigrants were involved in occasional violations of law and order; it should not be completely interpreted that they were responsible for increase in criminality (Weaver, 2016).

Moral Value Frame

The British moral value system had its way into the Brexit campaign. The change in traditional values and customs, which had been a longtime controversy in immigration debate was used either by the Leave or Remain group as a method of persuasion. Both the leave and remain camp also asked questions that speak to the fairness and rightness of UK’s relationship with the EU. Moral questions like equality and a gradual loss of respect for democratic values in Britain took the centre stage as a frame (De Koster and Reinke, 2017).

The pro-Brexit news stories demonized staying with the EU on the ground of moral unfairness, in which there would be a change that would threaten the existing value system, and further cause a wider sense of moral injustice. The pro-Brexit news stories argued that the decision to leave the EU was the right one, as the relationship was unfair to the British people, it increased net migration and did not benefit the country. These news stories were crafted to project that the imbalance embedded in the payment of taxes by British locals to ease the burden of the low-skilled migrants was highly unjust and violating the common principle of moral equality.

The Sun took the lead in using this frame to aid the campaign of the Leave camp. Writing in the same media outlet, Hawkes (2016) emphasized the idea of taking back the

control of the borders by quoting Lord Green, the Chair of the Migration Watch: *"the case for mass migration - if there ever was one - is blown out of the water. What this shows is that the economic benefits of continued mass immigration are trivial when set against the wider costs."*

The wider costs speak to the general effects, including the social dimension that encapsulates moral values and principles. Hawkes (2016) also saw the centralization of the EU as a construct that increased the rate of anti-social behaviour, and swept the moral panic across the UK. His portrayal matched with the approach of Steven Hilton, the former Director of Strategy to the British Prime Minister David Cameron, and he rode on it to justify how the EU was destructive to the nation (Hawkes, 2016). This was why he quoted Hilton as saying:

The EU is institutionally centralist, it directly contradicts one of the core elements of David Cameron's modernising manifesto: trusting people...Even those arguing for us to stay accept the fact of the EU's ongoing bureaucratic power grab: they just say we have to be vigilant about it and fight back where we can – (Hawkes, 2016).

Barely a month after this article, Hawkes joined hands with Davidson and Cole in The Sun to popularize the Brexit campaign as the 'Battle for British democracy' (Hawkes et al. 2016). Hawkes et al., (2016) concentrated on the Leave group using different expressions like 'let the lion roar again', remove the 'European's shackles', 'last chance to keep our democracy', and brought the argument of Boris Johnson to the fore that though *"he loved a multicultural society"* but the net migration had been overwhelming that the British long traditional values were gradually eroding in the name of supranational-federalism.

Under The Guardian, Mason (2016) framed the moral value factor into Brexit campaign by dwelling much on the level of mistrust of the UK government. He called attention to the manipulation of official statistics, and argued that the number of EU citizens that were working in the UK were not adequately captured, and so they were underestimated. Mason (2016) drew

the attention of voters to the fact that they needed to watch the national insurance figures to see the folly of the Remain group. In his words:

We can know the truth of the matter only if Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs releases its data on active EU national insurance numbers, but HMRC has refused to do so. Will the prime minister instruct HMRC to release those statistics immediately so that we can understand the truth about European Union immigration?

He argued further that only 800, 000 figures of immigrants from the EU were revealed while about two (2) million of migrants from the EU had already been issued the national insurance numbers at the time (Mason, 2016). What he finally used to subtly appeal to voters was the judgement of wrong that *"refusing to release the information could feed paranoia and mistrust in official statistics such as myths about the country being awash with millions of uncounted illegal immigrants"*. These uncounted immigrants from EU countries had watered down long secured moral standards, and it was upon the perspective that he tried to sensitize voters to vote to leave the EU to avoid further moral decadence in the UK.

