

HOW DO GOVERNMENT ORDERS AFFECT THE MEDIA AGENDA? ON THE EXAMPLE OF TENGRINEWS.KZ AND NUR.KZ

Uldana AMIROVA,

Suleyman Demirel University, Almaty, Kazakhstan,

uldana.ar@gmail.com

Abstract

Agenda setting is an index of how the media prioritizes the topics and how it wants to influence the significance to the themes of public agenda. It also has the factors affecting the agenda: type of issue, type of medium and type of coverage and those are directly correlated with demographics, psychographics and behavior. Consequently, the public agenda changes towards the concern. Despite its importance of revealing the crucial aspects, some of the channels might be affected by different influencers and events. The problem is that if one media channel covers only the negative aspects happening, others are supporting and fading the actual problems. Thus, it obviously could be seen that the second category linearly depends on government orders while setting the news agenda. Here, we have identified some critical issues and decided to focus on case study. During this unbiased application, we have classified two media channels as the objects of research: Nur.kz and Tengrinews. It helped us to indicate that the agenda setting is not only depending on what the public demands and needs to know, but on tenders, benefits for the third parties, posting paid content and also could be stirred by government offers.

Key words: *Agenda-Setting, Governmental Offers, Content.*

DOI: 10.58934/jgss.v4i14.158

1. Introduction

Government of Kazakhstan provides the tenders for media and the data about this is open, moreover can be found on the government purchases website. This is done to use the media outlets in the own needs of any authority or representatives of the charterer and this kind of government order is a trend of authoritarian regimes in any country.

The problem of the major is to research how governmental offers affect news agenda

setting theory on the examples of the most famous editorials like Nur.kz, Tengrinews.kz and comparing the agenda of highlighted two outlets with Azattyq, that we have highlighted as independent source without affection of governmental offers. The agenda is a media thematic direction relating to regional life that contains a group of texts that capture information about certain areas or regions on the country's territory. The actuality of the thesis is that the topic was not researched enough on a scientific level. According to the covered literature, unlike the American media, which has moved on from blatant bias, domestic periodicals frequently maintain their positions and are seen as active players in the political battle rather than impartial informants. It is clear that media (particularly printed one) is highly reliant on external variables in their transmission region. According to a number of academics, the authorities are more likely to generate the public opinion they require through the controlled media than to enlighten society. The reactions it receives from society are secondary to the propaganda impulses emerging from the authorities themselves, and the impact of many reflections blurs the picture. Following this perspective, the studies about agenda-setting theory is mostly dedicated to Western media with well-established democracy and freedom of speech, however it has no research on countries with authoritarian regimes. This displays insufficient study of the influence of the state elite on the media in the post-Soviet space, for example. Thus, the aim of this project is to reveal the connection between governmental orders and information posted in Mass Media in Kazakhstan and identify the factors influencing, on the example of the most famous editorials like Nur.kz, Tengrinews.kz, compared with the sources announced reliable

The topic was established after revealing the issue mentioned by our supervisor - the world ubiquitously suffering from pandemic and our state is not an exception - however, these portals published the news about minors who have sent

the letter to Elbasy wishing him a quick recovery. Then, we have specified the period which is March - August of 2020 for COVID, summer of 2021 for Mangystau Drought and January 1st to March 16th in 2022 .

On this perspective, we have chosen 3 different current issues and how they were covered on Tengrinews and Nur.kz:

1. The Vaccination and COVID-19
2. Mangystau Drought
3. January Events

Research questions. How does the government's offers affect the media agenda? How do these two portals cover major events? What are the differences of their agenda from other independent media? Does government order lead to biased news coverage?

2. Literature Review

The agenda setting theory

My main research question is how the governmental offers affect agenda-setting, for example of some media outlets in Kazakhstan, so logically it is important to study the theory of agenda-setting before conducting the research.

The theory of agenda setting was developed in 1972 by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, thus scientists saw the connection between what voters were thinking was important and what the media was covering. Initially, the theory was published in *Public Opinion Quarterly*. The theory, itself, could be explained easily by a few words: this theory sets not what to think, as it is usually accepted in Mass Communication theories, but what to think about.

The theory of agenda-setting is about positioning news by its significance and demand. McCombs and Donald Shaw are actually the first people to cover the topics of Agenda setting theory in mass media and its functions and their main treasure in this research is that they defend the agenda building by differentiating the priority of topics and how often they are covered. (McCombs & Shaw, 1972)

To be precise, the first level of the theory is about referencing the object of the media coverage of the world in the foreground among the other topics of audience mind. In this case I want to provide an example of extrajudicial killings in the Philippines, where president

Rodrigo Duterte was suspected.

The extrajudicial killings are the execution, from the side of someone on official positions, where an authority deliberately kills someone without any legal processes; this also could be done by militias, death squads or other non-State actors, often targeting political opponents, activists, or marginalized groups. (OMCT, 2022)

In the Philippines, while covering this issue, where the killing was spared among the children as well, media outlets mostly focused not on the killings, but on the number of people killed calling it "list kill". Explaining, the presidential campaign of Duterte contained the direction of "anti-drug war", what was then called as "president's the only sin" and after this occasion people may understand that the killings were insisted by Rodrigo Duterte himself, and as long as they see, listen and read it from everywhere, this type of news becomes significant for a public. Thus, informed from everywhere, people leaving a thought that there is no evidence that may prove the involvement of the president in killings and fading all the important things the president has done for the government. (Rodriguez, 2016)

By the way, there are two core assumptions of agenda-setting theory, first one is about media is not reflecting all the informative cases, but filters and shapes what audience sees, this occasion can be proved by the scandalous news post first rather than the story of the storm happened recently and having people's affection and involvement indeed. Another assumption saying that more attention the media would give to one specific news, then the public would accept as the most significant one. The latter one is also described as the occasion that media outlets do not dictate us what to think or what to do with the published news, but give us the stories that we should think more about.

So this is the psychological and scientific benefits of the story, the more the story is covered, the viewers remember it even if it does not specifically affect them or register in their minds as an important issue.

Moreover, there are three types of agenda setting, first one is "public agenda setting" where the public sets the agenda, another one is "media agenda setting" logically when

media established the priority of topics to be published and the last one "policy agenda setting", when both media and public affect on the action of policy makers. (Alvernia, 2018)

The theory of agenda-setting is about positioning news by its significance and demand. I have found that McCombs and Donald Shaw are actually the first people to cover the topics of Agenda setting theory in mass media and its function. Their main treasure in this research is that they defend the agenda building by differentiating the priority of topics and how often they are covered.(McCombs & Shaw, 1972)

Agenda-setting theory does not work for those, who have made the decision already, because he or she would think that the right decision was made, even if the numerous facts of contrary arguments would be published. (Alvernia, 2018)

Another problem of the research is that most of the Mass Communication theories are slightly common between one another, that is why it is essential to highlight and differentiate the theories. Sometimes priming and the agenda-setting are two concepts that seem common, however it has a lot of contrasting aspects since both have differences from ultimate outcome to the media messages. (Wanta & Tarasevich, 2018)

Agenda Setting in Kazakhstan and other countries

In this case, I have decided to study the agenda-setting theory in other countries similar to Kazakhstan, framework, journalistic ethics and obligations; and also Regarding the theoretical overview, I have read 11 different sources, in order to understand how the agenda-setting process flows in Western countries (The UK and The USA) countries and CIS region.

I have also discovered some additional news to prove the findings. In such a way, the media of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation are working slightly in the same direction. Both of the countries are counted as following authoritarian regimes and as I mentioned before my both affect the agenda-setting in

media outlets. The author also researched some regional gazettes and revealed that the

sequence of how the news were published is linearly correlated to how it was affected, in kind publications about the activities of the authorities and business are normally displayed on the first, second and third pages of regional newspapers, mainly in the upper corners. Modern publications tend to place these items in such a way that readers can see them without opening the newspaper. (Novak, 2018). However, not only the positioning plays the role, but also the environmental processes. The environment is also a key factor of how the news would be interpreted.

