

HOW NEWSPAPERS PRESENT UBER'S
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
IN THREE COUNTRIES: U.S., U.K., AND CHINA
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ABSTRACT

CREACTIVE PROJECT: How newspapers present Uber's government relations in three countries: U.S., U.K., and China

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Newspapers are among the most important sources of information, and the way they present a company may affect its reputation and government relations. This research aimed to find out how newspapers in the U.S., U.K., and China present news about Uber. It was hypothesized that newspapers in the three countries present Uber's government relations differently. A content analysis approach was used to test this hypothesis based on four variables: Uber's presentation, consumer concerns, legality, and valence. The results indicated that newspapers in the three countries presented Uber's government relations differently due to factors such as the type of article, sources of information for newspapers, and presentation of consumer concerns, valence, and framing. For future research, it was suggested the inclusion of other forms of media such as magazines, radio, television, and news wire services in the content analysis, and comparing the results to a competitor of Uber.

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Introduction

Participating actively in the news cycle can be an empowering and enlightening experience to an organization. According to Bryer and Zavattaro (2011), news media present a unique opportunity for individuals and organizations to attract the public to an issue. In this regard, a news media campaign or even a news media story around an issue can serve several advocacy purposes, including changing or influencing public opinion, making a private issue public, raising awareness of certain issues, and educating the government and public about that particular issue. Individuals, organizations, and governments frequently use news media, particularly newspapers to communicate certain issues or influence other parties on certain key issues and decisions. However, news media operating on their own way may influence public opinion about an issue through ongoing exposure to that issue. This paper aims to study how newspapers in the United States, the United Kingdom, and China present Uber's government relations.

Uber Technologies Inc., founded in 2009, is a multinational corporation whose main operations include developing the Uber app, marketing it, and distributing it to the users. Through the Uber app developed by the company, customers are able to submit requests for trips to a specified system, which then forwards the details of the request to Uber drivers. Once the Uber drivers receive the request details, they use their own cars to pick up the customer and drive them to their destination (Uber.com, 2015).

Studying how newspapers present Uber's government relations in multiple countries is important in determining its influence on the decisions of the governments as well as public opinion, both through exposure in news media. According to Grosse (2005), an organization's government relations strategies play a critical role in allowing a company to influence

government policies. Particularly, an organization can use government relations as a tool for advocacy to influence the government, policy setters, and regulators to enact regulations that suit its operations within a country (Ni & Van Wart, 2013). Essentially, government relations are the efforts that a company puts in place to influence government policies in a way that will allow it achieve its objectives or protect certain interests it considers important to its decision makers, employees, or the community at large. For this reason, organizations need to have healthy government relations to operate more effectively within a jurisdiction. Government relations can have significant impacts on the operations of a company, its ability to maintain trust and transparency, the kind of functional environment the company operates in, and provision of a better understanding of the government policies (Grosse, 2005). Since the U.S., U.K., and Chinese governments are different from each other, it is important for a company to use different strategies and approaches to government relations. For instance, the U.S. government is constitution-based federal republic with strong democratic traditions, while the Chinese government is a Communist state. The U.K. government is a Constitutional Monarchy that follows a parliamentary form of government. There are also differences in government policies and their enactments in the three countries. For instance, the U.S. government follows the constitution in enactments of its policies while, in the U.K., the government follows Acts of parliament, as the country does not have a single constitutional document. These differences in government and government policies make it necessary for companies to use government relations strategies that are relevant to a specific country.

According to Preiss (2007), news media can present a company's government relations in various ways that can be deemed either healthy or unhealthy. With regard to Uber, news media have greatly presented and analyzed its government relations, especially due to its use of

aggressive strategies to influence government policies. In the perspective of news media presentation, newspapers in the three countries have greatly reported about the company's government relations painting specific images to the public of these countries. The aim is to examine how newspapers in these three countries present Uber's government relations. The research will examine the company as a whole and its operations within the three countries, media theory (agenda setting, framing, and priming) influence in the presentation of the government relations of the company in the three countries, culture differences and policy differences influence, and conduct a content analysis of two newspapers comprising of fifteen articles in each of the three countries. In total, the research will analyze the content of fifteen articles in six newspapers totaling to ninety newspaper articles.

This study will examine how newspapers present Uber's government relations through an analysis of content in the articles of the leading newspapers in the three countries. This research is important because no study has been conducted covering specifically how news media in the three countries present Uber's government relations. It will seek to examine the coverage of the issue in the newspapers, examining the content presented, and gathering information about the major common themes presented in the news articles. Through this analysis, the research will not only identify how newspapers in these three countries present the issue, but also the factors that influence newspaper to present the issue in such a manner. To determine how the information is presented in the newspapers, this research will rely on theories of media effects. In particular, agenda setting, priming, and framing will be the basis for this study. The three theories will provide insight into how information is presented, how subjects are presented, the kind of information given more weight, and how news media influence each other to present the information in a certain manner.

To ensure equal representation and relevance of the data collected in each country, this research relied on two leading newspapers in each country. In the U.K., the articles were selected from The Guardian and The Sun; in the U.S., the articles were selected from The New York Times and USA Today; and in China, the articles were selected from China Daily and the Xinhua net.

Literature Review

Uber Introduction and Background

Company background and description. Uber is based in San Francisco, California, in the United States, and has its operations in 58 countries comprising of 300 cities around the world. The concept behind Uber operations is giving passengers the ability to summon a vehicle from their smartphone, feed their destination into the driver's navigation system, and let the passenger walk out immediately upon arrival. This is different from traditional taxi companies, whereby passengers are required to stand on the streets until an available cab drives by. The passenger then boards the taxi giving the driver directions in case going to an unfamiliar destination. Unlike in Uber where payments are made online, traditional taxi services require the passenger to pay in cash or credit cards once they arrive their destination (The Economist, 2015).

The history of Uber Technologies began in 2009 when Travis Kalanick and Garret Camp founded "UberCab" and released the app in June 2010. By the start of 2012, Uber had expanded to become an international brand and in 2014, it experimented with new features including carpooling and made several other updates on the app. In the same year, the company was rated as the 48th most powerful company in America based in San Francisco (Loudenback & Martin, 2015). However, several governments and taxi companies have alleged that using unlicensed drivers to drive taxicab is both illegal and unsafe, and they have challenged the legality of the

app and the company's operations. Nonetheless, the company has continued to excel in its market and using aggressive government relations strategies, such as lobbying to ensure the continuance of its operations (Palmer & Wong, 2015). With this being the case, it is important to analyze how news media cover the issue and could influence public opinion about the operations of the company.

Uber's government relations strategy over time. Uber's government relations strategy has relied on the use of lobbyists and massive support from its customers. By using its loyal following and a team of strong lobbyists, the company has been able to influence regulations not only in the U.S., but in the U.K. and China as well. According to Palmer and Wong (2015), Uber entered the market as a car-hailing app that could allow ordinary urbanites to access hired drivers using a smartphone app. However, it faced several legality issues from governments and taxi companies, which questioned its mode of operation and use of unlicensed drivers for its taxicabs. The innovation resulted in a dedicated following of drivers and users in cities like Washington, where supporter could take to social media to share their experience with Uber and turn up at public meetings to enthusiastically lobby for the car service. Since the company launched its operations in 2009, it has claimed its government relations strategies in the past have relied on the use of lobbyists to influence government policies and regulations (Palmer & Wong, 2015).

In its early days, the company used some of the biggest names in high tech in conjunction with hiring top-notch and well-connected lobbyists, public relations firms, and lawyers to influence municipal leaders and sway public opinion in its favor (Isaack, 2014). The strategy represents quite a sophisticated network of consultants across the nation combined with massive PR campaigns that allowed Uber to avoid the political game from its early days of operations (Palmer & Wong, 2015). In fact, the company had already hired PR professionals that had strong

ties to Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, and even President Barack Obama. In addition, the company quickly gained support from veteran political strategists who referred to it as a high-dollar investment doing good business (Palmer & Wong, 2015). Another key strategy the company has used in the past is using huge amounts of money to corner new markets despite having a high-tech and entrepreneurial image (Isaack, 2014). In particular, the company invested hundreds of millions of dollars in the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), and it is using substantial legal muscle and political influence to policies and regulations to continue operating in a way that has not been allowed in the past. For instance, Google invested \$258 million into the company during its inception with other high-profile figures like Goldman Sachs' Lloyd Blankfein, Menlo Ventures' Shervin Pishevar, and Amazon's Jeff Bezos injecting some additional \$32 million (Palmer & Wong, 2015).

Uber's government relations strategy was largely driven by the amount of resistance it faced when entering new markets due to allegations from local governments and taxi companies about the legality of its operations. On its part, Uber claimed that it wanted to expand economic options for drivers and improve the current transportation opportunities for consumers (Isaack, 2014). Nairi Hourdajian, Uber's spokesperson, asserted that the company was entering into these markets to provide a service that never existed before. She further emphasized that the company does enter the market to fight anyone, but others who do not compete, innovate, and like the status quo of what was in the market bring the fight to them (Palmer & Wong, 2015). The company quickly noted that it got a lot of viral support, which was integral in its government relations strategies. For instance, the company used viral support to kill proposed rules that would end its operation in Dallas whereby the petition garnered more than one 17,000 signatures in the first 24 hours. The company experienced the same nature of viral support in Washington

D.C. where another petition received 10,000 signatures (Palmer & Wong, 2015).

Hourdajian, Uber's spokesperson argues that the success of Uber as a company in the local market greatly depended on the immense support it has received since it started operating and news media activities surrounding its operations and relations with the government. In addition to the online petitions, the company has been utilizing lobbyist registration records, media reports, and court filing as part of international operations expansion (Palmer & Wong, 2015). The company hired a lobbying team in Chicago comprising of three key lobbyists under the leadership of Michael Kapser (Palmer & Wong, 2015). In New York City, the company relied on political strategist Bradley Tusk in leading its government relations strategies. Similar use of lobbyists was evident in Denver where the company hired former Rep. David Skaggs and former City Attorney David Fine, who lobbied to prevent the passing of new rules that would effectively shut down the company's operations in the city (Palmer & Wong, 2015).

Following the company's use of aggressive government relations strategy, Uber has managed to continue operating in areas it would otherwise be illegal to operate. In an era characterized by government dysfunction, Uber has pioneered as more than a new kind of taxi service, but also an innovative way to change enduring local ordinances. According to Helderman (2015), the company's approach to government relations is brash and has proven to be effective so far. The company begins with launching its operations in a local market even if existing laws and regulations do not support its operations. Then, the company establishes a huge customer base in the shortest time possible. When the government and taxi companies challenge it, Uber rallies its massive base of loyal customers to pressure government officials and at the same time unleashing a group of well-connected lobbyists that influence the lawmakers (Helderman, 2015).

Even today, hiring politically skilled executives has been a key part of Uber's success. The company looks for individuals that can influence governments to pass regulations that favor its operations. The strategy has been quite successful especially after the company realized that navigating a certain government is an essential art of maneuvering past competition (Isaack, 2014). For instance, towards the end of 2014, the company hired David Plouffe, who ran President Obama's 2008 campaign, to run the company's communication effort more like a political race. The purpose of selecting Mr. Plouffe was to push consumers and regulators to think in the same manner as the company in its global expansion strategy (Palmer & Wong, 2015). The company has carried out this strategy of using lobbyists repeatedly across cities and states clearly stating that it aims at working with officials to change old-fashioned laws that its executives argue they are applicable to the phone app based service operations. Effectively, it has upended existing taxi regulations and managed to build itself into a technology giant within just a few years of operations (Helderman, 2015).

The company is likely to continue its current government relations in the future to meet the ongoing resistance it continues to face from governments and taxi companies. Strategic consultant Steve McBee asserts that the future of Uber technologies will have more demand than Town Cars and in the process, it will likely lead to disturbances in several market shares in the transport industry. By managing its near-term risks at the local levels, the company is likely to succeed in its near-term business strategy and prepare for larger downstream battles in Washington with highly entrenched and well-established industries. In other words, the company's government relations is a case of smart politics and smarter business (Palmer & Wong, 2015).