In contradistinction to the pro-Brexit news stories, the Remain group argued that to stay in the EU was in consonance with the British values of democracy and tolerance for others' beliefs, and affirmed the traditional role of Britain as a global power. The freedom of EU citizens to move to the UK, according to them, would stabilize the British standard of behavior regarding respect for movement. On such foundation, The Independent allowed Duffy (2016) to create media effects for public sympathy that will deliver victory for the Remain group. Duffy (2016) pointed out what was wrong in the approach of the Leave group to address the three vital issues of immigration, economy, and sovereignty. He was much concerned with making the public see that statistics on the economic and immigration effects were largely not correct. To Duffy (2016), some moral value system of the UK had been strengthened as a result of joining the EU, and some of the good UK laws that evolved from the EU rules and

regulations were downplayed by the Leave group. This was the reason why he argued that “*one clear message that many have taken from the referendum debate is there are no facts about the future.*” The Leave campaigners were therefore seen as falling short of the UK moral value system and standard of behavior. In his words:

And we're massively wrong on the extent to which Europe draws on aspects of our benefit system, which became a signal issue in David Cameron's renegotiation with Brussels. The proportion of Child Benefit recipients that live in another EEA country is actually 0.3 per cent. But when presented with options, big chunks of us say it's 13 per cent, or even 30 per cent - somewhere between 40 and 100 times the actual level. So why are we so often so wrong!

The Daily Telegraph (2016) compiled different letters written by the public to the editor on Brexit. It was a compilation that had arguments for both the Leave and Remain group but much emphasis was placed on the need to stay. To create a positive impression, the editorial used Judy Battle's letter from East Sussex to say that there was a “*misconception of egalitarianism*”, stressing that the narratives the leave group was pushing to depict the EU relationship as parasitic totally negates the principle of equality and humanity.

In an article for Daily Telegraph, Riley-Smith (2016), while dwelling on the economic implications of Brexit on the UK, subtly used the analysis of the UK's former Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, to compare the Leavers' leaders to the former US President Donald Trump's supporters who hated the idea of globalism in practice. While being bothered about the possibility of some labour members switching to the Leave group, Riley-Smith (2016) showed that the Leave strategies were a complete deviation from the value system of the country. Thus he argued that the “*Senior Tories backing Brexit like Michael Gove and Boris Johnson were not motivated by sovereignty but a "hatred of Europe.* This hatred motivated the campaign to “*bring control back home*” (Riley-Smith, 2016). The spirit in which the Leave campaign was done was portrayed as contrary to the moral principles and the traditional value of the UK.

According to Riley-Smith (2016), apart from being a necessity of globalization, remaining in the EU would allow for economic integration, cooperation, and respect for sharing. Even though these features exist in modern parlance, Riley-Smith (2016) saw them as interpenetrating to the moral system of the British people; thus, remaining in the EU would even help to promote such values that can bring more sanity to the operations of governments across Europe.

Fearn (2016) featured a pro-Remain story in The Independent to support the unification of Europe, especially a humanitarian one. Here she expressed fear over the erosion of strong arguments on the need to stay in the EU. In order to gain support for being a part of the EU, Fearn (2016) directly argued that ‘right’ which is an integral part of the UK’s moral value might face some obstacles should the country opt out of the union. According to her, “*without the EU, we have no guarantee to some of the basic rights of citizenship to which we have become so well accustomed. If we leave the EU, all those hard-fought rights could be easily lost too.*” She opined that the rights that have been enjoyed by both the UK and EU citizens, including the rights to live and work, would be hampered, and the excesses of political leadership might be difficult to check domestically.

A similar view was pushed by Moore (2016) in the same The Independent. Moore (2016) sounded in favour of retaining the UK membership of the EU, as she noted some basic rights of people, especially on the basis of citizenship. This was considered to be in alignment with tolerance, which is one of the hallmarks of the British democratic values. She created her story to show that the Leave group was over-blowing the morality issue, while mixing it with the EU membership. Her story established that the Leave’s group claim was not true. Moore’s (2016) reason for this was because “*there are 49 countries with a higher proportion of immigrants in their populations than the UK, many of which have (or recently have had)*

thriving economies”. She used the instance of Uganda to appeal to voters to vote to remain in the EU. In this case, Uganda allowed for integration of refugees, even those who were victims of the Rwanda genocide. The resultant effect was that refugees were later encouraged to rebuild their communities and nation. Therefore, it was hoped that voting to remain will help further European integration and ensure development across the continent (Moore, 2016).