In the social world, Mass Media acts as a tool of describing the results of political choices, its schemes, plans and some of the reason - as perspectivists said that the rational intellection was the scheme of thinking from which we were not able to freed - and journalists do it in the way that suitable to understand, in such manner that would be acceptable for the party that made an order on that news. Basically the formed interpretation, on the one hand, informs, and on the other, connotes a particular attitude toward the depicted reality. Two different functions inherent in the media are informing and forming an attitude. (Garbuznyak, 2015) Also, it is important not only to pay attention to how the news is published, but also what type of news are published, for example bad news are usually better perceived by oppositional parties, because in this case they have an opportunity to focus on the problem and give it a huge coverage by fortifying personal campaigns. However the government would support the news with good tendency, simply because it helps to politicize every success. (Thesen, 2012)

From this perspective, we may assume that if the government has an influence on mass media, it prioritizes good news, then the sense of utopia exists. This kind of tendency could also be seen in Kazakhstan; the national TV-hosting channels - Khabar, for example - are covering only good news, about how the government's economy is growing on day-by-day basis, people have no problems and everyone is living wealthy and the only factor of flowing things like this is the work of authorities and the president. Nonetheless, if the editorial states itself as independent - it means that it is fully financed by a third party or another country - it covers only things that cater to this company's ambitions. As a pattern for this case we may take an Azattyq, which announces itself as the independent editorial fighting for democracy,

fully supported by the USA, this editorial almost never publishes balanced stories, it always shows only drawbacks moving this tendency to the absence of democracy - initial goal of the editorial.

It should be noted that the authorities and representatives of civil society should hold a physical dialogue. As the authorities often decide what tasks should be carried out, there is no such a culture. A public discourse dominated by official viewpoints does not promote the emergence of balanced, alternative options for inclusion in the list of priority political issues. Building vertical power structures, monocentrism, and the dependence of regional political subjects on the federal government only made conditions for broadcasting without understanding federal ideas. (Sosunov, 2017)

Researchers from the Birmingham School ignore the question of how cultural meanings are transformed during communication and what constitutes ideological dominance in culture. Therefore, agenda-setting is rigidly connected to the dominant layer of the elite, despite the well-known fact that media relationships with elites are not necessarily one of unconditional subordination and domination. In this sense, the poststructuralists, armed with the latest methods, have not gone far from the orthodox radical political economics school. There is no discussion of who sets the agenda, for both those and others. Furthermore, the history of domestic media illustrates that initially they acted as a means for propagating utilitarian information from the top down: from the highest to the lowest echelons of power. In order to ensure the state's control, the Russian state has always sought to form an agenda, excluding some issues from discussion and focusing attention on others, and has shown a great deal of suspicion toward the press' claim of independence. (Dyakova & Trahtenberg, 2001)

Qualitative content analysis and comparative content analysis

My further research is going to contain the content analysis of two displayed editorials: Nur.kz and Tengrinews.kz, both of them are initiated as lacking ethics and publishing paid content. Thus, my thesis is going to reveal how the COVID-19 in the beginning pandemic, Mangystau Drought and January events were covered in Kazakhstan.

The content analysis is the research method used to identify arrangement in recorded communication. It is used to perform the analysis from systematically collected data from a set of texts, which can be written, spoken or seen, such as books, newspapers, and magazines or speeches and interviews, or Web content and social media posts, or photos and movies. This method is perfect to use while handling the vast amount of information or digesting it, or understanding it.

The use of content analysis in research dates back to the 18th century in Scandinavia (Rosengren, 1981). Content analysis was originally employed as a prior empirical study in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century (Barcus, 1959). Scientists initially utilized content analysis as a qualitative or quantitative tool in their research (Berelson, 1952). Later, content analysis was mostly employed as a quantitative research tool, with text data being categorized into distinct categories and then presented using statistics. This method is also known as quantitative analysis of qualitative data (Morgan, 1993), however it is not the topic of this article. Thus, one of the many study methodologies for analyzing text data is qualitative content analysis.

Qualitative content analysis report concentrated just on properties of language as communication, with a focus on the text's content or context meaning (Budd, Thorp, & Donohew, 1967; Lindkvist, 1981; McTavish & Pirro, 1990; Tesch, 1990).

Each strategies to qualitative content analysis follow the same seven-step analysis procedure, which includes formulating the research questions to be answered, selecting the sample to be analyzed, defining the categories to be applied, outlining the coding process and coder training, implementing the coding process, determining trustworthiness, and analyzing the coding process results (Kaid, 1989). The coding procedure is crucial to the success of a content analysis. In content analysis, the basic coding method is to classify enormous amounts of text into considerably fewer content categories (Weber, 1990). Patterns or themes that are directly conveyed in the text or inferred from them through analysis are referred to as categories. Then, connections between categories are discovered. Researchers who use content analysis design or build a coding scheme to aid coders in making decisions during content analysis. A coding scheme is a device for converting data into categories (Poole & Volume 4, Number 14, 2023, ISSN: Print 2735-9328, Online 2735-9336

Folger, 1981). A coding scheme entails a systematic, logical, and scientific data analysis method and standards. The establishment of a solid coding scheme is crucial to the credibility of content analysis research (Folger, Hewes, & Poole, 1984).

By the way, there are three types of qualitative content analysis: conventional, directed and summative approaches and patterns or themes of every approach are differentiated one from another and center on codes. Summative analysis starts with identification and quantification specific words or content in a text with the goal of better understanding how those words or content are used in context, whereas conventional analysis is typically used with a study design, where the goal is to describe a phenomenon, so when there is a lack of current theory or research literature on a phenomenon, this design is typically acceptable; however, if there is existing theory or past research on an occurrence which is incomplete or will benefit from more explanation, this design is basically appropriate and directed approach can be chosen.

Then, connections between categories are discovered. Researchers who use content analysis design or build a coding scheme to aid coders in making decisions during content analysis. A coding scheme is a device for converting data into categories (Poole & Folger, 1981). A coding scheme entails a systematic, logical, and scientific data analysis method and standards. The establishment of a solid coding scheme is crucial to the credibility of content analysis research (Folger, Hewes, & Poole, 1984). Additional codes are produced as the study progresses, and the coding process scheme is changed and modified. A directed approach allows researchers to efficiently extend or refine existing theory. The summative approach to content analysis is radically different from the past two approaches. Rather than examining the data as a whole, the text is frequently examined in terms of single words or specific content.

This method is foolproof for mass communication studies, since it gives an opportunity to revise and report the political publications in media, but despite the qualitative research which means the understanding, we also worked on the quantitative part - defining how much it cost for a post to be paid. However, in the post of the cases we are going to classify or "code" the topics in the text and findings.

The content analysis gives a researcher an opportunity to compose the research in a structured, systemized and formalized way, also the researcher is able to distinguish and estimate the objectives. Eventually, the researcher gains a result as knowing issues that occurred and reflected before the issue or that exist only in a specific way, or that occur later as a result of the problem.

Comparative research itself is similar to content analysis, but it must involve different sources to be compared. In my work, we are going to observe how Tengrinews/Nur.kz and Azattyq have covered these events. My initial aim is to know how the governmental offers affect the agenda-setting and to find the answer I should figure out if editorials have filtered the news or act on the behalf of the agreement, thus I should find if there were any agreements, when they were done and which news were affected.

Talking of COVID: We have decided to focus on the peak of pandemic in June-July of 2020, however not only this period, but March, April and May would be included as the premise of the news. Moving towards the Mangystau Drought, it happened in 2021 and ended with the death of animals and poverty, however the agreements of akimats/regional communication services are also covered from the beginning of the pandemic.

Finally, the January events are taken place on 2-11th January 2022, the trigger of the riots was a sudden sharp increase in the price of liquefied natural gas, an income inequality and social stratification of the population, accusations of corruption, nepotism and illicit enrichment by the ruling elite and officials, law enforcement brutality, stagnation of the country's economy, rising prices against the backdrop of depreciation of the tenge and rising inflation, economic problems for the majority of the population, the preservation of the authoritarian and virtually autocratic long-term rule of Nursultan Nazarbayev in the country and, at the same time, tacit dual power, restrictions on freedom of speech and the media, violations of human rights and freedoms.

January 4-5 in Almaty, protests turned into riots, including arson of government buildings and looting, and the authorities lost control of the city; the former residence of the president and the akimat (mayor's office) were burned down,

and the protesters seized the Almaty airport. In most other cities, including Kazakhstan's capital, Nur-Sultan, the authorities remained in control. A state of emergency was declared in Kazakhstan, first in some regions, then throughout the country. For several days, there were Internet outages, leading to interruptions in the work of cashless payments.

As a result, reduction in gas prices for a certain period, the utilization fee was transferred from the ROP Operator LLP to the state structure, resignation of the government and Prime Minister Askar Mamin and the departure of Nursultan Nazarbayev from the post of head of the Security Council of Kazakhstan.