Issues Uber faced in government relations. Uber has been challenging the entrenched

transport industry and running into resistance from the local governments and taxi companies. Even as the company expands into the global market, it has tussled with regulators in the U.S. and abroad in its mission to gain traction in new cities. Isaack (2014) notes that the legality of the company's services was first questioned in 2012 as it entered New York City. Similar resistance was evident in Europe when thousands of taxi drivers tied up traffic in June 2014 protesting Uber's rise. Since the company started its operations and global expansion, it has faced resistance in new markets. In its response, the company has made it clear of its desire to find individuals that can create and execute a strategy for winning over consumers.

According to Mr. Plouffe, the company is on an exorable path of progress in making transport safer. He asserts that the company aims to provide jobs and cut down distracted and drunk driving (Isaack, 2014). However, the legality of Uber's operations remains to the key issue it is facing in its government relations across its countries of operations. For instance, in Belgium, the country's complicated taxi cab law banned the company threatening their drivers with a \$12,000 fine. Similar cases of Uber's legality issues have been experienced in other countries the company operates in including the U.K., China, Canada, France, Germany, and literally all Uber's other countries of operation (Taylor, 2014). News media have played a crucial role in influencing public opinion and the government as far as Uber's government relations strategies are concerned (Palmer & Wong, 2015). Therefore, studying the effects the media has had on Uber's government relations can be used to explain how media affect a company's government relations and the policies set by the government.

Media Theory Influence

A background of media theory influence is essential in setting a basis for analyzing how news media presents Uber's government relations. In particular, an analysis of media effects

theories of agenda setting, priming, and framing theories will explain how news media in the three countries present the issue. In this regard, it is necessary to review the three theories to explain why news media present information in a specific manner. Closely related to this is the influence of culture and policies on how news media present information and news.

According to Bryant and Zillmann (2009), the issue of news media influence falls within the realm of social psychology. In fact, the influence and reach of media are ubiquitous and incalculable as everyone is exposed to it in different amounts of attention and specific channels affecting how people feel about everything around them. In perspective, news media can influence how people feel about a particular product, event, people, or even themselves by creating a sense of what is important and what is not.

Although news media used to have influence or appeal to a smaller portion of the population, today it has evolved to influence everyone but to different degree. Regardless of their income, background, location, there is always something for everyone to read in news media. For organizations, news media influence can be used to benefit its operations and garner the support of the public through positive exposure (Moore, 2007).

News media play a significant role in influencing the way people perceive public relation messages. According to Moore (2007), news media influence the entire continuum of public relations by providing messages on issues such as journalism, advertisements, and politics. Although sometimes news media influence is intentional, there are times when the influence is accidental. Irrespective of the motive behind the influence, new media influence is inevitable, and public relations professionals need to be aware of the role news media play in influencing how the public perceive certain issues and how they can deal with this influence.

In one of the earliest formulation of media theory influence, the widespread fear that

media messages could be considered more important than other cultural influences, such as community and family (Bryant & Zillmann, 2009). The model, which was more prevalent in the 1920s and 1930s, theorized that the public readily accepts messages and information from news media and have some predictable reactions towards the messages (Hanson, 2011). However, the theory was challenged later on in the 1940s when it was found that voters that consumed most news media messages had already decided the candidate they would vote for during presidential elections. On the other hand, undecided voters would turn to their families and members of the community to help the decide (Hanson, 2011). Consequently, the direct news media effects model were discredited and influenced the development of several moderate-effect media theories, including agenda setting, framing, and priming which may be used to explain the influence of news media on Uber's government relations.

Agenda-setting theory. Agenda-setting theory is associated with Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972), although earlier work (Davis, 1952) emphasized similar process. The theory is built on the premise that news media do not necessarily tell the public or its audience what to think, but rather what they should think about. Under this theory, news media determine which issues are important to the public rather than particular issue positions. In other words, issues that receive more news media attention become the issues that the public discuss and demand action on. It implies then that news media are the determining factor of the issues and stories the public think about, share, and debate among themselves. Therefore, when news media fail to discuss and address certain issues, they become marginalized in the minds of the public (Hanson, 2011). According to Manning (2001), the concept of agenda setting involves arranging ideas within the text in a way that audiences can construct mental maps or interpretative frameworks. This theory also prompts questions regarding the interest at play when developing

news agendas before communicating them. It implies that news media can set agendas in the society by covering a certain issue with more weight than another. Tuchman (1973) argues that mass media can set agenda by impending routinization, which can be achieved by varying raw materials and categorizing objects to control ideas. In retrospect, the way in which news media classify events as news plays a crucial role in determining the stories the public think about, discuss, or share among themselves.

Agenda-setting theory is applicable in several situations including influencing the public to take certain issues with more seriousness while marginalizing others (Hanson, 2011). For instance, when critics claim that a specific media outlet has an agenda, they effectively draw on this theory. In such cases, agendas can range for propagation of cutthroat capitalist ethics in films to a perceived liberal bias in the news media (Bryant & Zillmann, 2009). This theory can be used to explain certain phenomena such as the rise of public opinion on the legalization of marijuana or the rising public opinion against smoking. Initially, smoking was considered a personal health issue before news media took an anti-smoking stance. Following the promotion of antismoking sentiments through public relations campaigns, advertisements, and through a variety of news media outlets, news media moved the issue of smoking into the public arena. Consequently, the issue became a public health issue and no longer a personal health issue (Hanson, 2011). By increasing the coverage of a certain issue in news media, the public's interest is increased, and the issue considered a public issue.

This theory explains why certain issues tend to become of public interests, while others fade away a few days after they first emerge. Media scholars of agenda setting theory study the relative importance or salience of an issue to understand what causes it to be important. In essence, the relative salience of an issue will determine its place within the public agenda in turn

influencing public policy creation. Therefore, this theory traces public policy from its roots as an agenda and how it has been promoted in news media to become a final product in the form of a policy or law (Hanson, 2011).

In agenda-setting theory, news media influence the salience of topics or issues on the public agenda (Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006). It implies then that by covering a certain piece of information or a topic more frequently, news media will influence the audience to regard the topic more important. Agenda setting is the process through which news media create awareness and concern of salient topics and issues among the public. Hanson (2011) notes that this theory is guided by two basic assumptions that try to explain how news media influence the public. First, news media do not necessarily reflect the reality, but rather filter and shape it to appear to the public in a given manner. Second, news media concentrate on a few subjects, issues or topics that lead the public in perceiving them more important than other issues (Hanson, 2011). However, for the two assumptions to hold, the concept of agenda setting requires mass communication within a given period. In essence, agenda setting occurs through accessibility in the sense that the more frequent and prominent the issue is covered by news media, the more accessible it becomes in the memories of the audiences (Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006). Consequently, the issue is perceived more important and given more weight to the public.

Priming theory. Priming theory is based on political science research works of Shanto Iyengar, Mark Peters, and Donald Kinder (1982). It is centered on an argument that news media provides the public with a context for discussing an issue, in turn setting the stage for audience understanding. According to Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007), this theory precedes agenda setting as a theory of media effects, and it is based in cognitive psychology that relate to an associative network model of human memory. Under this theory, news media can influence by

stimuli that can affect how the public perceive short-term thoughts and actions. Priming refers to a psychological process in which news media emphasize a given issue to increase the salience of the specific issue, and activate people memories previously acquired information about the issue (Bryant & Zillmann, 2009).

Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) describe priming as a conception that news media may use to influence people by enhancing their basic perception based on preconceptions already stored in their memory. Essentially, memories are stored as nodes in the minds of people and are interconnected to form a frame of references used in making decisions. Therefore, priming allows the public to analyze a situation and evaluate the effectiveness of news media based on a frame of reference (Bryant & Zillmann, 2009). An excellent explanation of priming is when a person hears a new word for the first time in their life, and suddenly it starts popping everywhere in news media and even at grandmother's dinner conversation. The situation happens because the human brain can be primed to notice things that would have ordinarily had overlooked it. Concerning media theory, the same thing happens when media outlets began spending time on an issue that might ordinary have been overlooked. When such an issue becomes news, it may soon become relevant. The more news media cover the issue, the more impact it has on public opinion (Bryant & Zillmann, 2009).

According to priming theory scholars, news media have the power to control the way audiences interpret new information (Bryer & Zavattaro, 2011). In retrospect, humans tend to filter new information based on what they already know, or they perceive to know. In this regard, the public cannot view new information outside the context of previous information. Therefore, people that attempt to mold public opinion more often than not try to manipulate the information conveyed to the public. By ignoring some issues and emphasizing on others, news media can

determine issues that will have a bearing on certain events, and which ones will not (Bryer & Zavattaro, 2011).

Priming theory asserts that news media can influence the public by portraying images that stimulate related thoughts in their minds. The theory is grounded in cognitive psychology and derived from the associative network model of human memory (Berger et al., 2010). In the perspective, a concept or idea is stored within a node in the network of a human mind, and it is related to other concepts and ideas by semantic paths. By definition, priming is the activation of a node in the network, and it serves as a filter, a premise for further processing of information, an interpretive frame, or a premise for additional judgment formation (Berger et al., 2010).

As far as media effects are concerned, priming is the process through which news media concentrate on some issues, news or topics at the expense of others thereby altering the standards by which the public evaluate a certain issue. This theory is usually discussed in tandem with agenda setting theory because of a two-fold association between the two. First, the two theories revolve around the recall of salient information and operate on the idea that the audience will use the most readily information to make decisions. Second, agenda setting is the process that takes place over time while priming is a later part of the two-fold process (Bryant & Zillmann, 2009). In other words, priming is used to shape the consideration people take into an account when making decisions or judgment issues once an issue has been made salient through agenda setting.

Framing theory. Framing theory is based on economics research of Erving Goffman (1974), and it is built on the premise that news media provide the public with a focus and environment for reporting a story thereby influencing the way audiences understand and evaluate it. Essentially, framing involves calling attention to some aspects of reality at the same time obscuring other elements that might make the audience react differently. Under this theory, news

media focus their attention on some issues or events and then places them within a certain field of meaning. The theory suggests that the manner in which the news is presented to the audience (frame) influences the people's choice about processing the information. Therefore, frames are the abstractions that work to structure or organize the meaning of a message. Frames are commonly used to structure the news or information that news media convey to the public. In this regard, they influence how news are perceived by the audience and act as second level agenda setting since news media tell the public both the issue to think about and how to think about it (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Framing theory, which was put forth first by Goffman, states that people use their primary framework for interpreting what is going on around their world. In the perspective, this framework is regarded as primary because it does not depend on other frameworks to be useful. However, primary frameworks can be either natural or social with both helping an individual interpret data. While natural frameworks identify events such by taking their meaning literally, social frameworks perceive the cause of events as social factors caused by goals, whims, and manipulations by other social players (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). From these two distinct frameworks, news media can use different framing techniques as suggested by Fairhurst and Sarr (1996). They include stories, metaphor, artifact, slogan and jargons, tradition, spin, and contrast (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

According to Neuman and Guggenheim (2011), framing comprises a set of concepts that individuals organize, perceive, and use them to pass information. It is a social phenomenon that involves news media construction issues and topics socially, and making it available to the public. In other words, news media selectively influence the perception of the public using certain phrases, words, or news. In news media, the information about a certain issue is used as a

base, and the frame surrounding such an issue is used to change the perception of the audience without having to alter the actual facts (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). In essence, news media can use a frame to define how information about an issue is delivered in most cases encouraging certain interpretation while discouraging others. Within the field of communication, this theory can be used to define how news media coverage shape public opinion. In particular, framing influences the behavior and attitudes of the audience by framing information in a way that will affect the desired influence (Neuman & Guggenheim, 2011).