The neutral tone of the media on the moral value system was mostly communicated in an implicit dimension. Elliot (2016) was part of those who used The Times to maintain a neutral tone on the moral value frame. The advantages and disadvantages of one of the two choices were laid bare in his argument to allow readers decide. In this case, he craved for a balance in the autonomy of the UK and the need for cooperation with inter-governmental organizations in order to actualize the desire of the people. But on the other hand, he also asserted that *“After Brexit, the automatic right of all EU citizens to come to live and work in the UK will end, as will EU control over vital aspects of our social security system”* (Elliot, 2016).

In The Guardian, Allen (2016) used an objective approach to balance opinions on Brexit. He presented the debates between two business men (Andrew Cox and Simon Winfield) in the Black Country. Both made moral judgements on EU membership. To Winfield, the *“rubber company, which employs 15 people, has faced fierce price wars in the UK. The EU helps stem the cost-over-quality trend”*. The EU became a type of opportunity to moderate this price war that can crush growing businesses, and he argued that the UK should continue with the EU (Allen, 2016). On the contrary, Allen (2016) showed that Cox *“does not agree that the EU guarantees a level playing field because corners are being cut in some states...As Brits we tend to do the right thing. We are polite, we are courteous, we adopt all the rules but not all the 28 states do”*. These two opinions were economic in orientation, but the undertone is consistent with the ‘rightness’ of being a part or not of the EU.

Freedland (2016) in *The Guardian* used the media as the fourth estate to pass information in a very objective way. He presented the poll results as showing two dominant things happening in the campaign that led to the referendum. The first is that the attempt by the Leave group to curb an excessive influx of Europeans created a lead over the Remain group, and such a lead was a genuine one; and the second was that what was responsible for the switch of traditional Labour support was immigration (Freedland, 2016). From the Remain angle, he asserted that he was comfortable with the liberal, and the open Britain's argument, which was actively a factor that upheld the moral system of the state. In his conclusion, there are possible solutions to the migration question that the people were not happy about, instead of pushing for vote leave. This which tilted towards a neutral point that allowed electorates to decide on whose side to vote based from the use of facts (Freedland, 2016).

National Identity Frame

One of the causes of division during the Brexit campaign was the issue of national identity. Under this frame the preference between multiculturalism, mono-culturalism, social cohesion, structure of governance, and inward nationality constituted the bone of contention between the Leave and the Remain groups.

The Leave group argued that being in the EU was harmful to the national identity of the British people. They adopted a mono-ethnic interpretation of the sense of Englishness and argued that the EU was a supranational political organization with a polycentric arrangement that can erode the sense of 'nationalism' (Ashcroft and Bevir, 2016). The news media, therefore, helped to frame this national identity issue from the conception that the EU's institutions were mechanisms void of democratic responsiveness. They averred that the September 11 atrocities were a result of the US' plural form of culture due to immigration, and subsequently warned that the free movement of the EU citizens into the UK can culminate in

the breakdown of social cohesion. Deep cultural diversity in the UK can massively affect the national identity of Britain (Aschroff and Bevir, 2016).

How this frame reflects the obsession of the news stories to craft stories favourable to the Leave group was expressed by Dominiczak (2016). *The Daily Telegraph* was used to argue that the sense of Britishness can be retained with Brexit. He made reference to Boris Johnson's argument that Brexit would require EU citizens to "*learn English if they want to move to the UK*", and that would prevent the loss of British identity, and even project it further (Dominiczak, 2016).

Hawkes and Woodhouse (2016) joined in *The Sun* to criticize the ideas of multiculturalism as "*what created ghettos in which some ethnic minority communities live entirely separate lives.*" They opined that the fact that immigration of EU citizens was beneficial to the UK economy should not be sacrificed for practical concern over the erosion of the UK's identity. As a result, they argued that a high level of immigration, which was fueled by the free movements of EU citizens, had created 'no go areas' in the UK. The media vehemently warned against the continuous alienation, marginalization of these neglected areas.