I would like to look at this events as journalist, so I have noticed that the coverage of this events were fully politicized and from the agenda-setting side it was totally controlled, so it shows the absence of freedom of speech, and comparative research is going to show how journalists are not free to choose what to write, because everything was resolved in the very beginning.

A content analysis is a method of determining the presence of certain terms, themes, or concepts within qualitative data (e.g. texts). With content analysis, researchers can quantify and analyze the presence, meanings, and relationships between certain words, themes, or concepts. Researchers can evaluate language within a news article to examine bias or partiality. As a result, researchers can infer messages within the texts, the writer(s), the audience, and even the culture and time of the text's composition; those could be any written materials such as interviews, articles, printed press and ect. The content analysis could be both qualitative and quantitative, and for my further work I am going to focus on qualitative and comparative content analysis.

Another significant termina for this research is "gatekeeping" , this term refers to agenda setting and could be defined as an ability of the owners or gatekeepers of any media outlet to influence on the decision whether or not the news tobe published for the public, in my case charterers in the face of akims act as gatekeepers.

3. Methodology

For this research I have used content analysis. This method is used to document data (texts, media), thus analyzing qualitative content involves organizing text into themes. The use of qualitative content analysis allows the researcher to understand the full context within which media reporting takes place, so as to provide a better understanding of what the media portrays. In both qualitative analyses, the researcher must interpret media texts according to their own perceptions. The noteworthy aspect is that all the highlighted events happened relatively recently, that is why there is no printed literature on these pressing problems. However, I have appraised of online sources to provide further investigations. Besides two editorials that I have chosen I have indicated the source "Ras Aitmayn", where all the journalistic investigations about the agreements between government and some specific media outlets are clearly shown and Azattyq for comparing the way coverage of the news.

In this case, I am going to cover three different topics about COVID, Mangystau Drought and January events and before analyzing the way it was covered, I want to know if the interactions between governmental officials and editorials were made by using goszakup.kz and then make the content analysis, this would help us to see the background of the story, that is not seen for ordinary viewers.

In order to conduct research on the topic of the diploma, I studied articles on the topics that I mentioned above on the websites of three editorial offices: Tenrgi, Nur and Azattyq.

For myself, I also marked the telegram channel Ras Aitamyn, where journalists publish journalistic investigations on various topics. However, it was important for me to find studies specifically on tenders that were raffled off with representatives of the public sector on the required dates.

We framed the period for the study based on the relevance of the selected topics: the coronavirus from March to August 2020, the drought in Mangistau from March to August 2021 and the January events from the very beginning on January 2 to the message of the

President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on March 16, 2022.

In order to find agreements between the editors and the necessary bodies, I put their in the BIN on the website of public purchases and studied the agreements. (Tengrinews: 080940014680, Nur.kz: 180340004820). The winner of the tender must publish the news by order of the customer, in this case the authority and in our occurrence those are akims of regions. From comparing all three editorials, two of them had an agreement with the different regional akims and Azattyq could be considered as independent from official parties, so the difference in coverage is absolutely different.

Thus, the alluring arrangement was made on the April 20th 2020, so here is a contract for 10 million tenge with Nur.kz and the contract for 8.9 million tenge with Tengrinews.kz dated on 17th of April 2020: materials were published that indirectly promote the work of the akim of the East Kazakhstan region during the pandemic. There is also an agreement with the Karaganda region, PR of the head of the Karaganda region dated in 2020. In total, the Akimat of the Karaganda region has an agreement with Nur.kz for 12.8 million tenge and a contract under 19.4 million tenge with Tengrinews.kz. Some news has been published even twice. Finally, talking of Mangystau region, since the beginning of the pandemic, the Mangistau akimat has contracts with the Nur.kz Internet portal for 12.8 million tenge. In total, since the beginning of the pandemic, the Mangistau akimat has provided about 700 million tenge under contracts for state orders in the media, which also promoted akim Trumov, 5.4 million tenge for Tengrinews.kz.

Then, I have researched if the images of akims were published before the tenders, to do that I have just entered the names (Zhenis Kassymbek - akim of Karaganda region, Daniyal Akhmetov - East Kazakhstan and Serikbay Trumov - Mangystau) regions on the websites and find out that the frequency has changed. Afterwards I have started to analyze the content and have noticed some differences in how the topics were covered at all. On the financial matters, I have found out some agreements between Nur.kz and Tengrinews.kz regional communication services and akimats.

Totally, for the research I have worked with more than 10,000 articles on all of the

three outlets.

In the long run, comparing all the editorials I have found out a lot of differences in how one topic can be covered; it could be both objective and not. Moreover, they are analyzed - if they are - from different angles, giving to an usual topic a really unusual point.

According to both my theoretical and practical research, I have found out that the coverage of any issue directly depends on the dependence of editorials on third parties. Talking about regional services, all of them are dependent on representatives of authorities, that is why before publishing any news, journalists put those people's significant news on the first pages and bring these news on frontlines, but this happens without payment.

To be noticed, as long as I am working in regional communication service in Almaty Region, I know that the services as internal policy department has own correspondents in Zakon.kz, 365dnei, NewTimes, Nur.kz and Tengrinews.kz and others, also approved by the tender and usually all the news having political overview is provided by those own correspondents, who are working with releases and officials themselves.

4. Qualitative Content Analysis of nur.kz and tengrinews.kz

Comparing all of the editorials, a significant amount of budget was shared for both Tengrinews.kz and Nur.kz. This shows how agenda-setting could be influenced by the third parties. To be noted, before judging the differences of all three media agendas, I want to point out some obvious characteristics. The way news is covered absolutely depends on how the topic is allowed to be covered: starting from the angle of seeing the problem, the usage of words, the figures appearing in the article and ending with the object of the coverage; that is what we call the gatekeeping.

The idea of gatekeeping theory - the choice of article based on editorial needs. Gatekeeping, also could be explained as filtration, so to say a journalist or editor chooses the specific topics, any media outlet has its own set of criteria for determining whether or not news is worth publishing. Consequently, criteria are

influenced by factors such as the economic demands of the media, journalistic ideals, and audience interest, among others. Journalists and editors utilize these factors to determine whether or not news will be published, and as a result, they become gatekeepers.

Nur.kz, Tengrinews.kz and COVID-19

For every news that the akim of the East Kazakhstan region ordered something or his proposals were supported, 434 thousand tenge was paid from the local budget. The same amount was paid for positive memories of the first president.

Going deeply to the news, there are a lot positive news about akim's actions towards citizens' well-being just whilst the peak of first wave of pandemic in July 2020, for example, *"Аким ВКО провел встречу с врачами из Татарстана"*, where the issues of organizing the work of the group in the region, further actions to combat coronavirus infection were discussed. Danial Akhmetov - region's akim - focused on the good equipment of medical organizations in the region: 15 computer tomographs operate around the clock in cities and districts. He also decided to mentioned, that a number of hospitals have equipment that meets all international standards, thus 1948 infectious beds, 2348 provisional beds have been deployed in the region, and 300 more provisional beds will be deployed in the next few days, alsom ventilators, oxygen concentrators, X-ray machines have been purchased. By the way, the head of the region also mentioned that the region is preparing for another wave in autumn and there is also an announcement that Marcel Minnulin - First Deputy Chief Physician for the Medical Department of the Republican Clinical Hospital of Tatarstan - positively assessed the equipment of hospitals in East Kazakhstan.(Nikolayev, 2020)

Another news that could be assessed as PR of the akim is about a meeting of akim with Semey entrepreneurs, and as a result, the businessmen supported the restrictive measures due to the coronavirus outbreak. For instance, the owners of recreation centers in the East Kazakhstan region supported his proposal on the occupancy of recreation centers in Alakol. (Kolmakova, 2020)

Next news is about Danial Akhmetov's visit to Alakol, he made a serious remark about

the development of the main street of the coast, for the improvement of which almost 4 billion tenge was allocated.

Moving to Karaganda, the publications about the Karaganda region, where the news about preparing for the second wave of the COVID cost Karaganda residents 345,720 tenge. At a terrible time for Kazakhstanis, when people suffered from the deficit of medicines - in July 2020, the news about the profit of medicines in Karaganda was released - "В аптеки Карагандинской области началась отгрузка жаропонижающих и противовирусных препаратов", that cost 184,049 tenge.