Culture and Policy Difference Influence on Media

News media can be quite influential in shaping public opinion in several ways mainly because it provides people with information than any other source. As a result, they tend to develop a level of trust allowing news media to become more influential. Due to this high level of trust, news media are able to shape and mold public opinion on what is bound to happen (Miller, 2011). News media are also influential because the public perceives it as “the fourth branch” of the government that helps in keeping institutions accountable and more responsible. Therefore, when there are cases of distrust of authority figures of business institutions, news media act as a public watchdog in shedding light on that which transpires in darkness. However, culture differences and policy differences in a country or state can influence the manner in which news media operate. The influence can range from the kind of information presented, the tone used, to even the manner in which news media operate.

According to Gripsrud (2002), culture values and differences shape news media by determining how news media are created, controlled, and used. For instance, the value of free speech has been central to the American news media with the U.S. Constitution's first amendment guaranteeing the freedom of speech and of the press. Today, the U.S. has some of the

broadest protections for speech, which has greatly influenced the American culture. These cultural values have allowed news media to enjoy the freedom of reporting on most issues surrounding the people. However, news media still face some limits since these values have shifted over time (Miller, 2011). For example, obscenity has not always been tolerated in American culture, but the definition of the term has greatly changed over time. In the perspective, magazines such as Playboy are readily available while pornography is generally unacceptable to particular demographic groups.

Another way in which cultural differences and policy differences shape news media is when producers of news media content have vested interest in certain social goals (Gripsrud, 2002). Usually, producers offer news media content that refutes or promotes specific viewpoints of certain issues. Corporations, government, educational institutions, and even nonprofits try to shape news media content to promote themselves and their values. In the event that news media owners have a stake in a certain issue, they tend to influence what information get to reaches the public. Usually, this is accomplished by focusing news media of certain stories or news at the expense of other news. Therefore, news media tend to be saturated with news of certain issues while giving no attention at all to other issues. At the government level, this type of news media influence can take the form of propaganda that intentionally attempts to persuade its audience for political, ideology, or commercial purposes. In most cases, propaganda distorts the truth by selectively presenting the truth and sing emotional appeals (Gripsrud, 2002).

The cultural values also influence news media by making it societal gatekeepers. According to Shoemaker & Vos (2009), gatekeeping refers to the process of culling and creating countless bits of information into a limited edition or number of messages that reach audiences every day. Gatekeeping theory is at the center of the role of media in modern public life as the

process determines information to be selected, and the nature and content of messages to be delivered. For instance, an international news channels receives numerous news items in a day, including international terror issues, change in government policies, UN discussions, and business expansions to new markets, among other news. However, the news channel cannot show all of those news items to its audience due to organizational policy and reputational concerns. In this regard, an editor decides which items to show to the public and which ones to filter. Essentially, gatekeepers are people, such as reporters and editors, who help to determine which stories make it to the reporter. They also decide which sources to use, what is published and the stories that make it to the front page. For this reason, news media gatekeepers are part of the culture and have their own cultural values that guide how they create news and shape what is presented to the wider public (Gripsrud, 2002). Equally, news media can decide which events to represent as more important and which ones are less important to the consumers. In retrospective, the news considered uninteresting or unimportant never reaches the ears or eyes of the larger public (Miller, 2011).

An example of such a case was the Rwandan genocide in 1994 whereby international news media were sluggish in covering the events in Rwanda where almost one million people were killed furiously in just 100 years. Instead, the news focused on the murder of O.J. Simpson, the attack by Tonya Harding on a fellow figure skater, or the conflict in Bosnia. This lack of coverage by news media allowed politicians to remain complacent and invested less time and troops to a country that was in turmoil. Africa was considered unimportant issue by news media because it did not have a large market for newspapers. Since news media outlets need to make profits, the genocide news were downplayed at a time of great crisis and had significant contributions to hundreds of thousands of people in the nation (Gripsrud, 2002).

Global Differences Media Presentations

International news coverage continues to have striking differences in coverage across nations and regions. The major news productions in the world, the U.S. and the U.K., make headlines in most places of the world and devote more of their attention to issues in their immediate regions. The same is being seen in news media in emerging markets, such as China, which are devoting their attention to influences of external parties to their countries (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). Although news media in different parts of the world aim to reflect the world without bias, several country-specific factors can influence how they present news. In essence, news media in different countries can have different or opposing windows through which they see the world. Consequently, they can have varied understanding and interpretations of events that are identical (Paterson & Sreberny, 2004).

Several case studies and empirical evidence reveal that news media in different countries can present an event differently. Particularly, the extents to which the government and other regulators control news media determine how news media will present an event (Paterson & Sreberny, 2004). In the United States, news media enjoy the freedom of reporting and presenting news across several channels especially over internet. The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States provides protection to the freedom of news media allowing news outlets to present and report news without limitations (Freedom House, 2015). However, the manner in which news outlets report and present news is affected by their ratings. The United States news media industries comprise of many for-profit organizations that operate news outlets and competition is considerably high. Each of the news outlets compete to get higher ratings by presenting news that are unique and highly rated in the public (Luther & Zhou, 2005). In essence, organizations with higher ratings get larger audience size and larger profits. Another

factor that influences how new media in the United States present issues is politics. Primarily, news media collaborate with politicians, organizations, and other key players in society to improve their ratings in the public. While politicians use news media as their PR machines, news media use politicians to get to power (Freedom House, 2015).

In the U.K., the government does not control the operations of news media even though there are publicly funded news outlets. News media in the country operate freely, but there is a slight difference from news media in the United States because the constitution does not guarantee press freedom. Instead, the government has set certain guidelines and protocols that guide the operations of news outlets. In addition, the freedom of news media is restricted on issues concerning national security or under the specifications of the Royal Figureer of press regulations. In some rare occasions, the courts impose super-injunctions that forbid news media from reporting specific information or the mere existence of the injunction itself. Although news media have consistently criticized the increasing use of these injunctions, they still influence how news media in the country reports. Another factor that affects the way news media in the U.K. present issues is ownership. Essentially, ownership of news media outlets in the UK is concentrated in the hands of a few large companies that remain aligned with political parties. Since news media markets lacks stiff competition, news media only focus on presenting issues that are relevant leaving out the rest (Freedom House, 2015).

News media environment in China has remained to be one of the most restrictive in the world. Although the outlets are no longer required to follow journalistic guidelines set by the government strictly, self-censorship is still a critical issue in the country. In particular, news outlets are required to take necessary precautions when reporting news about certain issues or subjects. Some of the subjects considered taboo by the government include, but are not limited

to, government policies in Xinjian and Tibet; the legitimacy of the Communist Party, religious topics, including Falun Gong and Dalai Lama; and pornography (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). News media are regulated by several organizations, including the General Administration of Press and Publication that administers newspapers and related media forms, and the Ministry of Public Security's Cyber Police force that monitors online content. In addition, foreign reporters operating within China are under strict restrictions that are considerably more severe than in most Asian countries (Luther & Zhou, 2005). As a result, the influence of international news media on Mainland China is greatly limited. Although Article 35 of the constitution guarantees freedoms of publication, speech, association, and assembly, the rights are subordinated to the decision of the government (Freedom House, 2015). The Chinese government has more control over news media than both the U.S. and U.K. governments. However, Chinese media industry is increasingly becoming a commercial market for media outlets. In fact, the mass media industry in the country is experiencing growing competition, increase in investigative reporting, and presentation of diversified content. As such, topics in finance, entertainment, and sports face little or no regulation in the government (Freedom House, 2015).

Hypotheses

The purpose of this research is to find out how the newspapers present Uber's government relations in the U.S., the U.K., and China. The study will use a qualitative and quantitative content analysis to investigate the presentation of this news in the two newspapers in each of the three countries. Since government policies and enactment of law in these three countries is different, it is expected that newspapers will present news about Uber's government relations differently. The use of content analysis will include describing news media content,

testing hypotheses of the characteristics of the message, and comparing news media content to the real world. To accomplish this goal, the following hypothesis is built.

Hypothesis: Newspapers in the three countries present Uber's government relations differently.

In order to test this hypothesis, it will be broken down into three parts regarding the ways newspapers in the three countries present Uber:

Consumer concerns. Uber's consumer concerns tend to be different in the three countries. It is expected that consumer concerns in China are less likely to be presented than in both the U.S. and the U.K. This is because Chinese newspaper outlets are mostly controlled by the government. Therefore, newspaper outlets in China rely more on official government information as their main source of information. In this regard, it is likely that fewer newspaper articles about consumer experiences and concerns from citizens' view, compared to both the U.K. and the U.S. where the newspaper outlets are more independent. Given this difference in news media freedom, the following hypotheses will be tested;

- H1_a: Chinese newspapers that talk about Uber contain fewer consumer concerns than U.S. newspaper.
- H1_b: Chinese newspapers that talk about Uber contain fewer consumer concerns than U.K. newspaper.

Legality. Legality is one of the factors affecting Uber's operations in different countries. In this regard, newspapers tend to present this issue in a somewhat broadened manner. Given that the laws concerning taxi-hailing services are different in the three countries, it is anticipated that newspapers presents Uber's legality differently. Legality issues in three countries that will be

analyzed are reference to legal action, public relations, and lobbying. This research hypothesizes that Chinese newspaper will have more reference to legal action than both U.S. and U.K. newspapers due to the communist nature of the Chinese government. However, no differences is expected to be observed in the amount of reference to PR and lobbying in the three countries. This is because both PR and lobbying are the key government relations strategies used by the company. Since the company experiences resistance when entering the markets in the three countries, it is likely to use the same amounts of lobbying and PR. Therefore, under the issue of legality, the following hypotheses will be tested:

- H2_a: Chinese newspapers have more reference to legal action than the U.S. newspapers
- H2_b: Chinese newspapers have more reference to legal action than UK newspapers
- H2_c: There is no difference in the amount of reference to PR in all the three countries
- H2_d: There is no difference in the amount to lobbying in all three countries

Valence. Several issues such as legality, consumer concerns, and relations with traditional taxi companies affect the overall tone towards Uber's government relations. Essentially, Uber has been in competition with traditional taxi companies in the U.S. and the U.K. The case is different in China, because China has a large population and taxis cannot satisfy the needs of the large customer base. Also, there are more public transportation options in a lot of cities, such as subway and bus. Therefore, the competition with taxi market in China is not as severe as in the U.S. or the U.K. As a result, Chinese newspaper lack bad news against Uber or have more favorable valence compared to both the U.S. and the U.K. It is also imperative to note that Uber's relations in China may be favorable because Uber's strategy in China is humble, neutral in the U.K. because of the company's neutral approach, but unfavorable in the U.S. because of using aggressive strategies against the White House. Given these prepositions, the following

hypotheses will be tested:

- H3_a: Chinese newspapers have more favorable valence than U.S. newspapers
- H3_b: Chinese newspapers have more favorable valence than U.K. newspapers

Method

Content analysis will be used in this research, because of its objective and systematic nature, and the ability to apply the results to a greater population (Jugenheimer, 2010). In particular, quantitative and qualitative content analyses allow the analysis of content presented in multimedia materials including news articles, photos, films, websites, and more (Schreier, 2012). However, this research only focused on newspaper articles and using this approach would produce the context of evaluating how newspaper presents Uber's news. According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006), content analysis allows for determining textual meaning and frames' identity in news media. Codebook with a proper coding instruction and agreement provides valid results about issues and frames as portrayed in the media. By applying this straightforward method, the aim will be to look directly at the amount of text and text frames in the selected articles to determine where there are any common themes in the local coverage of Uber's government relations.

This study is designed to compare the first level of agenda setting (amount of text), and the second level of agenda setting: framing (framed messages), and priming (influenced by stimuli) as media effects. Therefore, the study will do two levels of content analysis: the higher level and low level of content analysis. While the lower level content analysis focuses on analyzing, content that is measurable such as word count, the higher-level content analysis measures latent content where the researcher is interested in the underlying and deeper meaning of the message (Riff, Lacy & Fico, 2014).

To achieve this, the study will require doing a cross-section analysis of 90 different articles from 6 newspapers. This will comprise of 30 articles from two newspapers in each country from Jan 1, 2012 to Dec 31, 2015. The articles will be retrieved from "Access World News" and the "PreQuest Historical Newspapers" databases on topics addressing Uber's government relations in those countries. Articles about Uber that do not reflect its relations with the government will be ignored. The newspapers, time frame, and topics will be carefully researched to provide the optimal situation for analyzing the issue.