Alexander (2016) had a slight reference to the issue of national identity in his article published in *The Guardian*. According to him the influx of the EU citizens can brew up '*housing crisis, overcrowded A&E departments, fractured communities and a loss of identity*', which a vote to leave can prevent. Also, Rentoul (2016) invoked the national identity frame when he posited that resources were being taken away from the UK nationals who deserved them; and the lasting solution to take back the jobs and prevent the loss of sovereignty over the authoritative allocation of resources was to delink from the EU's lopsided multicultural arrangement that will weaken to the barest minimum the sense of being British.

The Remain party had their view on national identity supported by newspapers as well. In fact, The Observer (May 29, 2016) stood in sharp contrast to the Leave group, and argued that the issue of national identity had been strengthened since the UK joined the EU. The editorial dedicated a page to showing why voters during the EU referendum should vote to remain in the EU. It referred to the Leave group as ‘scapegoating’ EU citizens without facts. According to this editorial:

Culturally and socially we are enriched, not threatened, by their presence - as with previous waves of immigration. Hostility to this is not some organic expression of English identity but the outcome of decades of inflammatory media distortion and political opportunism, building an atmosphere of ignorance along with the dehumanisation of immigrants and refugees.

Stuart (2016) joined the Remain in The Guardian, and portrayed to voters that immigration had been a boost to the UK economy, and that the membership of the UK in the EU had helped to foster “*openness of trade, immigrants, and the flow of ideas and technologies- all of which are the essence of Britishness*”. He used the comparative experience of Britain in recent time to allow Japanese in the state. This experience is a reflection of democratic value and still fosters the British national identity of freedom. This was why Fearn (2016) in The Independent argued that a vote to leave the EU might cause further deterioration in the UK, especially for Scotland, which would likely come up with the fight for independence.

On the neutral angle, The Times, The Guardian, and Financial Times also used the frame of national identity, but in a more subtle way. The *Times* argued in a balanced tone that though national identity can be affected if Britain did not check the excessive influx of immigrants, but the argument was not streamlined to only EU citizens, rather ‘all immigrants’. This is why Elliot (2016) argued that the ‘Australian point system would not absolutely’ solve the problem of national identity in the UK. As a corroborative to the neutral perspective, Kasperkevic (2016) argued in The GuardianThe Guardian that national identity crisis was not

a question of the EU-UK relations, rather a phenomenon that would always be present with or without Brexit.

Terrorism Frame

The global rise of terrorism sparked some debates on the future of the UK security. The open door policy of the EU caused the need to protect the British people from possible attacks (Boffey and Helm, 2016). This is where the connection between immigration and terrorism can be made. The terrorist attack of September 11 that took numerous lives and destroyed the World Trade Centre in the US did not only cause panic to rebrand security architecture in the Western world, it also rendered the British Muslims an object of suspicion (Aschroff and Bevir, 2016). Added to this unfortunate incident was the Arab Spring that saw a high level of Middle Easterners and Muslim preachers and activists into Europe. The threat was more real and intensified when the emergence of the Salafist terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) contributed to the influx of the Syrian refugees in the EU countries (Burke, 2016). As Germany allowed Syrian refugees, France rejected a number of them, and immigrants took advantage of the conservative policy of the UK to move in. This influx would continue indefinitely as extremists moved with the EU citizens into the UK, it was these incidents that brought terrorism into the Brexit discourse (Sogelola, 2018).

The advocates of Brexit believed that terrorism and its rise on the British soil was a direct backlash of multiculturalism which the EU paved the way for. They considered the fight against terrorism as inevitable as long as they remained in the EU. This constituted a public discourse that the news media were largely deployed by the Leave group to frame stories on the effects of EU immigration on British security, especially how it would pose a difficulty on the 'war on terror'. They argued that the open borders of the UK created a pathway for Islamic terrorism. In view of this, The Independent, Evening Standard, and The Times were the

national newspapers from the selected samples that adopted a pro-Leave tone to Brexit campaign on the ground of terrorism.