Finally, coming to akim's reputation Zhenis Kasymbek, the akim of the region. Residents had to pay even for the message that "In the Karaganda region, the "Akim's Hour" is being introduced in social networks to communicate with the people" and, Zhenis Kassymbek on the development of healthcare in the Karaganda region". By the way, the "Akim's Hour" also appeared in the ill-fated July 2020. Overall, the content cost 12,8 mln tenge.

Another editorial to be discussed is Tengrinews, because as I have mentioned, publishing news here is also financed by budget. Thus, coming again to akim of East Kazakhstan Daniyal Akhmetov, materials were published that indirectly promote the work of the akim of the East Kazakhstan region. Thus, Daniyal Akhmetov spoke about

the development of border areas ("Даниал Ахметов рассказал о развитии приграничных территорий"), here, during a press conference, the regional akim announced a comprehensive solution to the problems of border areas, among all this improvement. infrastructure, development of agriculture, entrepreneurship, education and healthcare, as well as the creation of new jobs, so another topic discussed during the press-conference is innovative projects in the region (Производство медицинских имплантатов запустили в ВКО). At this point, Daniyal Akhmetov announced the production of medical implants for traumatology and orthopedics. As the akim of the East Kazakhstan region noted, the first pilot plant for the production of medical implants has been created and it has no analogues in the country. This news cost the budget almost 800 thousand tenge.

There was news that Danial Akhmetov in Semey presented awards to relatives of doctors who died from COVID-19, and so forth in Ust-Kamenogorsk, the Akim of the East Kazakhstan region handed over the keys to the long-awaited apartments to families with many children.

Before May 9, Akhmetov visited the veterans, congratulated them and presented them with gifts, and presented the military award to the family of a soldier who died during the war. Also, the akimat of the East Kazakhstan region paid for the news that social support and protection of vulnerable categories of citizens have been strengthened in the region (report of the regional akim on the development of the region). Money was paid from the budget for the news that Minister Beibut Atamkulov praised the repair of roads in the region, stating to Akhmetov that the East Kazakhstan region is the champion in road reconstruction. The akimat also gave money to the residents for Nur Otan propaganda. Evidence of this is the news, in the text of which Danial Akhmetov praised the primaries. The cost of each such news is 399 thousand tenge.

Some money was also spent on the fact that the akim of the East Kazakhstan region set the task of combining industrial and scientific potentials and offered businessmen new conditions for filling the Alakol recreation centers (by the way, this news was also published on both Nur.kz and Tengrinew.kz for a fee).

Nur.kz, Tengrinews.kz and Mangystau Drought

As it was mentioned the akimat Mangystau region has made several agreements with Nur.kz and Tengrinews.kz, and even when the citizens of the region were suffering from the drought consequences, some positive news for the akim's picture promotion was published anyway.

According to one of the contracts, the publication should be paid for the news with a quote from Serikbay Trumov (head of the region) that 4.5 million tons of cargo was transported through the ports of Mangystau during the quarantine. Also information was considered as paid about the regional akim "Серікбай Трұмов: 10 айда 1 млн шаршы метрге жуық тұрғын

үй пайдалануға берілді", it explains that about 1 million square meters of housing were commissioned under the "Nurly Zher" program, it could be counted as 7400 apartments. Thus, increasing the volume of commissioned housing to 1.2 million square meters by the end of the year is planned. Also, as part of the "Happy Family" program, 154 families received housing. In particular, in order to provide socially vulnerable groups with affordable housing, 130 families were issued housing certificates and by the end of the year, the provision of apartments to 419 families (including 204 socially vulnerable groups, 215 large families, by the way 2.9 billion tenge has been allocated for this purpose. There is also news that 7 new projects will be launched in Mangystau in 2020. Here, at the same time they advertised "Rixos Aktau", noting that after the successful launch of the hotel, the interest of tourists is growing.

Another example of the brilliant PR is that prisoners also received letters of thanks from the akim of the Mangistau region, saying that even if prisoners are in the maximum security institutions involved in the manufacture of personal protective equipment during quarantine, perceiving the fact that people in prison, the convicts have made a huge contribution by manufacturing protective equipment for everyone who is on the front line in the fight against the pandemic. This news is also paid, as well as about the fact that Serikbay Trumov announced that medicines would be delivered to Mangistau, on the online press-conference Serikbay Trumov declared that the problem of the arrangement of medicine common to the whole Kazakhstan is started to be solved in Mangystau region.

Also, the regional akim was promoted in the news: Several desalination plants will be built in Mangistau, thus here the picture of Serikbai Trumov was promoted by noting that the plan to address the issue of water supply to the population has been developed in the region. For example, he said that the connection of an additional desalination plant at the Kaspiy desalination plant was expected, which would allow producing another 20,000 cubic meters per day.

More money from the Mangistau people was spent on the news that Trumov congratulated the journalists on their holiday. The news - which was pleasant for the drivers from the akim - of the Mangistau region that the reconstruction of roads of republican significance is being completed was paid for being published as well.

Another piece of paid news is a group of medical workers from Russia arrived in Mangistau and managed to promote Trumov, although he was not present at this meeting, but they nevertheless mentioned that it was with his “direct participation that work began to attract these specialists to the region.”

In the news “Three tourist sites will open this year in Mangistau ” no speech by Trumov and there is no talk about his activities, but in the course of listing the tourist sites they inserted a photo of the region akim behind the podium, what shows his direct participation. The cost of each such PR news on Nur.kz is 249 thousand tenge.

However, even if the PR of Serikbay Trumov was paid to Tengrinews as well, there is only one news dated on needed time, where Trumov said that 30% of oil production was done by Mangystau region, and there is no news with the name of akim in Kazakh news field.

Thus, these actions are appearing as a huge joke, while farmers were losing livestock that died from the drought, the Akimat of the Mangistau region gave away millions of media outlets that published manipulative one-sided materials, allegedly showing that the authorities were “fighting the drought”. However, from this the death of livestock does not stop until a long time after its official announcement. Just to notice, it would have been wiser to direct these millions to purchase fodder and hay and distribute them free of charge.

Generally, there are some news paid twice to be published about the meeting of Olga Rypakova with Elbasy (434 000 tenge), East Kazakhstan region discussed anti-corruption measures in the implementation of the Employment Roadmap, Sanitary posts will be installed in the Karaganda region from October 19 (322,320 tenge), Coronavirus vaccination centers organized in Karaganda (320,760 tenge)

Talking of January events, the information that correlated to this event must be presented by official governmental bodies, however according to the words of Alua Kozhahmet (Deputy Head of KSU "Jetisy' Media"), the coverage of the topics connected to riots abandoned or must be covered after being checked by Central Communication Service

in Nur-Sultan, however after the President's message (on March 16th 2022) the ban has expired.

For example, during the the peak of the pandemic Nur.kz and Tengrnews.kz had published materials about the dispatchment of medicines to Karaganda region or the news that the akim of Karaganda region had met with the doctors from Tatarstan, after what they announced that the situation in hospitals is perfect, whilst on Azattyq journalists were publishing news about how people were burying their relatives and the articles that none of the rewards were taken by medical workers, also the stories that hospitals are not able to carry the burden makes. Another example, Tengrnews did not focus only on positive trends, it also published some articles that could be interesting for people, the damage of quarantine on public transport, whilst Azzattyq focused on other social matters such as domestic violence and poverty. Here is the variety of topics however covered in the biased way on Tengrnews.kz and Nur.kz, none information about how people suffering and fighting, none information about other crucial problems appeared during the quarantine, while Azattyq covered the social, cultural, well-being and even the methods of protections from the spreading of problems; journalists here covered the issues from the side of ordinary citizens explaining how their lives have changed after ailment, the story from the side of medical workers explaining the obstacles they faced on duty, from the side of those who was grieving and those who dead, while the position of Tengrnews.kz and Nur.kz was limited by official announcements, viral video and PR of regional authorities as well. Of course, I am saying that Azattyq was totally unbiased in the way of covering actual complications, precisely, journalists here did it mostly only in a negative way, but anyway they did on purpose to show the different angles of the pandemic.

Moving towards to Mangystau drought, while Tengrnews and Nur.kz were publishing the articles about the absence of emergency situation in Mangystau region and spreading the viral video, Azattyq has focused on the consequences of drought, other direction that were damaged and also interviewed the local citizens, where the fact of falsification of official numbers revealed. The obvious problem is that people, animals and even agriculture was suffering because of the issues and the most significant ones were shown in Azattyq, whilst

Nur.kz and Tengrinews.kz were doing the active PR of authorities, by rebutting the existing problems and spotlighting the activities that are not connected to the issues at all.