The identified hypotheses will be helpful in ensuring the research sticks within the set boundaries and scope. The amount and measurement of frames, and the influence of stimuli will be the independent variable for this study. On the other hand, Uber's government relations will act the dependent variables. All the articles selected for the study will be reviewed from the headlines, images, and body texts. If the headline or lead paragraphs mention "Uber" and "government relations," it will be reviewed for paragraph count and the themes present. The article will then be coded based on the common themes and frames identified. The frames will focus on Uber as a company, government relations, influence on government relations, and lobbying strategies.

For the purpose of completing this study, the frames will be further categorized into three categories; favorable, unfavorable, and neutral outcomes. Favorable outcomes will include news with positive remarks about the company's government relations; unfavorable outcomes will have the news with negative remarks while neutral outcomes will be void of both positive and negative remarks.

Codebook

This codebook will be used to analyze how the content of newspapers in the U.S., U.K.

and China present Uber's government relations. The research project aims to map, interpret, and explain the differences in how newspapers in the three countries present Uber's government relations. The content analysis will cover the positive, negative, and neutral presentation of government relations in the newspapers of the three countries.

Unit of analysis. The specified unit of analysis for this coding process is newspaper articles from both "Access World News" and the "PreQuest Historical Newspapers" databases. They include newspaper articles written by official columnists, staff, and other external sources including experts, opinion columnists, and politicians. It will also code editorials, letters, feature article or new report, and commentaries. All stories mentioning Uber and its relations with the government in the specific or other countries will be coded. In essence, items to be selected comprise of only articles discussing the relationship between Uber Company and the governments. The process involves reading the article in entirety and then coding the item on a coding sheet based on the codes below.

Form Variable Constructs. Form variable constructs comprises of codes generated before reading the article based on content analysis literature, newspaper's circulation and history.

Newspaper selection. The newspapers selected for this study are the ones with the highest circulation and largest online audience. In other words, data will be collected from the top two newspapers in each of the three countries under study. The two newspapers in each country reflect a broad spectrum of the country's position as far as Uber's government relation is concerned. It is assumed that the newspaper articles are readily available online and easily searchable on search engines. The process will involve finding literature that used these news outlets and using it for content analysis.

While the “Access World News” database provided articles from five of the newspapers (USA Today, The Guardian, The Sun, China Daily and TheXinhua net) the “PreQuest Historical Newspapers” databases provided articles from New York Times. These newspapers are a good choice for conducting this research because they have proven to be effective in the past. For instance, Calloway et al., (2006) used USA Today as their source of data to conduct a content analysis of news coverage about HPV in the U.S. New York Times was used in a different research by Kioussis (2004) to determine whether media salience was the key independent variable in agenda-setting during the 2000 U.S. presidential election. In a study aiming to update depictions of degradation, aggression, and sexual practices, Bridges et al., (2010) used The Sun and The Guardian to conduct a content analysis on sexual behavior and aggression in best-selling adult videos. TheXinhua net and China Daily were used to conduct a content analysis of how the 2010 Yushu earthquake was covered by the media in China (Qu et al., 2011). Therefore, each of these six newspaper are appropriate for this research because they have provided useful and reliable information in previous studies.

Data were collect for the period between 1/1/2012 and 12/31/2015. This time period was chosen because Uber expanded its operations internationally for the first time at the beginning of 2012. Although Uber did not expand its operations to China until 2014, the said time period allowed the researcher to use a precise 4-year period from which to gather relevant data.

Article Selection. The coding process begins with identifying and retrieving articles from the selected newspapers since January 2012 that focus on Uber as a company and its relationship with the governments. The process of article selection will involve selecting articles talking about Uber's relations with the local government in a particular country. For instance, when selecting articles from China's newspapers, only articles talking about Uber's relationship with

the Chinese government will be selected leaving out those talking about Uber's relationship with the White House and the British government. Since the analysis of these articles is based on three different countries, the selection of the articles is from three different news media systems. The goal of the research is to find out how newspaper covered Uber's relations with the government differ in the three countries, if at all. In other words, article selection will involve decoding the newspapers' circulation and history in each country. Since it is not possible to access Uber's inside information on the strategies they used for government relations, news media are the only manners that the public can get this information. Consequently, using information from newspapers is a feasible way of finding out Uber's relations in the three countries. By the end of the analysis, it will be possible to judge how Uber's government relations are expressed by newspaper in each country. For instance, Uber's relations in China may be favorable because they are more humble, neutral in the U.K. because they used a neutral approach, and unfavorable in the U.S. because they used aggressive strategies against the White House. The article selection can be undertaken through searching the following keywords on Access World News and the PreQuest Historical Newspapers search engines.

- "Uber" AND "United States" OR "Uber" AND "America" OR "Uber" AND "White House" OR "Uber's government relations strategy in the U.S./America/ with White House"
- "Uber" AND "U.K." OR "Uber" AND "Britain" OR "Uber" AND "England" OR "Uber's government relations strategy in the U.K./Britain /in England"
- "Uber" AND "China" OR "Uber's government relations strategy in China"
- "Uber government strategies" AND "lobbying"

The objective of using these keywords is to retrieve news articles that substantively

discuss Uber's operations and government relations in the three countries. The use of "AND/OR search" will help in picking articles that mentions one or more of the keywords. In some search engines such as Google, a Boolean search criteria can be used to refine search results to include "either/or" search options. The aim is to retrieve articles that are most relevant to the purpose of the research.

The results will comprise of a collection of articles about Uber's government relations in each of the three countries. Only articles talking about Uber's relations with the local governments the three countries are coded.

Descriptive variables. This set of variables is providing an identity to the article by describing it. Data about the section of the paper, page number, and type of article can be used to give additional indication of the importance of the article. They include the identity of the coder, the newspaper articles, years selected, among other crucial information. The following variables are key variables in this content analysis while other descriptive variables are shown in Appendix.

Countries (*Article from*). The articles will be retrieved from newspaper publications in three countries. The following code will represent the countries.

- 1 = The United States
- 2 = The United Kingdom
- 3 = China

Newspapers. Two newspapers from the list of leading newspapers in each county will be selected. The abbreviations of the names of the newspaper where the articles was derived from will be used to code the newspapers. The following two newspapers will be selected from the United States and coded appropriately:

- 1 = The New York Times
- 2 = USA Today

The following two newspapers will be selected from the United Kingdom and coded appropriately.

- 3 = The Sun
- 4 = The Guardian

The following two newspapers will be selected from China and coded appropriately.

- 5 = China Daily
- 6 = Xinhuanet

Type of Article. Specify a code for the type of article being analyzed as indicated below.

- 1 = News story: News are the most frequent story type and includes factual, fair and balanced reports of events and articles reporting specific topics or issues such as Uber's entry into the market, individual who said what, where an event occurred and the company took a particular move, among others (Smith, 2012).
- 2 = Opinion column or commentary: These articles are clearly marked as special column and they are distinct from regular coverage. Usually, they are written in a personal style discussing an item that is recurring in the news. Commentary is a special type of opinion column that is written by an external source such as a politician or expert and are explicitly marketed as "commentary" (Smith, 2012).
- 3 = News Summary: News summaries are short sections of an article giving a summary of the issue discussed in the article or a particular part of the newspaper. Usually, a news summary will be clearly marked "news summary" in its heading (Smith, 2012).

- 4 = Editorial: An editorial article will typically be marked as editorial. It is an opinion-piece that gives evaluations into specific issues giving a clear standpoint of the editor or author (Smith, 2012).
- 5 = Background story/Report: A background story is typically marked as an “analysis” and focuses on factual reporting of an issue from an in-depth descriptive and analytical approach. A report is a type of background story based on individual experience of the author or correspondent on the issue being addressed (Smith, 2012).
- 6 = Others: Articles not falling in the above categories can be classified as “others.” They include questions to the newspaper, interview, among others (Smith, 2012).

Articles source. Since there are differences in the degree of news media freedom in the three countries, with the U.S. having the highest degree of freedom, followed by the U.K., and lastly China, the source of article will be coded based on where it got the information. The sources will be coded as follows,

- 1 =Uber
- 2 = Government
- 3 = Commercial Organization
- 4 = Citizen
- 5 = Other

Content variable constructs. Content variables describe the content presented in the article. They will be used to describe both the dependent and independent variable, and help in answering the research question. The following codes will be used:

Frames.

- **Lobbying:** focuses on Uber's actions in attempting to influence government decisions on its operations.
 - **Keywords:** "lobbyists," "lobbying strategies," Uber's interests," "team of lobbyists," "advocacy strategies," "political game," "political influence" among others.
- **Legality:** focuses on the legality of Uber's operations within a country, and the strategies the company uses to address the issue of legality.
 - **Keywords:** "legality," "legality issues," "proposed laws," "mode of operations," "local laws," among others.
- **Public relations:** focuses on the company's use of public relations to address issues associated with government relations.
 - **Keywords:** "public relations strategies," "use of public support," "viral support," "support from customers," "use of social media," among others.
- **Other:** if a news articles does not fit into any of the above categories, mark "other" on the code sheet and indicate in a few words the possible category the article would best fit (e.g. marketing, operations, unsure, etc).

Consumer concerns. Some of these factors include consumer security, price, and consumer experience, among others.

- 1 = containing consumer concerns
- 2 = no consumer concerns

Valence. Indicate the overall tone of the article towards Uber's government relations.

- 1 = Positive/Favorable: news article depicts the relationship between Uber and the government in good light. E.g., "Uber continues to work closely with the government" or

“the effective Uber’s government relations strategies.” News articles with positive valence will portray Uber’s government relations as a factor promoting the success of the company’s operations in the country.

- 2 = Neutral: news article demonstrates both positive and negative stance towards Uber’s government relations in the country. Any news article whose valence cannot be depicted as either positive or negative will fall under this category.
- 3 = Negative/Unfavorable: News article depicts Uber’s government relations in a bad light. E.g., “Uber is facing several legality issues in its operations” or “the government has restricted Uber’s operations.” News articles with negative valence will portray Uber’s government relations as a limiting factor to its operations in the country.

Coding Process

The independent variables for this study included the newspaper and the country from which the newspaper was published. Dependent variables included the valence (favorable, unfavorable, neutral), story placement of the article (headline, body, paired with image), the tone of mention of Uber’s government relations. By searching the terms “Uber” and “Government,” the two databases found a population of articles containing the unit of analysis. Then a simple random sample of articles was produced from the population ensuring that each article had an equal chance of being chosen. For example, searching the keyword Uber in China Daily generated a population of 251 results. Narrowing down the search with the keywords “Uber and Government” produced 181 results, “Uber’s government relations” 0 results, and “Uber’s government strategy” generated 4 results. These results were then narrowed down to the most appropriate in meeting the goals of the research by reducing the unrelated and overlapping articles. This resulted in a population size of 59 results articles, which were randomly selected to

form a sample of 15 articles from China Daily. This process was then repeated for the each of the other 5 newspapers.

Inter-Coder Reliability Analysis

Two experienced coders undertook the task of coding the materials. Ten articles were content randomly selected from USA Today and used in the main analysis. Kappa is .846, which is sufficient for this type of research.

Result Analysis

The following section will rely on the coding process to analyze and derive meaning from the data collected. When analyzing content quantitatively, it is assumed that phrases and words mentioned reflect important concerns in communication. Therefore, quantitative content analysis examines factors such as word frequencies, time counts, keyword frequencies, among others to (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). After coding for relevancy to the study, 88 (98%) of the identified articles were included for this analysis. For Xinhua net and the New York Times, the two newspapers had only 14 valid articles after reducing unrelated and repetitive articles (16% each of the total relevant articles). Thus, for those two newspapers, population is the sample which brings the total number of articles to 88 articles. For other newspapers, 15 articles were selected randomly from each of their population.