In The Independent, Wright (2016) lamented the increase in terrorism in the UK to appeal to voters to vote leave. The method he deployed was the use of analysis from intelligence experts, and how Islamic militancy remains a threat to the UK. The effectiveness of intelligence cannot be undermined, as their words can really win over those who are deficient of information on such subject. In this regard, the words of former British head of the foreign intelligence service MI6, Richard Dearlove, was thoroughly used to persuade voters. He argued that *“that an advantage of leaving the union is that it would allow the UK "greater control over immigration from the EU"*. Wright (2016) leveraged on such statements to dig out how the Islamic militancy, Al-Qaeda, caused extremism to grow in the UK. To Wright (2016), the UK’s tolerant attitude and its joining the EU *“allow terror suspects to enter Britain because European Union rules left them powerless to prevent them from travelling here”*.

Going beyond experts’ statements, Wright (2016) extended the definition of extremism and argued that it should be given strict application when looking at those that should face a ban from moving into the UK. The words of the Justice Secretary Michael Gove that *“I have experienced the frustration at our inability to refuse entry to those with a criminal record and even some who are suspected of terrorist links”* were used. The Leave group used The Independent and continued to sponsor narratives in this direction. Cowburn (2016) was one of the writers that spread the terrorism panic. He did this using ‘the rigging propaganda’ as a methodology. This was made possible by the poll conducted by YouGov. In his argument, Cowburn stated that *“nearly a third of Leave voters believe Britain's intelligence agency MI5 is in cahoots with the Government to stop Britain leaving the European Union, according to a new poll”*. He argued that a successful rigging will mean that the UK will still be attached to

the EU in the sense that acts of criminality and terrorism will continue to spread across the country (Cowburn, 2016).

The above views were also supported by Mortimer (2016), who in *The Independent* portrayed that the structure of the EU, its policies and administration, were too loose to properly ensure adequate security for the EU people. The emphasis of his argument on terrorism and how it is linked to immigration, and by implication the Brexit campaign, can be captured below:

The Syrian civil war and the emergence of Islamic State changed much. About 800 Britons have now travelled to Syria, as well as 1,500 French nationals and 800 Belgians. Many of the men who attacked Paris in November, killing 130, and who struck in Brussels on Tuesday, killing 31, were former combatants with Isis. The group has claimed responsibility for their acts and has issued specific threats against the UK.

For Mortimer (2016), the implication of the international dimension of terrorism is that it has a contagion effect on how terrorism grows amongst the British nationals. This is why he argued that activities of some extremists in Europe had inspired the British terrorist that was all out to detonate the jet in Paris in 2001. As captured:

Some were wanted for extremist activities in Europe, such as Djamal Beghal, an Algerian organiser later jailed in France and linked to the Charlie Hebdo attack last year, or Abu Doha, another militant detained at Heathrow in 2001. In December that year, a British terrorist took off from Paris aiming to bring down a passenger jet bound for the US.

It was generally believed amongst the pro-Brexit advocates that the loose system of the EU was abetting terrorism. They were largely all out to demonize Islam and victims of the Syrian civil war as responsible for spreading the extremist ideology throughout the European continent.

On the other hand, national newspapers in favour of the Remain did not appear to directly argue against the terrorism frame in the course of the Brexit campaign. This means that no selected newspapers for this study captured a pro-Remain tone on the issue of terrorism. However, there were news media that appeared to be neutral on the subject. These newspapers

left voters to make their decisions by presenting facts, without manipulating them. Prominent amongst them was The Guardian. Burke (2016) created his story objectively in which he argued that the rise in terrorism in the UK should not be attributed to the country's membership in the EU. This is because there were a number of British terrorists who had committed acts of terror without connection to Islamic militancy. In trying to provide such justification, Burke (2016) averred in his story that the argument of the intelligent expert Richard Dearlove should not be distorted, as there had been terror acts in the UK even before the Syrian civil war. Thus he argued that:

In this period the flow of extremism was more from the UK to the EU than vice versa. There were the preachers and activists from the Middle-East who had fled to London to take advantage of the UK's relatively tolerant attitude to Islamists - much to the frustration of French authorities in particular.