Lastly, I wanted to publish articles about January events by giving the information from prosecutor office, where the damages of civil servants, because almost all news were published about civilians and detainees, to do that I have contacted the internal policy department of Almaty Region, where I was warned that that the topic was prohibited to cover. During the January events Tengrinews.kz and Nur.kz focused on official statements and numbers, Azattyq were publishing news about the overview on the problem from the international sources (HRW), whilst Nur.kz and Tengrinews (surprisingly these two has almost same agenda) covered it as it was given from the words of officials, no sympathy to the civilians, despite the coverage of those, who became viral. However, talking of three highlighted editorials, only Tengrinews.kz has organized the search for the missing during the Almaty tragedy. The words used to describe the events in Nur.kz and Tengrinews.kz are mostly the same as they could be given in press-releases given by officials or published on websites.

5. Comparative content analysis

After knowing about the agreements of editorials and official bodies, there is a turn to compare how some problems were covered on these portals and the others.

Covid-19 in Tengrinews.kz, Nur.kz and Azattyq

Despite the PR of skims in different regions, both Tengrinews and Nur.kz had also published some news related to the peak of the pandemic. Focusing on the specific date that me and my supervisor have highlighted, I have discovered March-July 2020.

Chiefly, 4177 news articles were published on the topic of coronavirus from the beginning of the pandemic on Tengrinews.kz. To be precise, it is obvious that the vast majority of news at the very beginning were only about international news and basic information about COVID-19 and its spreading.

Totally, in March 2020 news were mostly about international news as like as ["Масканы Алматыдан алдырамыз" - Жапонияда тұратын қазақстандық коронавирусқа қатысты ахуалды айтты (Satybaldina, 2020)] or some soft news about abandoning traditions when people are introducing themselves by touching each other [Информация о заразившемся коронавирусом казахстанце не подтвердилась - МИД] other news were about dated on middle of March 2020 were about problems that COVID-19 [Коронавирус нанес удар по общественному транспорту Алматы, (Tengrnews.kz, 2020)], international news where the death of Iranian deputy died because of the virus. Also, some statistical news where as like in the best case coronavirus would take 15.000 lives and the explanation of conversation between Dmitri Medvedev, Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev and Nursultan Nazarbayev (Tengrnews.kz, 2020a)|Медведев Назарбаевпен және Тоқаевпен не туралы сөйлесті?|. To be noticed, on March 11-15 the news about portable cases of COVID in Kazakhstan were published, to clarify when Zhandarbek Bekshin (at that time chief medical officer) prognosed that the first cases would be announced on the 11-16th of March. Other news were about distance learning, holidays and prohibition of the huge events and only then cases of positive results of COVID-19 started to be shown and quarantine in some of the cities. Overall, all news are taking an informative direction. Finally, news about the first death of a Kazakhstani citizen and its consequences were published.

Talking of April, from the end of March news about the cases of coronavirus within the medical workers and deficit of protection equipment started to be discussed and the updates that all the medical workers would get a gratitude as a cash reward 10 mln tenge if the worker died and 850k as a reward. Also, a reward of 42500 was announced here. By the way, the news about divorces and the effect of quarantine on people started to be explained in April ["300-ден аса жұп ажырасуға арыз жазған". Карантин халыққа қалай әсер етті?(Tuleshev, 2020)] and news about humanitarian help to our country was actual for all the time. Pregnant women cases were published at this time: methods of treatment and cases of deaths and new mutations of virus [Обнаружена первая значительная мутация COVID-19, (Tengrnews.kz, 2020c)]

Moving towards May, here the situation was much more stabilized and published news was following the same tendency of informative content. The news about chipping people and intentional infection got its popularity. Thus, the news about prohibition of iftars in the period of quarantine and those who did not follow the rules. |Ауызашарға барғандардан да анықталды" - бас санитар дәрігер коронавирустың әлі де қауіпті екенін ескертті.

In June, as everyone knows the issues with the high percentage of COVID-19 positive cases started to be faced, so almost all news from June to the end of July (on par with PR that I have mentioned before) were mostly about how many people got infected, cases of deaths and information of famous people diseased. The only exception is that there were more announcements from Bekshin, Birtanov and Tsoy.

In this period more than 4000 articles were published on Nur.kz about COVID-19. Those were slightly following the same tendencies of Tengrinews.kz containing basic information and informative content on existing matters.

Lastly, Azattyq.kz, approximately 2365 news about coronavirus, as it was found out at the very beginning of the pandemic almost all editorials were publishing international news and basic information, I should notice that Azattyq appeared special because more content on citizens' matters were published. For example, the story of a man who was cured from the disease was translated from Kyrgyz to Kazakh language |Covid-19 дертінен айыққан Елдостың әңгімесі (Кененбайева, 2020)| or news about people were buried |"Жаназаны он метр жерде тұрып оқыдық". Вирустан көз жұмған марқұмның келіні мен имамның айтқаны (Тойкен, 2020)|. From the middle of May news as refutation of officials' words started to be published, as like as medical workers did not get any reward for their duties |Жедел жәрдем қызметкерлері үстемақы алмағандарын айтады, (Тойкен & Amirkhan, 2020).|

It is important to notice that in the beginning the news were published maximum 3 times, from the middle of March more than 10 articles per day, which shows the significance of the topic raised. In the middle of April, they have published a news about medical workers

in Aktobe, who were protesting that none of the workers got the reward for work |Сотрудники скорой помощи в Актобе протестовали против отсутствия компенсаций(Zhursin, 2020)|, whilst Tengrnews and Nur.kz published news only about the expected reward. By the way, comparing all the three highlighted editorials, I have revealed that only Azattyq have published a news that every fifth diseased is medical worker |Пятая часть зараженных COVID-19 в Казахстане — медики (Azattyq, 2020)|.

Another interesting fact, Azattyq has hosted the topic of disappearance of Nursultan Nazarbayev (the first President of RK) and Security Council |Словно испарились. Где Назарбаев и Совбез в разгар коронавирусного кризис (Pannier, 2020)|, none of the other editorials did that. Azattyq also covered the problems of domestic violence during the quarantine and the problem of poverty |"Табыссыз қалдық". Пандемия кедейлерді көбейтті (Kalmurat,2020)|.

From the end of June to the end of July a lot of news about the growing number of diseased people and the situation in our country, especially about the deficit of medicines, medical equipment and labor forces in hospitals. Another breaking news is about medical workers' work in the red zone, the video of how the worker cried and explained the issues faced during the fighting for people's lives. |"Қандай жауыз вирус..." "Қызыл аймақта" індетпен арпалысып жүрген дәрігерлердің айтқаны (Zhursin & Abdrakhmanova, 2020)|.

Noticeably, no positive news about any official or representatives of authorities as we have seen in the first two editorials. I also have noticed that Azattyq has covered the issues that appeared because of quarantine, as both Tengrnews and Nur.kz had done.

Both Tengrnews.kz and Nur.kz has missed the moment of disappearance of Nursultan Nazarbayev, editorials did not cover the deficits, the official numbers of death, the consequences of virus, the fightings and the obstacles medical workers face, domestic violence, the poverty, because obviously (and this refers to other two topics below), those news would act against the image of those who promoted.

Mangystau drought in Tengrinews.kz, Nur.kz and Azattyq

A thing to be mentioned is that the drought was also covered in both of the editorials. There are six news on Nur.kz and nine news on Tengrinews. The vast majority of them are containing the basic information about problems appeared after drought as the absence of feed for animals [Верблюдов кормят картоном из-за засухи и дефицита корма в Мангистау] or about local farmers request to announce the emergency situation in region [Животноводы попросили объявить режим ЧС в Мангистауской области] [Мальчик прославился в Сети с призывом помочь фермерам Мангистау] and the official reply from akimat that there is no need for state of emergency announcing [Акимат Мангистау: Оснований для объявления ЧС нет]. However, there some special news on Tengrinews.kz where they are addressing the request for additional help from third parties to beat the drought from ministry of agriculture [Минсельхоз просит казахстанцев помочь пострадавшим от засухи фермерам] and the humanitarian help to animals in Mangystau dying because of the drought [Вагон с сеном для гибнущего скота прибыл в Мангистау].