For qualitative analysis, the focus will be on the context of the newspaper articles. According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006), the idea of conducting a qualitative content analysis starts from the methodological basis to the analysis by conceptualizing categories to text passages. In retrospect, this analysis involves assignment of categories to text as a qualitative step and analyzing of frequencies of categories as a quantitative step. This section will present a detailed analysis of newspaper's presentation of Uber in the three countries under study by

describing the newspaper content and testing hypotheses of the characteristics of the message. To accomplish this goal, the hypothesis identified during problem definition will be analyzed individually. This section will be divided into two main parts. In the first part, the paper will examine the main hypothesis to determine whether government relations are presented differently in the three countries. The second part will test the other hypothesis derived from the main hypothesis to elaborate how the newspapers' presentation of Uber differs.

Main Hypothesis

This study mainly examined to what degree newspapers in the three countries present Uber's government relations differently. To test this hypothesis, this part will examine the type of newspaper articles talking about Uber in the three countries, their sources of information, and their presentation of Uber's government relations.

Type of Newspaper Articles Talking about Uber. The articles used for this research were grouped into six different types. They include news stories, opinion columns or commentaries, news summaries, editorials, background stories, and others. Table 1 demonstrates the frequency of each type of article in the newspaper selected.

Table 1: Types of Articles

	News	Editorial	Opinion	Summaries	Background	Others	Total
NYT	8	3	0	0	3	0	14
USA Today	4	5	2	0	3	1	15
The Guardian	7	5	3	0	0	0	15
The Sun	3	3	8	0	1	0	15
Xinhua net	13	0	1	0	0	0	14
China Daily	12	1	2	0	0	0	15
Total	47	17	16	0	7	1	<u>88</u>

From the 88 articles selected for this research, 53% of them were news articles, 19% editorials, 18% opinion columns, 8% background stories, and 1% others. Generally, there were no news summaries covering stories about Uber. In the United States, Uber was mostly covered in news articles comprising of 41% of the selected articles. In the United Kingdom, Uber was covered more in opinion columns (37%) followed by news articles (33%). In China, news about Uber were covered most in news articles (86%), with no news summaries, and background stories covering news about Uber.

Sources of Information for the Newspaper Articles. Due to the differences in the degree of media freedom in the three countries, the source of information provided in the newspapers differed greatly. The sources also influenced the information and news presented in the newspaper, and whether an article presents Uber in a positive or negative light. The articles selected derived their information from Uber, the government, commercial organization, citizens, and other/undefined sources. Table 2 shows the distribution of the newspaper articles based on

their sources.

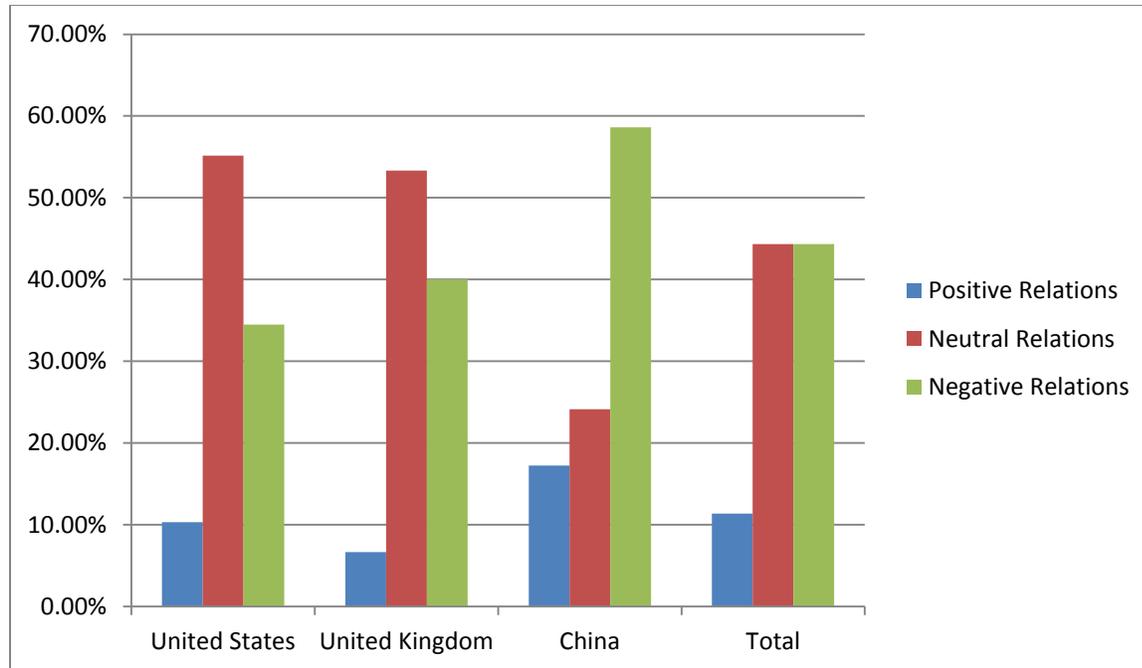
Table 2: Article Sources

	Uber	Government	Commercial organization	Citizen	Other	Total
NYT	3	4	1	4	2	14
USA Today	4	2	2	2	5	15
The Guardian	1	1	5	4	4	15
The Sun	2	2	0	4	7	15
Xinhua net	4	6	1	2	1	14
China Daily	3	5	2	2	3	15
Total	17	20	11	18	22	<u>88</u>

From the data collected, 19% of the newspaper articles derived their information from Uber, 23% from the Government in respective countries, 13% from commercial organizations, 20% from citizens, and 25% from undefined sources. In the United States, the newspapers relied on all types of sources almost equally; Uber (24%), Government (21%), Commercial organizations (10%), citizens (21%), and others (24%). In the United Kingdom, newspapers mainly relied on undefined sources (37%) and citizens (27%) as their sources of information. They also relied on the government (10%), Uber (10%), and commercial organizations (17%). In China, information about Uber usually came from the government (38%) followed by Uber (24%). Other sources of information also contributed to the news presented in the newspapers; commercial organizations (10%), citizens (14%), and others (14%).

Newspaper articles presentation of Uber and its relations with government. The presentation of Uber and its government relations is likely to be influenced by the type of article and its sources of information. The following figure shows how Uber's relations were presented in newspapers in the three countries:

Figure 1: Presentation of Uber's government relations



The results show that newspapers in the three countries presented Uber's government relations generally in a neutral light (44%) or in negative light (44%). In the United States, Uber's government relations were presented as being more neutral (55%) than negative (35%), with just a small portion of the newspapers presenting Uber's government in a positive light (10%). Almost a similar case was observed in the United Kingdom newspapers where the majority of the newspapers (53%) presented Uber's government relation in a neutral light, 40% in a negative light, and 7% in a positive light. The biggest difference in the way newspapers presented government relations in the three countries was observed in China's newspapers. In China, majority of the newspapers (59%) presented Uber's government relations in a negative

light, while 24% presented the relationship in a neutral light. However, newspapers in this country had the highest rate (17%) of news depicting a positive relationship between Uber and the government compared to the U.S. and the U.K., who had 10% and 7% respectively.

This analysis shows that the results supported the main hypothesis since newspapers in each country presented Uber's government relations differently. The next step will involve two statistical analysis methods (Chi-square and One-way ANOVA) to test the other identified hypotheses under headings consumer concerns, legality, and valence.

Statistical Analysis

A chi-square test (χ^2 test) is a statistical test to examine whether sampling distribution accords chi-square distribution. When the null hypothesis is true, the sampling distribution is approximately coincident with chi-square distribution, which means there is no statistically significant difference between variables. Chi-square test is used with variables measured on a nominal scales and examines the frequencies of occurrence in each category. The only assumption is that data have been randomly selected or are able to represent the population. There are two types of chi-square: chi-square test of goodness of fit, which is used to test if observed data accord to the pattern that is expected; chi-square test for independence, which is used to test if there is a relationship between categories (Lancaster & Seneta, 2005). This study just used the second type of chi-square.

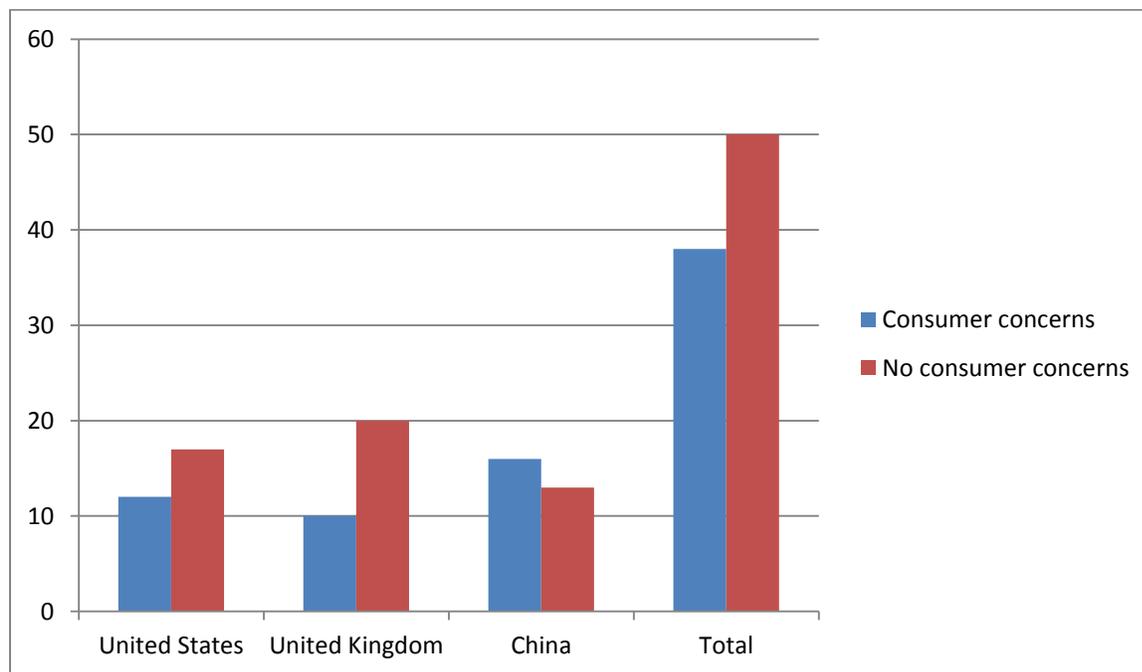
One-way ANOVA is a method to compare means of two or more groups based on an F distribution. The analysis only can be used when there is only one independent variable and dependent variable is numerical. In fact, one-way ANOVA is used to test at least three groups' means because two groups use *t* test to compare their means. The null hypothesis for one-way ANOVA is that there is no statistically significant difference among those groups, which means

the population means from which the samples are selected are equal, or each of the group means is statistically equal (Green & Salkind, 2003).

Consumer concerns. To determine if newspapers in the three countries present Uber differently, it is important to analyze how consumer concerns are addressed in the newspapers. The analysis compared the frequency of consumer concerns in each country to determine whether difference exist.

Hypothesis H1_a. Hypothesis H1_a stated that Chinese newspapers that talk about Uber contain fewer consumer concerns than U.S. newspaper. In the analysis of whether a newspaper article contained consumer concerns, several factors were put into considerations. Some of these factors include consumer security, price, and consumer experience, among others. An article with one or more of these factors was considered to contain consumer concerns, while an article lacking these factors was classified as not containing consumer concern issues. A summary of the analysis is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: How consumer concerns are addressed in newspapers



After the analysis of the headlines and words in the newspaper articles selected in the two countries, the results revealed that 41% of the newspaper articles in the United States that talked about Uber had consumer concerns. In China 55% of the newspapers that talked about Uber contained consumers concerns. Although there is no statistically significant difference between U.S. and China, $\chi^2(1, N = 58) = 1.7, p = .189$, Chinese newspapers that talked about Uber had more consumer concerns than the U.S. Therefore, the results did not support the hypothesis H1_a.