They argued that there were some British extremists who were caught in the early period of 2000s that had strong link with Pakistan, Afghanistan, and some parts of North Africa. It was upon this basis that he said that a shopping mall attack was spearheaded by some British men who were born and bred in the UK, with only one Algerian born fellow who was raised in London (Burke, 2016). To prove that terrorism was not a major issue that emanated from the UK's membership of the EU, Burke (2016) stated:

Neither the 7/7 bombers who attacked London in 2005 nor the unsuccessful 21/7 bombers who followed them came from elsewhere in Europe. Only a tiny minority of other attacks over the following half decade or so have any connection to the EU. Some involved migrants, but rarely from Europe.

The *Guardian* also published an article with a neutral perspective. In this news, Elgot (2016) argued that terrorism is a global phenomenon that must be fought cooperatively, and that leaving the EU would not nip terrorism in the bud in the UK. Her opinion took a brief analysis to show how the exit of Britain from the EU would arrogate more power to Vladimir Putin of Russia, who will most likely weaken the power of the North Atlantic Treaty

Organization (NATO) and the EU (Elgot, 2016). Elgot (2016) expressed her opinion further using the words of Barnsely, the Labour MP to reinforce her argument. According to Elgot (2016):

The Islamic State would not be defeated by pulling up a drawbridge, when a terrorist in Raqqa could instant-message a teenager in Reading. Isolationism will not defeat these threats...To think otherwise reflects both a denial of reality and a poverty of ambition. That has never been the Labour way.

Elgot (2016) acknowledged that the structure, legislation and procedures that can help in intelligence sharing within the EU institutions were not adequate to guarantee security in the UK. This is why she looked at the flip side of the argument and posited that the plan of the government to give room for free visa travel, especially for Turkish citizens can jeopardize the security system of the state. This is because of the close affinity of Turkey to the terrorists' den – Middle-East. Thus, she concluded that the 'bring back control of the border' should not be pushed for under the exit from the EU (Elgot, 2016).

Turkish Membership Frame

The possible ascension of Turkey to the EU had been a relatively long-time phenomenon before the Brexit campaign intensified. This subject was featured sparingly in the selected newspapers, but the few ones that mentioned it largely did so from a negative perspective to dissuade voters from voting to stay in the EU. The main connection of Turkish membership with Brexit was that Turkish citizens were attributed to 'criminality' as other citizens from the Middle-East. This possibility of joining the EU also prompted the awareness that there would be an extra socio-political and economic pressure on the social welfare system of the UK.

During the Brexit campaign, the Leave group used the yet-to-happen phenomenon to create panic and fear message in the minds of the audience. The Independent also took the front

seat in the use of the frame. Cooper (2016b) made reference to Turkey causing a strain to the UK's public services and job opportunities, while increasing criminality in the UK. He showed the estimate of the Vote Leave that *"the UK population could increase by 5.23m by 2030. This is based on the assumption that Turkey, Albanian, Montenegro, Serbia, and Macedonia will join the EU"*. The arrangement between the EU, the Turkish government and the UK to admit Turkey would mean that the UK will receive intense economic pressure that it cannot cope with, which will be at the detriment of the British citizens.

In support of Brexit, Asthana (2016) also argued *en passant* in The GuardianThe Guardian that being in the EU could be scary for UK citizens, as they would likely face the risk of poverty, and lack of improvement in public facilities. Asthana (2016) painted a picture that the IMF's statistics could win the Remain party the vote; *"which is why this week's fightback is not about the money, but immigration: about free movement, about the accession of Turkey and about the impact it all has on public services such as the NHS"*. This resonates with the ridiculous concerns echoed by Collins (2016) in his approach to gain audience for the Leave camp. Collins (2016) in The Times said:

The worst country applying for EU membership, though, is Turkey, whose 76 million inhabitants, Vote Leave clearly implies, are itching to live in Haringey, every last one of them. There will only be President Erdogan left in Turkey once they join the club.

This was more like an attribution of desperation to Turkish citizens without facts. The strong positive Brexit tone utilized here was the use of hypothetical assertions without a trace of objectivism. They argued that Brexit will not only place limitations on the free movement of Turkish citizens into the UK, but that it will definitely help to abate criminality and terrorism.