Whilst in Azattyq there news about how the numbers were falsified by government during the drought [«Выдают, что погибло 1200 голов. Это ложь». Фермеры из Мангистау — об утаивании масштабов джута] Here the journalists, despite publishing the information provided from regional communication services in Mangystau region and sharing a viral video, where camels are eating paper, made their own investigations. Thus, the livestock died from starvation and peasants called the official case numbers significantly underestimated. Journalists in Azattyq were not only focusing on farmers and high temperatures, as other editorials did, but also provide the information of agricultural loss [178 тысяч гектаров посевов зерновых погибло от засухи в Казахстане], there journalists were writing according to acting Minister of Agriculture of Kazakhstan Yerbol Karashukееv, who said that according to the akimats of the regions, as of August 12, the state of grain crops is assessed as good or satisfactory - by 13.2 million hectares, so the drought consequences are especially strongly felt in the Mangistau region and the Aral Sea region of the Kyzylorda region, where the situation with a lack of food has led to the loss of livestock. Another interesting point was that on Tengrinews we have found a paid news, where akim of the

Mangystau region has praised the opening of Rixos, however found out that akim of Mangystau acknowledged the impact of the Rixos hotel on the shortage of drinking water for residents |Аким Мангистау признал влияние отеля Rixos на дефицит питьевой воды для жителей|.

There we can see the obvious influence of the tender on how the news were covered, lack of different overviews, the opinion of local people and announcements about real consequences helps to gatekeeper to promote the object of interest.

January events in Nur.kz and Tengrinews.kz, Azattyq

Before starting the comparative analysis, it is important to explain why the conflict began itself.

Thus, January events is the common designation of protests over rising liquefied natural gas prices in Zhanaozen, which started on January 2 and spread throughout Kazakhstan. Tens of thousands of people complained about the high prices and demanded a change in the country's political system and it culminated on January 5-6. Several government buildings were seized and set on fire in several cities across the country, including Almaty. Meanwhile, Kazakh President Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev called on the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) for help, also announced that the protests were organised by so-called "external terrorist attack" and after what ordered law enforcement and troops to open fire without warning. As a result, hundreds of people died and thousands were injured. On January 15, the Prosecutor General's Office said that 225 (in Almaty) bodies had been delivered to morgues across the country in those days, and then the Ministry of Health announced that two more people had died three days later. Another title to be introduced in this case is Almaty Tragedy, unfortunately, the most rigid clashes happened in Almaty and Almaty region, those have a special title. As I have mentioned before the topic of "January Events" and "Almaty tragedy" was prohibited by the Central Communication services, thus official information always taken from official authorities and provided by regional communication services, consequently there is no communication bridge between civilians and authorities until the President's message on March 16th. However, the news articles were

presented anyway and I have decided to analyze them as well.

Before searching for keywords I have decided to search by its special topic. Under the topic "January events" there is only one news article on Azattyq. Dated on the 26th of January and the main idea was about the fact that Human Rights Watch had revealed 10 cases when the Kazakhstani army used guns against "peaceful" protesters and killed civilians, thus the HRW made an offer that the government should focus on people's lives rather than on property and its costs. ["Мүліктен гөрі адам өміріне басымдық берілуі керек". HRW Қаңтар оқиғасын бейтарап тергеуге шақырды (Azattyq Radiosy, 2022)]. Then I discovered news articles that were published from the beginning of the events (January 2) till Tokayev's message (March 16).

On January 2, 2022 two articles regarding highlighted topics were published, mostly journalists covering the reasons for protests and current decisions towards the satisfaction of people's requests. For example, people in Zhanaozen had blocked the roads to protests, whilst other regions were supporting the movement. [Жаңаөзенде газдың қымбаттағанына наразы ел жолды жапты, оларды басқа өңірлерде де жұрт қолдады (Тойкен, 2022)] and the answer that the former price on liquefied gas would not be the same ever again. [Жаңаөзендегі наразылыққа билік жауабы: сұраныс өсірген газ бағасы бұрынғы қалпына қайта келмейді (Azattyq, 2022)]

Moving towards to culmination time, on January 4, 2022 Azattyq has published 22 news articles, most of them were about detaining innocent people and journalists [Қазақстанның бірнеше қаласында ондаған адам ұсталды (Тарыева & Asautay & Isa, 2022)] and also about the requirements addressed from the public to government["Нұр Отан" партиясынан сайланған депутат Берік Әбдіғалиұлы үкіметтің отставкасын талап етті (Azattyq,2022)].

During the cultivation time Azattyq has published more than 100 articles about everything happening in different parts of Kazakhstan, saying that strategically important objects are taken by protestors. Thus, after the culmination the news about the events consequences started to be covered. From the twentieth of January the news about January

events started to be mixed with other international news, for example, the article about Uzbekistan blogger, who was criticizing Shavkat Mirziyoyev was detained for three year [Мирзияевті сынаған блогердің бостандығы үш жылға шектелді (Azattyq, 2022)]. In the beginning of February, mostly the articles about making the detainees free were published, as like as ["Бостандық!" Алматыда қаңтар оқиғасына байланысты ұсталғандардың туыстары прокуратурада наразылық білдірді (Asautai, 2022)]. In the middle of February, the topic of January events were mostly forgotten, here the articles about Ukraine and some new requests from civilians and protesters were published, as like as raising the salary of medical workers in Aktobe [Ақтөбеде жедел жәрдем жүргізушілері жалақы өсіруді талап етті (Zhursin, 2022)]. In the beginning of March the issues of January events were almostly replaced by the war in Ukraine, for instance the death of ethnic Kazakh Arman Narynbayev living in Astrakhan [Украинадағы соғыста кемінде бір Ресей қазағының опат болғаны хабарланды (Azattyq, 2022)] , the only things remained unchanged are the announcements and substitutions done by Kassym-Zhomart Tokyev, for example the rename of "Nur-Otan" party to "Amanat" ["Нұр Отан" партиясы "Аманат" болып өзгерді. Саяси кеңес құрамына төрт адам қосылды (Mukhitkyzyz, 2022)] and the number of civilians died during the events [Тоқаев құрған қор қаңтар оқиғасында 29 бейбіт тұрғын қаза болғанын айтты(Assylbek, 2022)]. Finally, moving to the MArch 15-16th, no news about January events only one, where journalists wrote about a mother having a lot of children set free in Nur-Sultan and - by the way - no news about Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev's message as well.

There 53 articles under the topic "January events" published on Tengrinews.kz, this category ends on April 28th, after that no news were published Most of them are the announcements from officials, as Almaty region had informal leaders [У Алматинской области были неформальные руководители - аким Бозумбаев, (Tengrinews,2022)] and the property issues cases, for instance, the article about cars owners would be paid for the costs during the January events. Both Tengrinews and Nur.kz has limited the variety of topics by stating the announcement, interviews and well-known cases where people were killed by stray bullets, numbers of people dead and probable reasons for the event, also stated by officials. So, the noticeable thing is that according to comparison is that both Nur,kz and Tengrinews.kz has missed the angle of topics from civilians side and International coverage, none of the

Volume 4, Number 14, 2023, ISSN: Print 2735-9328, Online 2735-9336 *Page | 192*

articles published in these editorials raises the question if there innocent people becoming detainees or the cases of people set free, this is how the order have influenced the coverage of the topic.

6. Conclusion

From the literature review I have come to the conclusion that researching agenda is not enough to reveal any connection between governmental orders and agenda-setting theory. As long as any culture has its own values, features and history, it is crucial to pay attention to these aspects as well. As an example, Russia as part of the Soviet Union faces a lot of common problems with Kazakhstan. Usually, the mass media is controlled by the government and used as a tool of shaping citizens' opinion. Based on the research of socio-cultural factors for defining the agenda, we may infer that the media do not always determine the agenda autonomously. Quite often, this is done by wholly separate entities that use a system of formal and informal links to influence the media. The processes of this effect are dictated by the socio-cultural framework in which the media operate, and it is hard to comprehend how they perform an agenda-forming function in society without taking this context into consideration. To develop the agenda-setting hypothesis in the future, a cultural and genetic analysis of the media phenomenon is necessary. So, I have revealed a gap that shows that mainly all the mass media tools are compared to American/British Mass media and hypotheses are based on the studies conducted in Western countries and they are not always applicable to countries under authoritarian regimes, and even with those that were under those regimes in the past. For example, many believe that the only thing that distinguishes domestic media from Western media is tough censorship. However, many people forget that the media in the USSR worked as a separate secret state body, limited not only in information of discussion, but also in topics, as well as a rigid selection in publication. Moreover, there a lot of studies on agenda setting connected to Western countries, a few of them about Russia and almost no researches on that field about Kazakhstan, and to make this kind of report not only theoretical work with an academic literature is needed, but also it is important to focus on special cases and monitor highlighted editorials. The affection of governmental order also could be justified with the attempt to minimize the risks from opposite parties. Thus, the affection of the government on

agenda-setting could be described as an exertion of politicizing every aspect of life, taking credit and nullifying / covering up pressing issues.