Hypothesis H1_b, Hypothesis H1_b stated that Chinese newspapers that talk about Uber contain fewer consumer concerns than U.K. newspaper. A comparison of the number of Chinese articles that contained consumer concerns were compared to those in the United Kingdom. Chi-square showed that there is no statistically significant difference between U.K. and China, $\chi^2(1, N = 59) = 3.8, p = .051$. Also, the results obtained revealed that 55% of Chinese newspaper articles contained consumer concerns, while only 33% of articles from United Kingdom newspapers contained consumer concern issues. Therefore, the results did not support the hypothesis H1_b.

Legality. In analyzing how Ube's legality is presented in the three countries' newspapers, the results will be analyzed based on how the newspapers gave reference to the frames of legal action, public relations, and lobbying. Frames refers to the manner in which newspapers or media shapes a given story or news (Hansen, 2004). For the purposes of this research, frames were defined as the ways in which newspapers shaped Uber and its government relations in a country. The articles selected for the study framed Uber and Uber's government relations differently. In every article, the frames present were identified and classified into four categories: lobbying, legality, public relations, and others. Articles with the frame of lobbying focused on Uber's actions in attempting to influence government decisions on its operations. Those that

framed legality focused on the legality of Uber's operations and legal issues surrounding Uber's operations within a country, while public relations focused on the company's use of public relations to address issues associated with government relations. Articles that did not fall into any of these three categories were classified as other. Table 3 shows the distribution of the identified frames in the selected newspapers.

Table 3: Frames

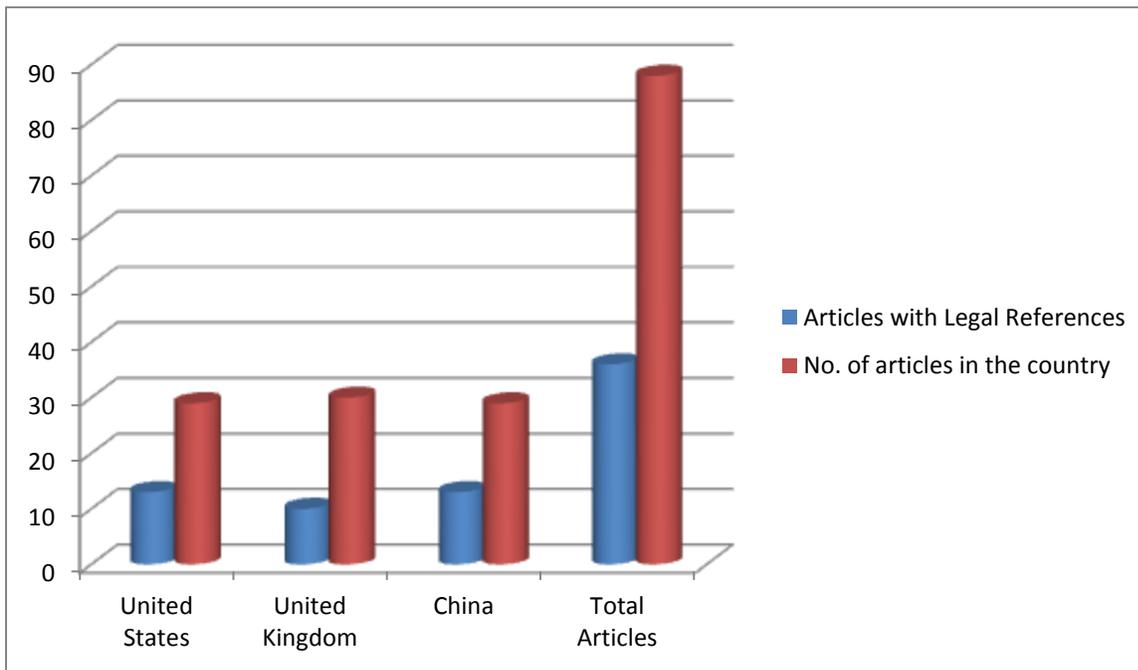
	Lobbying	Legality	Public Relations	Other	Total
NYT	1	7	0	6	14
USA Today	4	6	1	4	15
The Guardian	1	6	1	7	15
The Sun	0	4	0	11	15
Xinhua net	0	5	1	8	14
China Daily	2	8	3	2	15
Total	8	36	6	38	<u>88</u>

From the data analyzed, 9% of the articles had the frame of lobbying, 40% legality, 7% frame of public relations, and 43% had undefined frames. In the United States, newspapers mostly covered news about Uber's legality (45%), followed by other/general news (35%). Lobbying and public relations were covered in 17% and 4% of the articles respectively. In the United Kingdom, newspapers mainly covered the general news about Uber (60%) followed by Uber's Legality (33%). Only 3% of the articles covered Uber's lobbying and public relation each. In China, newspapers gave more attention to Uber's legality (45%) followed by general

news/others (35%). Public relations and lobbying were covered in 14% and 7% respectively. This analysis shows that newspapers in the three country framed Uber differently.

Hypothesis H2_a. Hypothesis H2_a stated that Chinese newspapers have more reference to legal action than the U.S. newspapers. To examine this hypothesis, a comparison was made on how between newspapers in the two countries about how they addressed the issue of legality. In the perspective of Uber’s legality, legal action refers to judicial proceedings that were brought by various parties, including the government, taxi companies, or citizens against Uber. In particular, articles that talked about how Uber was prosecuted for a wrong doing or preventing Uber from operating were considered to make reference to legal action. Figure 3 shows the distribution of newspaper articles in the three countries with regard to giving reference to legal action.

Figure 3: Articles with reference to legal action



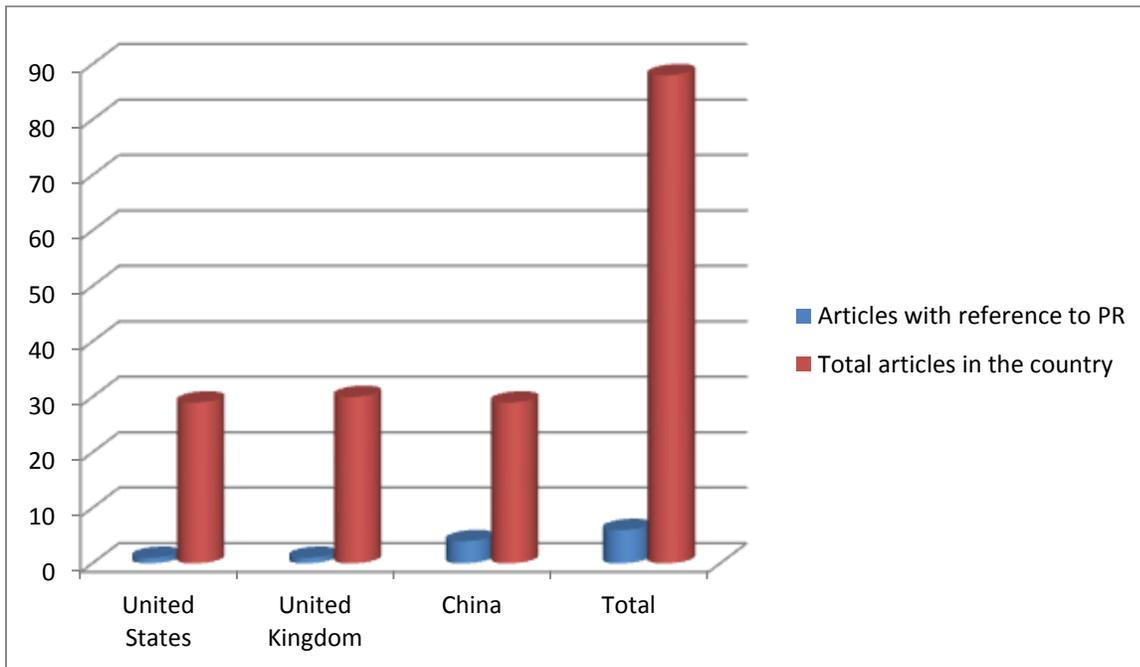
From the results, majority (45%) of newspapers in both the United States and China that talked about Uber gave reference to legal action, $\chi^2(1, N = 58) = 1, p = 1$. Therefore, the results did not support the hypothesis H2_a since newspapers in both countries had an equal portion of

newspapers giving reference to legal action.

Hypothesis H2_b. Hypothesis H2_b stated that Chinese newspaper have more reference to legal action than UK newspapers. Analyzing this hypothesis involved examining the contents of newspaper articles to point out words giving reference to Uber and legality. According to the results, 33% of the newspapers in the UK gave reference to legal action, which is less than 12% lower percentage compared to Chinese newspapers, which scored 45%. However, there is no statistically significant difference between U.K. and China, $\chi^2 (1, N = 59) = .8, p = .365$. Therefore, the results did not support the hypothesis H2_b.

Hypothesis H2_c. Hypothesis H2_c stated that there is no difference in the amount of reference to PR in all the three countries. In testing this hypothesis, articles with stories about Uber public relations strategies were considered to have reference to PR. Figure 4 shows the number of articles that gave reference to PR in each of the countries.

Figure 4: Articles with reference to PR

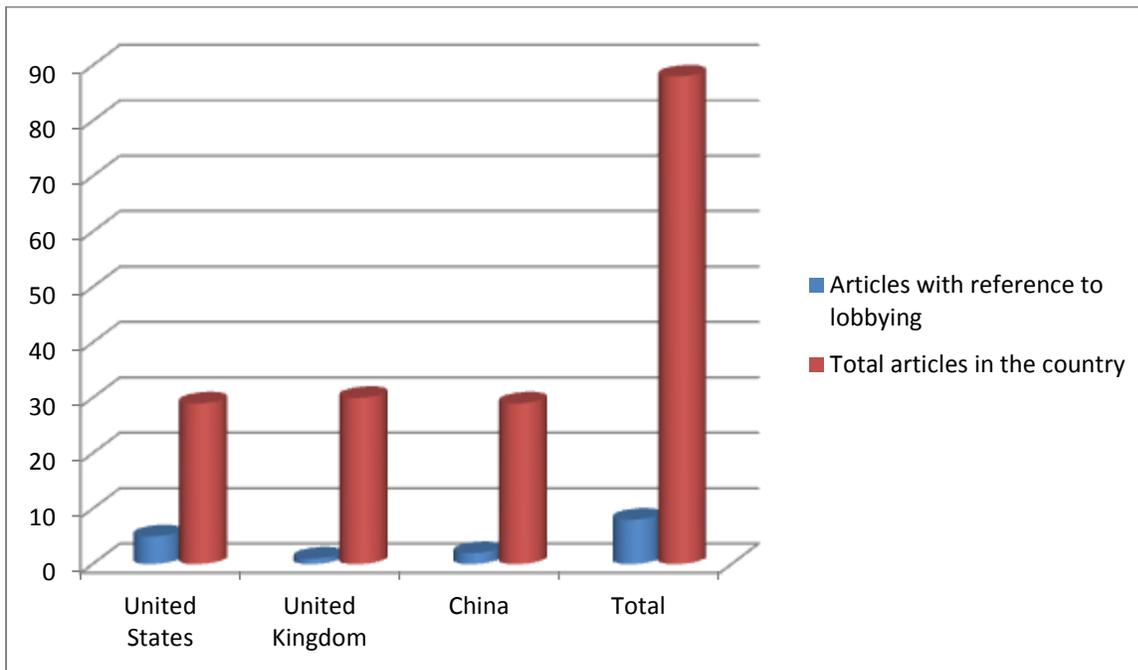


According to the data, 4% of the articles in the U.S. gave reference to PR. In the U.K. the

proportion stood at 3% while in China it stood at 14%. Therefore, the amount of references to PR was low in all the three countries with China giving the highest percent of 14%. This shows that there is no difference in the amount of reference to PR in the three countries, $\chi^2 (2, N = 88) = 3.3$, $p = .191$. Therefore, the results supported the hypothesis H2c.

Hypothesis H2d. Hypothesis H2d stated that there is no difference in the amount to lobbying in all three countries. Lobbying refers to any strategies used by Uber to influence the government decisions or current legislation. In the perspective, articles that had stories about actions taken by Uber to influence the government were classified as including lobbying as a theme. Figure 5 shows the number of newspaper articles that comprised of stories about Uber’s lobbying strategies.