In refuting the value-laden analysis of the Leave party, Lichfield (2016) took to The Independent to express concern on the possible Turkish admission as an important factor in determining the Brexit vote. This perspective leans more towards neutrality rather than the pro-

Remain tone. Lichfield (2016) portrayed that there was a decline in the propensity of Turkey to join the EU in this generation. This is because the country had only fulfilled just a few of the criteria to be admitted to the EU. He called the debate of pro-Brexit advocates as filled with distortion and exaggeration. He called the quoted 12,000,000 figures mentioned by the Leave camp as Turks that will likely flood the British soil if allowed to stay in the EU, as an absurd figure. According to him, *“that would mean that one in seven Turks emigrating to Britain - an absurd figure. In any case, Turkey's chance of joining the EU are receding rather than enlarging under the present authoritarian regime in Ankara”* (Lichfield, 2016).

In the *Guardian*, Elgot (2016) also provided an objective opinion by condemning the possibility of Turkey joining the EU. According to her, *"I think it is fair to say that there is no prospect of Turkey joining the European Union for a generation at least,"* she said, and *"if that were ever to happen it would be decades away."* This was clearly to neutralize the possible EU membership of Turkey as an essential factor in the Brexit debate (Elgot, 2016)

Conclusion

The discourse of Brexit in the context of immigration is quite a sensitive subject. Such sensitivity can be spotted in different methodologies adopted by news media to win their audience. The framing of immigration under the seven frames analyzed is revelatory of the complexity of the subject. For a fact, while some news media were obvious in their approaches as to either be pro-Leave or pro-Remain, what underlies the power of the media was the subtle way in which the so-called neutral narratives crafted their stories to influence public opinion prior to the Brexit referendum that determined the future arrangement of the UK with the EU.

Thus, this study has successfully described how selected UK national newspapers framed immigration during the Brexit campaign. It identified seven different frames under which the selected news articles crafted narratives that supported or opposed the idea to remain in the EU or leave.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

This study described the role of media in public opinion in relation to immigration discourse during the Brexit campaign in 2016. It drew a sample of 104 stories in national newspapers through an automated format on the LexisNexis Database, and deployed it to show ‘how’ the media framed immigration. Drawing from the ‘Media Framing theory’, it identified seven different frames (social welfare, labour market, law and order, terrorism, moral value, national identity and possible Turkish membership) and captured different approaches and methodologies used to show either pro-Leave or pro-Remain or neutral tone. From the analysis, it is revealed that the leave party’s methodologies were mostly based on the distortion of facts, and reminders of the past complicated relationship between Britain and the EU. Thus, while the Remain party presented facts and used experts’ experiences, the construction of the social phenomenon, including the subtle alignment of the neutral school with the Leave camp all had possible influence on the public opinion at the referendum.

Suggestions for Further Research

Framing is popularly used in political communication, but there is a dearth of systematic studies that shows the relationship between media framing and immigration during the 2016 Brexit campaign, specifically, the conceptualization of the methodologies that remained unclear up until the time of this study. Therefore, it can be suggested that capturing ‘how’ framing is systematically and non-systematically done is essential to improve research in the area of media framing. And in the context of international relations, Brexit must be studied beyond the common frames, and more options should be explored to see how the media

skewed narratives and framed stories to actualize the political goals of the political class, while undermining the essence of public opinion in a democracy.

Conclusion

As evidenced from the explored literature, it is rare to have a thorough analysis on the Brexit referendum without reference to the media. The tragic image of the long-degenerating relationship between Britain and the EU was brought to the fore by the news media. This shows that the significance of media to the development of public opinion in a democratic dispensation cannot be over-emphasized. They are the critical instruments in agenda-setting for both the government and its citizens. This they often do by framing stories, policy issues, and electoral discourses to persuade voters to back political parties to win elections.