So, summing up all the findings we have so far for the comparative content analysis of editorials: Nur.kz and Tengrinews.kz are affected by government officials, the tenders could be played up and then editorial can be provided with news of interest party, as it is done in communication services; or the tender could be played up with the representative branch of authority and used as the means of PR, as a practice shows, successfully used by akimats of different regions. Either, it could announce itself as independent, considered as oppositional by the government and give the problem different angles by missing the words of officials.

Finally, answering to the research questions government offers affects the media agenda of editorials by giving the problem one-sided attitude to cater authorities/government's ambitions, so needed news published in the "needed" way with the "needed" information, thus usually government orders lead to biased coverage of existing problems and sometimes it even may seem that people may suffer and die because of actual issues, while authorities are busy promoting their pictures in-front of the ruling community and absolutely neutral audience, but I want to point out that is it wrong to say that Azattyq is absolutely independent, it has sponsorship from state department, then the gatekeeping is also working here.

So, the difference of media agenda is obvious, firstly the paid news are breaking and got to be promoted, then news that are not refuting main topic are published, at the same time in independent media news are published as they revealed and analyzed, given specific angle and balanced by views of both public and official words.

Lastly, these portals covered the events in really various ways. Azattyq as it was mentioned had given a problem both social, cultural view. Journalists here tried to focus on people basically and develop the coverage from this prism. Although Tengrinews.kz and Nur.kz cover the events according to the agreements made, usually the news is given the appearance of official authorities, their deeds, activities, points of views, sometimes even the justifications and answers from authorities to citizens. Usually coverage in independent editorials is different, because of the journalist's personal style of writing. I mean, the story is not written

as an official announce, it is fully gone through the journalist and - of course - there is no specific position of journalist, but the word choice and the way of catching the audience, while most of the news of Tengrinews.kz and Nur.kz sounds official.

Totally, I have found out that after the tenders, the images of akims that played it up started to be published more frequently, than it was before. Moreover, not only direct phrases of promotion as quotes or deeds could be published, but the photos of involvement in the process as well. So, the governmental offers affect the media agenda in the way of filtering all the news and publishing only those that are useful and helpful for the authorities, also ignoring those that come contradictory.

Further studies in this direction may be helpful to know more about agenda-setting theory, by skipping the parts that were mentioned by other researchers and explore new borders of the topic concerning Kazakhstan.

Shortcoming/Limitations

During the research I have mostly met the problem of websites of editorials, while doing the comparative research, these websites are completely uncomfortable to use for some reasons.

Firstly, Nur.kz's searching tab is not working, even if it works, news are given by the latest publications and to find the relevant one researcher needs to scroll it down. In Tengrinews.kz it is easier, there a researcher has an ability to press a specific number where news articles are collected, but to find the needed one, he/she also should press and search it for a long time. Azattyq has a very good example of how the news website should appear, it has a calendar, so the researcher may choose from which to which date to explore, however this function does not work for the articles written in Russian.

Secondly, all the highlighted events happened nearly recently, so there is no specific study on them, that is why a researcher has to go in-deep in order to understand if the conclusion is right or wrong.

Thirdly, there is no specific book with topic of agenda setting in Kazakhstan, so the research must be done on the behalf of comparing Kazakhstan with other countries that are covered.

Lastly, as I have mentioned before, the theory of agenda-setting could not be measured, so it is hard sometimes to research and prove that it has its own influence on establishing the tone of the news priority.

That is why in some cases the research may seem out of the topic, but it needs a lot of comparison to find a specific answer to the research questions.

REFERENCES

Alvernia University. (2018, February 16). *The Agenda-Setting Theory in Mass Communication*. <https://online.alvernia.edu/articles/agenda-setting-theory/>

Asautay, M. (2022, February 1). “Bostandıq!” Almatıda qañtar oqıǵasına baylanıstı ustalǵandardıñ twıstarı prokwratwrada narazılıq bildird.Azattyq. <https://www.azattyq.org/a/31680815.html>

Assylbek, B. (2022, March 1). Toqaev qurǵan qor qañtar oqıǵasında 29 beybit turǵın qaza bolǵanın ayttı. Azattyq. <https://www.azattyq.org/a/31729521.html>

Azattyq Radiosy, A. Z. (2022, January 26). “Mülikten göri adam ömirine basımdıq berilwi kerek”. HRW Qañtar oqıǵasın beytarap tergewge şaqırdı. Azattyq. <https://www.azattyq.org/a/human-rights-watch-on-kazakhstan/31672036.html>

Azattyq. (2022c, January 22). Mirziyaevti sınaǵan blogerdiñ bostandıǵı üş jılǵa şekteldi. Azattyq. <https://www.azattyq.org/a/31666090.html>

Azattyq. (2022, January 2). Jañaözendegi narazılıqqa bilik jawabı: suranı ösirgen gaz baǵası

buringı qalpına qayta kelmeydi. Azattyq. <https://www.azattyq.org/a/31636415.html>

Azattyq. (2022b, January 4). “Nur Otan” partiyasınan saylanğan depwtat Berik Äbdiğaliuli ükimettiñ otstavkasın talap etti. Azattyq.

<https://www.azattyq.org/a/31639161.html>

Barcus, F. E. (1959). *Communications content: Analysis of the research 1900-1958 (A content analysis of content analysis)*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Berelson, B. (1952). *Content analysis in communication research*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Budd, R. W., Thorp, R. K., & Donohew, L. (1967). *Content analysis of communications*. New York: Macmillan.

Cherkashin, R. (2020, June 18). Neskol’ko opresnitel’nykh zavodov stroyatsya v Mangistau. Nur.Kz.

<https://www.nur.kz/society/1861082-neskolko-opresnitelnyh-zavodov-postroat-v-mangistau/>

Dyakova, E. G., & Trahtenberg, A. D. (2001). Социокультурные механизмы. Cyberlinka. Retrieved from

<https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/sotsiokulturnye-mehanizmy-ustanovleniya-pov-estki-dnya>

Entman, R. M. (2006, February 7). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. Wiley Online Library. Retrieved from

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x>

Folger, J. P., Hewes, D. E., & Poole, M. S. (1984). Coding social interaction. In B. Dervin & M. J. Voigt (Eds.), *Progress in communication sciences* (pp. 115-161). Norwood, NJ:

Ablex.

Garbuznyak, A. (2015, January 30). Повестка дня СМИ как технология интерпретации. Медиаскоп. Retrieved from

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Alina-Garbuznyak/publication/320930182_Media_Agenda_as_a_Technology_of_Interpreting/links/5a030682aca2720c3265e66c/Media-Agenda-as-a-Technology-of-Interpreting.pdf

Kaid, L. L. (1989). Content analysis. In P. Emmert & L. L. Barker (Eds.), *Measurement of communication behavior* (pp. 197-217). New York: Longman.

Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277–1288.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687>

Isa, Tapayeva, Asautayeva. (2022, January 4). Qazaqstanniñ birneşe qalasında ondağan adam ustaldı. Azattyq. <https://www.azattyq.org/a/31638483.html>

Kalmurat, A. (2020, May 12). “Tabyssyz Kaldyk”. Pandemic kedeilerdi kobeitti.

Azattyq. <https://www.azattyq.org/a/kazakhstan-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-increase-s-the-number-of-poor-people/30606987.html>

Kenenbayeva, E. (2020, April 1). Covid-19 dertinen ayıqqan Eldostıñ ängimesi. Azattyq.

<https://www.azattyq.org/a/spain-kyrgyzstan-coronavirus-survivor/30523746.html>

Kolmakova, V. (2020, July 11). Gruppa medrabotnikov iz Rossii pribyla v Mangistau. Nur.Kz.