Figure 5: Articles with reference to lobbying



Analysis of the data revealed articles with Uber’s lobbying strategies were less than 20% in each of the three countries. In particular, only 17% of the articles in the United States gave reference to lobbying, 3% in the United Kingdom, and 7% in China. Chi-square showed that

there is no difference in the amount of lobbying in the three countries: $\chi^2 (2, N = 88) = 3.7, p = .157$. Therefore, the results support the hypothesis H2_d.

Valence. Valence refers to overall tone of the article towards Uber's government relations. Depending on how an article presented Uber and government relations, it was classified as having either a positive, negative, or neutral valence. Articles with positive or favorable valence depicted the relationship between Uber and the government in good light. On the hand, articles with negative or unfavorable valence depicted Uber's government relations in a bad light. Articles with neutral valence demonstrated both positive and negative stance towards Uber's government relations or could not be classified as positive or negative valence. Table 4 shows the distribution of valence among the articles analyzed.

Table 4: Valence

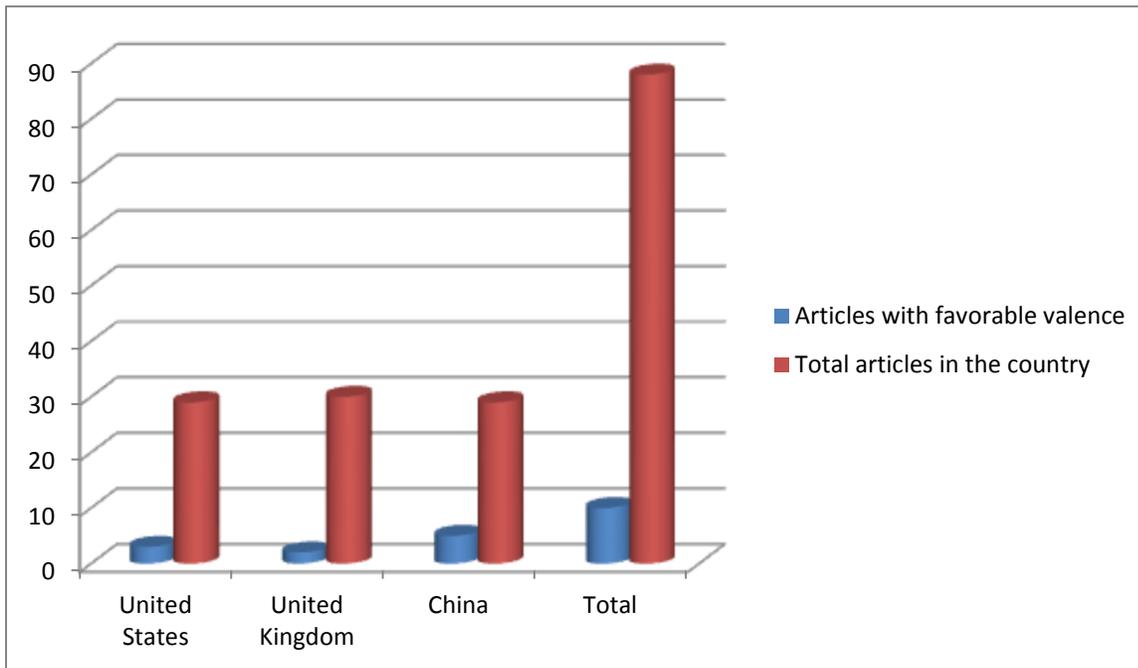
	Positive/Favorable	Negative/Unfavorable	Neutral	Total
NYT	2	5	7	14
USA Today	1	5	9	15
The Guardian	0	9	6	15
The Sun	2	3	10	15
Xinhua net	5	6	3	14
China Daily	0	11	4	15
Total	10	39	39	88

From the data analyzed, 11% of the articles had positive/favorable valence towards Uber's government relations in their country, 44% had negative/unfavorable valence, while 44% had neutral valence. This analysis shows that majority of newspapers in the three countries

generally had a neutral or negative tone toward Uber with few newspapers having a positive tone. These results will be analyzed further to test the following two hypotheses.

Hypothesis H3_a. Hypothesis H3_a stated that Chinese newspapers have more favorable valence than U.S. newspaper. Figure 6 shows the number of articles with favorable valence in the three countries.

Figure 6: Favorable valence among the newspaper articles



According to the data, 10% of articles in the United States had favorable valence towards Uber's government relations compared to 17% in the China. However, through comparing means of overall tone of three countries using one-way ANOVA, the results showed that China had a slightly more negative tone ($M = 2.4$, $SD = 0.78$), compared to U.S. ($M = 2.2$, $SD = 0.63$). The analysis showed that there is no statistically significant difference among three countries regarding overall tone of newspapers about Uber ($p = .626$). Therefore, these results did not support the hypothesis H3_a.

Hypothesis H3_b. Hypothesis H3_b stated that Chinese newspapers have more favorable

valence than U.K. newspaper. According to the results, although 7% of the articles in the U.K. had favorable valence toward Uber compared to 17% in the China, China had a slightly overall negative tone ($M = 2.4$, $SD = 0.78$) than U.K ($M = 2.3$, $SD = 0.61$). However, one-way ANOVA showed there is no statistically significant difference among the countries regarding overall tone of newspapers ($p = .626$). These results did not support the hypothesis H3_b.

Discussion

The manner in which news media cover a particular story or issue can have a significant influence on how the public perceives the information. In this regard, news media can be used to make certain issues appear to be more important than others while making others less important. In the case of Uber government relations in the U.S., U.K., and China, it is quite clear that newspapers plays a big role. Therefore, this research provided a center stage for investigation how newspapers in this three countries presented Uber's government relations, and their presentation influenced the public, government, and taxi companies in those countries.

Summary of Major Findings

Based on the data and the analysis conducted, the main hypothesis was supported. For the hypotheses, the data analysis supported 2 hypotheses while the remaining 6 hypotheses were not supported.

Presentation of Uber's Government relations in newspapers

Newspapers in the three countries presented Uber's government relations differently. This could be attributed to the type of newspaper article and their sources of information. While the majority of news about Uber in the United States and China was covered in news articles, in the United Kingdom Uber's news was covered more in editorials than news articles. With regard to sources of information, United States newspapers relied almost equally on all types of sources,

while in the United Kingdom newspapers relied mostly on undefined sources and citizens as their sources of information. In China, however, information about Uber mostly came from the government and Uber. These differences in the sources of information and the type of articles reporting about Uber made the presentation of Uber to be different in all the three countries. In addition, consumer concerns, newspaper framing, and valence affected this presentation as revealed by the test of minor hypotheses.

Consumer Concerns

Chinese newspapers that talked about Uber had more consumer concerns than newspapers in the U.S. and the U.K., although there is no statistically significant difference. It was surprising to find out that newspapers in China have more consumer concerns than both the U.K. and the U.S. given that the government highly controls newspaper outlets in China. This could mean that the government influences the media to publish news containing more consumer concerns to present a company's government relations in a particular way the government wants it to be perceived.

Newspaper Framing

Newspaper framing in the three countries presented Uber along the frames of legal action, public relations, and lobbying. Although it was expected that majority of the articles would generally contain the frames of legality, it turned out that majority (43%) of the articles analyzed contained undefined frames, followed by legality and lobbying while the frame of public relations had the lowest number of articles. In particular, of the articles analyzed, 38 fell under the category others, 36 legality, 8 lobbying, and only 6 in public relations. This could be because other factors are involved in the operations of Uber in the three countries or the articles comprise of all the other frames in equal measure. A deeper analysis of the articles in this

category revealed an emergent frame, 'use of innovation' as a success factor in its operations. Integrating this theme in future research can play a crucial role in explaining Uber's presentation in newspapers. Although there is no statistically significant difference regarding the amounts of legality, both the U.S. and Chinese newspapers had more reference to legal action than the U.K. newspapers. Although it was expected Chinese newspaper would give more reference to legal action, it is surprising that U.S. newspapers also had a high reference to legal action. This could be due to the resistance Uber faces from different state governments in the U.S., which is different from legislative branch in where Uber deals with only the national government.

Another notable observation is that the category PR had the least number of articles. This may imply Uber is not putting enough effort in its PR strategy to counter the resistance it faces and government relations challenges. From the perspective of a PR professional, it is important to increase coverage of PR in newspapers or by publishing more PR articles to influence not only the decisions of the government but that of consumers as well.

Newspapers in the U.S. gave more reference to lobbying, followed by Chinese newspapers while newspapers in the U.K. had the least amount of reference to lobbying. It is quite remarkable that newspapers in the three countries gave relatively low reference to both lobbying and public relations. This could as well as mean that Uber's lobbying and public relations strategies were not adequate to meet the legal actions facing the company in each of the countries.

Valence

From the data analyzed, newspapers in the three countries presented Uber's government relations in either a neutral or an unfavorable valence, with a small portion (11%) of the newspapers presenting the relationship in a positive tone. Even though Chinese newspapers had

more articles reporting favorable valence than both the U.S. and the U.K. newspapers, there were also more negative articles. Therefore, although there is no statistically difference in valence in three countries ($p = .626$), Chinese newspapers had a slightly negative light ($M = 2.4$), compared to U.S. ($M = 2.2$) and U.K. ($M = 2.3$).

This can be attributed to several reasons. One of the reasons, Uber has been in constant competition with traditional taxi companies and have used aggressive strategies to enter markets in both the U.S. and the U.K. However, in China, the company seems to use a milder and humble approach to enter the market. In addition, the Chinese market is relatively larger than the formers implying that Uber does not offer significant competition to taxi companies in the country. These may result in a lack of this type of negative news and have more favorable reports on those points. On the other hand, content analysis found Chinese newspapers mainly rely on government and Uber as sources of information. This may result in a lack of favorable news from Uber's massive supporters and more negative news from Chinese government for protecting indigenous hailing cab companies like Didi, which is the biggest competitor of Uber in Chinese market.

Limitations of the Study

This study was subject to several limitations. First, it only focused on how newspapers in the three countries presented Uber and its relationship with the government. By so doing, it ignored how media would cover other companies. Therefore, the results obtained cannot be generalized to all companies in the taxi-hailing industry. Second, focusing on the three countries (U.S, U.K, and China) does not necessarily mean they represent newspaper's presentations in similar others countries. While the U.S. and U.K would normally represent Western Countries and China represent countries high of control of media, the results obtained may not be

conclusive. Third, the data and analysis are based on only two newspaper in each country, which may not represent all other newspapers. For example, USA Today has a high respect and circulation in U.S. implying that its agenda setting may affect others. However, this study did not put this factor into consideration when selecting newspaper for analysis. Fourth, the study relied only on one form of media, newspapers, which cannot be used to represent news media entirely. In retrospect, newspapers may have been the best channels to analyze this issue because of its ease of accessibility and ease of analyzing words compared to videos or graphs in other media. However, this analysis may not represent information in other media such as videos or audios on the same issue.

Another limitation is that the analysis is based on a sample of articles that cannot represent all the newspaper articles in the three countries. Although most research are based on samples, it can never be certain that the sample is a true representation of the population being studied. The use of "Access World News" and "PreQuest Historical Newspapers" databases may have attracted some limitations as well. For instance, not all newspapers are accessible through these databases.

Another limitation is the use of the search terms "Uber" and "Government." As much as these two terms provided relevant data about the study, they may have missed out some important reports about the company and government relations in these countries. For example, a country like China or the U.K. may refer the company in a different term. Furthermore, relying on English as the only language in the research may have limited access to some valuable information.

Further Research

For future research, it may be necessary to include other forms of media including

magazines, radio, television, printed newspapers, and news transcripts. To improve the research and generalizability of the research, it is important to conduct a further analysis of a competitor of Uber. Perhaps looking at a related industry such as bus transportation may also provide comparative data on how newspaper presents a company's government relations. It is also important to consider other types of research such as interviews, questionnaires, and focus group in addition to content analysis on analyzing this issue further. Having identified innovation as a factor affecting Uber's presentation, it is important to consider this factor in future research. In particular, future research should attempt to answer how innovation affects Uber's operations, its government relations, and perception in the market.