In the context of Brexit, the media outlets consistently framed immigration issues to influence public opinion. Thus, they were highly responsible for the deep political divide between those who wanted to see Britain exit the EU and those who wanted to stay. As revealed in the analysis in chapter four, findings showed that newspapers weaved immigration into the Brexit campaign by raising concerns around pressure on social welfare, the influx of cheap labour into the British market, the threat from terrorism, the breakdown of law and order, morality questions, the undermining of the national identity, and possible admission of Turkey into the union. Media were much dedicated to influencing voters and persuading them to make their decisions on the basis of pro-Leave and pro-Remain narratives curled out in stories. The most common of this approach was factual analysis and the distortion of facts, use of panic message, personalization of issues, negative and sensational use of tabloids, poetic renditions of supposed effects, and juxtapositions of issues.

While media framing is not necessarily a bad thing, it is important to argue that its methods of utilization can constitute a threat to the continued existence of democracy. This is because some unnecessary emphasis can easily be placed on some matters over the other that can distort actual facts for the electorates. In the case of Brexit, the Leave group showed a high level of desperation, and got a number of British national newspapers to spread Eurosceptic and Europhobic narratives to the audience. One significant instance was the emphasis that the UK should stop sending 350 million pounds to the EU and that these funds should be redirected for the National Health Service (NHS). This position is practically flawed and fictional. I argue that there was no proof that all the money went to the EU because Margaret Thatcher had already negotiated for a rebate in 1984. Thus, the media occasionally portrayed lies, and voters were persuaded to vote to leave without facts on the subject.

News outlets such as The Independent, The Times, and The Guardian engaged the audience with panic messages to get people to vote, and especially, The Guardian brought back its 2012 prediction polls that 56% of Britons would vote to quit the EU (Boffey and Helm, 2016). Most media that aligned with the leave party dedicated an unprecedented length of pages to loudly echo the languages that voters could easily understand. The use of ‘take back control’, ‘protect our democracy’, ‘loss of job’, ‘terrorism’ and languages that depicted hatred for Muslims from Syria and Turkey were very common in newspapers that canvassed for the Brexit side. On the other hand, the Remain group used methodologies that were mostly factual and they took time to counter the Leave group. Despite the use of practical and modest techniques, it remains a shock to see the victory move to favour the Leave group.

What is interesting is the employment of subtle methods to promote Brexit. While just 23% of the newspapers selected used pro-Leave tone towards Brexit, and about 35% sounded pro-Remain to Brexit in their narratives, and 42% appeared neutral, it was strange to see some of the selected newspapers tilt more towards the pro-Leave tone. The point here is that in an

attempt to produce balanced arguments, some newspapers like *The Independent*, *Daily Telegraph*, and *The Guardian* with massive readership curated stories that were favourable to Brexit. The use of verifiable facts by the Remain group failed because of the mastery of the leave news media to create news stories in ways that appealed and captivated the common masses.

Thus, this is where the question would be raised, that given the role of media in framing immigration stories for citizens in the Brexit campaign, to what extent did the media represent the opinions and interests of the British people on the subject? Did the British people really have a public opinion on the subject of Brexit? The answer to these questions are embedded in the analysis of Fishkin's (2015) phantom opinion, while developing his theory of deliberative democracy. According to Fishkin (2015), when George Bishop of the University of Cincinnati in the United States, asked people about the repeal of the Public Affairs Act of 1975, about 48% of voters polled 'Yes'. The Public Affairs Act of 1975 was a fictional act, as it never existed in the history of US politics. Yet it was surprising that voters chose 'Yes' to an act that never was. This means that the outcome of a poll in which all electorates voted does not necessarily validate that people's opinion as there might be a problem of rationality. Even if people have not read about a subject matter, they would rarely admit they do not know, they will rather pick an alternative. This does not make it democratic, as the opinion is not exactly people's opinion. This is where one provides a definite answer to the above questions. The British public's understanding and evaluation of the immigration issues during the campaign was heavily influenced by the way it was depicted by the mass media.

It can be concluded that media was at the forefront of critical immigration issues during the Brexit campaign with the aim of influencing voters to either vote in support or against Brexit. Despite the attempt of the media to be neutral and produce stories that do not favour any of the groups, findings show that some news articles majorly employed tone favourable to

pro-Leave. This out-rightly distorts the fundamental principle of the media as an arbiter in politics. And unless the news media maintain their objectivity within the theatre of politics, they will continue to remain like the two sides of a coin that can unite different and diverse forces together or cause them to fall apart.

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