<https://www.nur.kz/society/1864464-gruppa-medrabotnikov-iz-rossii-pribyla-v-mangistau/>

Kolmakova, V. (2020, August 5). Predprinimateli Semeya podderzhali ogranichitel'nye

meryiz-za vspyshki coronavirusa . NUR.KZ. Retrieved May 3, 2022, from <https://www.nur.kz/health/coronavirus/1860232-predprinimateli-semea-podder-zali-ogranicitelnye-mery-iz-za-vspyski-koronavirusa/>

Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel, T. (2021, July 15). The elements of journalism. American Press Institute. Retrieved from

<https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/journalism-essentials/what-is-journalism/elements-journalism/>

Kristina Krivcanova. (2020, August 5). На благоустройство восточного побережья алаколя выделено почти 4 млрд тенге. NUR.KZ. Retrieved May 4, 2022, from <https://www.nur.kz/kaleidoscope/1859798-na-blagoustrojstvo-vostocnogo-pobereza-alakola-vydeleno-pocti-4-mlrd-tenge/>

McCombs, M., & Shaw, D. (n.d.). The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media. American Association for Public Opinion Research. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2747787>

Molodyh, A. (2020, August 12). V etom godu v Mangistau budet zapushcheno 7 novykh proyektov. Nur.Kz.

<https://www.nur.kz/society/1869261-v-etom-godu-v-mangistau-budet-zapuseno-7-novyh-proektov/> =

Morgan, D. L. (1993). Qualitative content analysis: A guide to paths not taken. *Qualitative Health Research*, 3, 112-121.

Mukhitqyzy, A. (2022, March 1). “Nur Otan” partiyası “Amanat” bolıp özgerdi. Sayasï keñes quramına tórt adam qosıldı. Azattyq.

<https://www.azattyq.org/a/31729531.html>

Novak, A. A. (2018). Повестка дня в государственных и частных изданиях городов-миллионников. Медиаскоп, (1), 13-13. Retrieved from <http://www.mediascope.ru/2424>

Nikolayev, V. (2020, August 5). Akim VKO provel. vstrechu s vrachami Tatarstana. NUR.KZ. Retrieved May 3, 2022, from

<https://www.nur.kz/health/healthcare/1865558-akim-vko-provel-vstrechu-s-vracami-iz-tatarstana/>

OMCT. (2022, May 12). *Extrajudicial killings*. Sos-Torture New-York. Retrieved May 17, 2022, from

<https://www.omct.org/en/what-we-do/extrajudicial-killings>

Pannier, B. (2020, April 19). Slovo isparilis'. Gde Nazarbajev i Sovbez v razgar koronavirusnogo krizis. Azattyq.

<https://rus.azattyq.org/a/nazarbaev-kazakhstan-out-of-sight-coronavirus-crisis/30563922.html>

Rodriguez, G. (2016, December 16). *Agenda Setting Theory*. Wordpress.

<https://gkent.tech.blog/2016/12/10/agenda-setting-theory/#:~:text=The%20Agenda%20setting%20theory%20or%20also%20known%20as%20The,pioneered%20this%20theory%20in%20the%20Public%20Opinion%20Quarterly>

Rosengren, K. E. (1981). Advances in Scandinavia content analysis: An introduction. In K. E. Rosengren (Ed.), *Advances in content analysis* (pp. 9-19). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Temirkhanova, L. (2020, August 20). Blagodarstvennyye pis'ma ot akima Mangistauskoy oblasti poluchili zaklyuchennyye. Nur.Kz.

<https://www.nur.kz/incident/crime/1870399-blagodarstvennyye-pisma-ot-akima-mangistauskoy-oblasti-polucili-zaklyuchennyye/>

Tilegen, S. (2020, April 4). Zavershayetsya rekonstruktsiya dorog respublikanskogo znacheniya.Nur.kz.

<https://www.nur.kz/politics/kazakhstan/1840797-zaversaetsa-rekonstrukcia-dorog-respublikanskogo-znachenia/>

Satybaldina, S. (2020, March 4). Maskany Japoniyadan Aldyramyz. Tengrinewz.Kz.
<https://tengrinews.kz/story/maskanyi-almatyidan-aldyramyiz-japoniyada-turat-yin-393526/>

Satybaldina, S. (2020b, May 20). “Awızasařǵa barǵandardan da anıqtaldı” - bas sanıtar dāriđer koronavırwstıñ āli de qawıptı ekenin eskertti. Tengrinews.Kz.
https://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan_news/auyizasharga-bargandardan-anyiktaldyi-bas-sanitar-darger-402870/

Saveleva, V. (2021, August 16). Подростку оторвало голову ... КТК. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from <https://www.ktk.kz/ru/news/video/2021/08/16/187892/>

Shafqat, M. (n.d.). Purposes, functions and obligations of journalism. Retrieved from <http://jdhr.org/publications/media-and-development/Purposes,%20functions%20and%20obligations%20of%20journalism-ISA.pdf>

Sosunov, D. V. (2017, November 17). Формирование политической повестки дня современной России. Retrieved from <http://www.vestnik.vsu.ru/pdf/history/2018/01/2018-01-22.pdf>

Sultan, T. (2020, October 23). Vo vremya karantina cherez porty Mangistau perepravleno 4,5 mln tonn gruz. Nur.Kz.
<https://www.nur.kz/kaleidoscope/1886038-vo-vrema-karantina-cerez-porty-mangi-stau-perepravleno-45-mln-tonn-gruza/>

Tengrinews.kz. (2020, March 7). Koronavirus Nanes Udar po obshestvennomew transpotru v Almatinskoi oblasti.

https://tengrnews.kz/kazakhstan_news/koronavirus-nanes-udar-po-obschestvennomu-transportu-almaty-393854/

Tengrnews.kz. (2020a, March 6). Medvedev Nazarbayev hane Tokayevpen turaly ne soilesti?https://tengrnews.kz/kazakhstan_news/medvedev-nazarbaevpen-jane-tokaevpen-ne-turalyi-soylest-393836/

Tengrnews. (2022, April 28). U Almatinskoy oblasti byli neformal'nyye rukovoditeli - akim Bozumbayev. Tengrnews.

https://tengrnews.kz/kazakhstan_news/almatinskoy-oblasti-neformalnyie-rukovoditeli-akim-bozumbaev-467317/

Tengrnews.kz. (2020c, April 21). Obnaruzhena pervaya znachitel'ynaya mutatsiya. Tengrnews.Kz.

https://tengrnews.kz/world_news/obnarujena-pervaya-znachitelnaya-mutatsiya-covid-19-399489/

Thesen, G. (2012, October 15). When good news is scarce and Bad News is good: Government responsibilities and opposition possibilities in political agenda-setting. *European Journal of Political Research*. Retrieved from <https://ejpr.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2012.02075.x>

Toyken, Amirkhan, S. E. (2020, May 5). Ambulance workers say they did not receive compensation. *Azattyq*.

<https://www.azattyq.org/a/kazakhstan-aqmola-ambulance/30594348.html>

Toyken, S. (2020, March 27). “Janazanı on metr jerde turıp oqıdıq”. *Vırwstan köz jumğan marqumniñ kelini men imamniñ aytqanı*. *Azattyq*.

<https://www.azattyq.org/a/kazakhstan-coronavirus-victims/30513212.html> Toyken,

S. (2022, January 2). Jañaözende gazdıñ qımbattağanına narazı el joldı japtı, olardı basqa öñirlerde de jurt qoldadı.

Azattyq. <https://www.azattyq.org/a/31636233.html>

Tuleshev, E. (2020, March 6). 300-den asa zhup azhyrasuga aryl zhasgan. Tengrinews.Kz.

https://tengrinews.kz/world_news/300-den-asa-jup-ajyirasuga-aryiz-jazgan-karantin-halyikka-397614/

Wanta, W., & Tarasevich, S. (2018, September 20). Agenda-Setting and Priming Theories . Researchgate. Retrieved from

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332750236_Agenda-Setting_and_Priming_Theories

Weber, R. P. (1990). *Basic content analysis*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Zhursin, Z. (2020, April 10). Sotrudniki skoroy pomoshchi v aktobe protestovali protiv otsutstviya kompensatsiy. Azattyq.

<https://rus.azattyq.org/a/30546537.html>

Pyataya chast' zarzhennykh COVID-19 v Kazakhstane — mediki. (2020, April 13). Azattyq. <https://rus.azattyq.org/a/30546537.html>

Zhursin, Z. (2022, February 15). Aqtöbede jedel järdem жүргizwşileri jalaqı ösirwdi talap etti. Azattyq. <https://www.azattyq.org/a/31705008.html>