Key Considerations

This creative project provided useful knowledge that can be used by public relations professions in their daily duties. In essence, the results revealed that the image of a company as portrayed in newspapers is influenced by several factors. These factors, which may include legality issues, government relations strategies, public relation strategies, the use of technology and innovation, among other factors, may determine whether a company will be presented in a positive or negative light. Therefore, there is a need for a company to ensure that it has put in place the right strategies to improve its presentation in the newspapers as image plays a significant role in the performance and success of business. In this regard, the PR professionals of a company need to establish ways in which the company can influence the presentation of its government relations in the newspapers.

From a public relations perspective, this research has revealed government relations are a key consideration in as company's entry into a new market and its continued operations. However, conscious efforts are required by both the government and company to maintain

healthy government relations. In the absence of either party, the government relations would be skewed to one party while the other would be losing. This implies that, when clients ask PR professionals to deal with the government relations, PR professionals need to improve the positive coverage of news media regarding the relationship between the company and government. As noted in the study, newspapers may use government as their main source of information. In this regard, it is important for a company to provide as much information as possible to counter the amount of information newspapers get from the government. That way, both the government and the company will be providing equal amounts of information and the news presented will not be skewed to one party only.

A company's direct efforts toward government relations may help in improving the relationship and position of a company in a country's market. However, media's coverage of a company's government relations can have significant impact on its performance in that particular country. If a company is consistently reported to have legality issues, it may have difficulties interacting and maintaining good relations with government agencies or legislative representatives of a given area. Consequently, the legislative representatives in such an area may pass policies that limit the company's operations in that specific area. This would mean that the company would not be able to operate in that area and to expand to other areas may as well be problematic. However, when newspapers continually report the company as having healthy government relations in other parts, the legislative representatives may be influenced to pass policies supporting the company's operations in the area. Therefore, there is a need for the PR professionals of a company to ensure that its presentation in the newspapers portrays good government relations.

Given the importance of newspaper presentations a company's government relations on

its performance, it is important to publish more PR articles. With more PR articles, it would mean that newspapers would consider a company's PR news as a source of information. These articles should be based on the successes and the improvements that the company is making in the industry. As learned from the framing theory, the company can use its PR articles to frame what is more important or what need to be given more attention in the newspapers. When these articles focus more on the company's positive actions and improvements, newspapers will also report more on these positive actions. Consequently, the company's image will improve and ultimately this can be used as a government relations strategy. In other words, the government is more likely to start recognizing the importance of the company in the economy and thus start interacting with the company. Such an interaction would lead to a healthy government relation with both parties playing their role equally. Therefore, PR professionals can play a substantial role in government strategy by consistently publishing PR articles and release useful information to newspaper outlets.

It is quite clear that the way newspaper present a company's government relation affects its reputation and performance within a country. Therefore, it is important for a company to develop strategies that would influence the way newspaper presents its operations as well as its government relation. In the perspective, the company's PR professionals can play a crucial role in framing the news in newspapers by publishing PR consistently with a greater focus on the company's achievement and role in the economy. Thus, it is essential for companies to improve the role of PRs in government relations strategy. In other words, top managers of a company need to give more attention PR when dealing with government relations. The PR will not only help in framing news about the company but also in increasing the recognition of the importance of developing an effective partnership with legislative representatives and government generally.

Outside Reviews of the Project

Evaluation for Xiaorong Qian's Creative Project

Evaluator: Teh-Kuang Chang, Professor of Political Science at Ball State University

Brief discussion of evaluator's credentials (knowledge and experience of the subject area)

As an evaluator for the project, I offer a unique perspective and a set of skills, knowledge and experience. Academically, I earned Ph.D. of International Relations from The American University and have near 50 years education experiences on political sciences. I teach American Foreign Policy, International Relations, and Asian and Pacific Studies. My research interests include international relations in Asia, U.S.-China diplomatic relations, democratization in China, and constitutional development in China, Mongolia and Tuva.

Practically, I initiated and chaired the Asian and Pacific Studies Research Committee of the International Political Science Association. In 2005, I was elected as the President of the International Tuva Studies Association. Moreover, I travelled to over 70 countries for teaching, research, and participating in academic conferences.

Relationship to the student and subject matter

I have known Xiaorong Qian as she was my student at Ball State University to take my course of Foreign Policy of China. She is intelligent and she studied diligently. She received A grade for this course.

Evaluation of the topic as appropriate for the creative endeavor

I would like to comment that Miss Qian's project is a well written paper with creative idea. Uber is one of well-known innovative company in recent years, but there is no study to discuss Uber's government relations standing news media's perspective. Excellently, she involved three representative countries to examine if there are differences on "presenting" Uber's

government relations by newspapers among those countries.

Evaluation of student's approach

Xiaorong Qian used content analysis as her approach, which is very proper for her creative project. Her approach is objective by choosing two newspapers from each country and randomly selecting 15 articles from valid populations from each newspapers. This approach gave her the ability to test hypotheses that she aimed to examine.

Suggestions:

Content analysis definitely is a good method to conduct news media research, but two newspapers still have no strong ability to make generalization for overall newspapers in one country. If the student could three or more representative newspapers in each country, that would give her more confidence to make conclusion. In addition, pre-test for variable category should be added, which could reduce the odds that many articles fall into other category, which happened in her paper.

Evaluation of the body of the project

(Quality, Depth of Treatment, Coverage)

a. Quality

The student conduct a high quality creative project through comprehensive literature review, detailed codebook, and great bibliography.

b. Depth of treatment

Qian did a deep analysis on how newspapers present Uber's government relations in three countries. She constructed three main content variable, consumer concerns, and frames, to deeply and qualitatively analyze the research.

c. Coverage

Qian involved media theory, different culture background and different media systems to make her hypotheses reasonable, even though there are some hypotheses that were rejected. Coverage is comprehensive and she, by and large considered all aspects that should be involved. However, as she stated in limitation, it would be more comprehensive and convincing if she discussed how newspapers present one or two of Uber's competitors in same countries. I don't think other news media should be added if she just want to examine how newspapers present Uber's government relations, even though she said it in further research section.

Evaluation of the student's work as contributing to the field (e.g., body of knowledge)

I believe the student's work is very help and meaningful to her field - public relations. As she explained to me, public relations is to help organization establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationship with publics. No doubt, media are the medium that have strong power to influence public, government and company. Examining how newspaper, which is one of popular news media, present Uber's government relations in those countries, would not only give the company ability to adjust its strategies when it run in those countries, but also give PR persons a glance that how to protect and improve clients' reputation through Uber's case. The most excellent is, in the end of the paper, she provided key consideration that what she learned and what she could apply in the future work as PR professionals' perspective.

Evaluation for Xiaorong Qian's Creative Project

Evaluator: Zelong Chen, Associate at Web Shandwick (Shanghai) & Ball State Alumni

Brief discussion of evaluator's credentials (knowledge and experience of the subject area)

As an evaluator for the project, I offer a unique perspective and knowledge. Currently, I am working in the world's leading PR firm Weber Shandwick (Shanghai office), and I have over 3 years of working experience in PR industry and digital marketing. I had the experience in

consumer public relations, crisis communication, and digital marketing communication.

Academically, I graduated from Ball State University and achieved the Master of Arts in Public Relations in 2012. I am familiar with the academic paper writing and the research methods, especially the content analysis that I was using back to my thesis.

Lastly, as living in Shanghai and a huge fan of Uber, I can tell the real experience about how Uber is developing and expanding in China, and I can tell more about what's the media are covering.

Relationship to the student and subject matter

I have no relationship to the student before she reached out to me from one common friends from Ball State University as well.

Evaluation of the topic as appropriate for the creative endeavor

This project is quite timely when Uber is expanding rapidly these years, and in most of the countries, negative news such as how taxi drivers conduct the strike, Uber is lingering in-between the grey area of the regulation, etc. are reported by media often. This project conducted the research by comparing media news coverage in three different counties could be helpful to conclude with an overall idea about how the reaction of the countries towards Uber. Furthermore, the research results could assist PR professionals to understand more about how to manage the customer expectation and government relationship.

Evaluation of student's approach

Qian's approach was a good one by choosing the leading newspaper in three different countries which representing three different national values and totally different media ecology. By doing so, to make the hypotheses and to evaluate Uber's public relation strategy and government relationship is quite reasonable and make perfect scene. Qian conducted the content

analysis as the main research method is a great choice, this could not only make the research focuses on quantity of the reports, but also it pays more attention on the content of the report, which can go deeper. Qian makes the hypothesis from three perspectives (consumer concerns, legality, and valence) indicates that she took the several classic stereotypes into consideration (such as Chinese media has no freedom to right real news since it is controlled by government), and the research results can help to test the true or false about the hypothesis; and finally make the tested results and statement crystal clear. This is wonderful to see in the project.

Evaluation of the body of the project

(Quality, Depth of Treatment, Coverage)

a. Quality

Qian conducted a comprehensive research in regarding the Uber topic. Great examination on how media response to Uber in three countries, and the research leads to a great insight that government relationship is critical for the company like Uber. She also points out a key statement about how to keep the company in a positive light: “legality issues, government relations strategies, public relation strategies, the use of technology and innovation, among other factors, may determine whether a company will be presented in a positive or negative light”, which quite practical and useful tips for PR professional in daily work.

b. Depth of Treatment

First, the three academic theories were good, especially the theory of agenda setting and the framing theory, which can stand as the strong theoretical foundation for the research. Second, the hypothesis is based on three important perspectives, and it helped to examine what's the real media attitude towards Uber, and what's the most important factor that influences the expanding and developing of Uber in different countries.

Suggestion:

The research results support the main hypothesis as Newspapers in the three countries present Uber's government relations differently. However, not only the government relationship is important to Uber, the public relation ecosystem is also different within three countries, especially in China. Xiaorong mentioned that with more PR articles, Uber might perform better. This might not be valuable to Uber in China based on my observation and understanding. So if Qian can have more discussion on this topic that could make the project more objectively.

c. Coverage

As Qian said, the research should involve more media formats such as social media and radio media. Just newspaper articles are not enough to represent the whole picture.

Evaluation of the student's work as contributing to the field (e.g., body of knowledge)

Government relationship is one of the most important key elements for one organization or company; especially to the company like Uber, which is a quite controversial organization in every country since it brings a huge strike to the traditional market. This is my first time to see one whole research article that studied to this topic. I would appreciate the article by shedding a bright light to PR and communication industry.

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Appendix

Coder_ID. This variable identifies the person that coded each case. The initials of the coder's name followed by a sequential number will be used to identify uniquely the coder (e.g. if Coder's name is Jane Doe, her Coder_ID will be JD1).

Coder_name. This variable will be used to enter the related full name of the coder (e.g. Coder_name: Jane Doe).

Sample years: Data is collected from the period between January 2012 to December 2015 in the three countries. The following code will be used to specify the year in which the article was published.

- 1 = 2012
- 2 = 2013
- 3 = 2014
- 4 = 2015

Article_ID. This is the identity code assigned to individual articles when constructing the database. The code will follow the format year/month/day/newspaper abbreviation/article number (e.g. Article_ID: 20140801TWJ1).

Day. The articles will be selected randomly in any day of the week during the specified period.

The codes below will be used for the day of the week:

- 1 = Monday
- 2 = Tuesday
- 3 = Wednesday
- 4 = Thursday
- 5 = Friday

- 6 =Saturday
- 7 =Sunday

Date. The date the article was published will be added in the format: DD-month abbreviation-YYYY (e.g. 1-Aug-2014).

Words. Enter the word count of the article.

Author's information. The name and gender of the article's author should be added if available.

Type of Article Coverage. The type of article will be defined by the scope of news being presented. The news selected will be presenting Uber's government relations within the country the article was published. This will be coded as follows:

- 1 = Domestic News: article that exclusively presents Uber's government relations in the country the article is published

Headline. The headline will play a crucial role in determining whether the article is relevant for the study. Copy and paste the article's headline into this string variable.