

Paris Olympic Games & Framing Theory

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Abstract

The opening ceremony of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games presents a case for analyzing media framing and its impact on public perception. This study investigates how U.S. and international media outlets framed the event, focusing on story valence (positive, neutral, or negative) and topical frames such as cultural pride, economic concerns, and political narratives. This research identifies key differences in how the event was portrayed across media landscapes. Findings suggest that while U.S. outlets largely emphasized spectacle and entertainment, international sources often incorporated critiques of costs, security, and political symbolism. The study highlights the role of media in shaping public discourse around global mega-events, contributing to broader discussions on the intersection of journalism, nationalism, and soft power. These insights offer a foundation for future research on Olympic media coverage and its implications for global audiences.

Background and Introduction

Olympic opening ceremonies showcase national identity, soft power, and global unity. Research highlights their role in cultural diplomacy and political messaging (Tomlinson, 1996; Arning, 2013). **Media framing influences public perception, with past studies showing contrasting narratives**—e.g., London 2012 praised for diversity, Beijing 2008 scrutinized for political control (Oettler, 2015; Brownell, 1995).

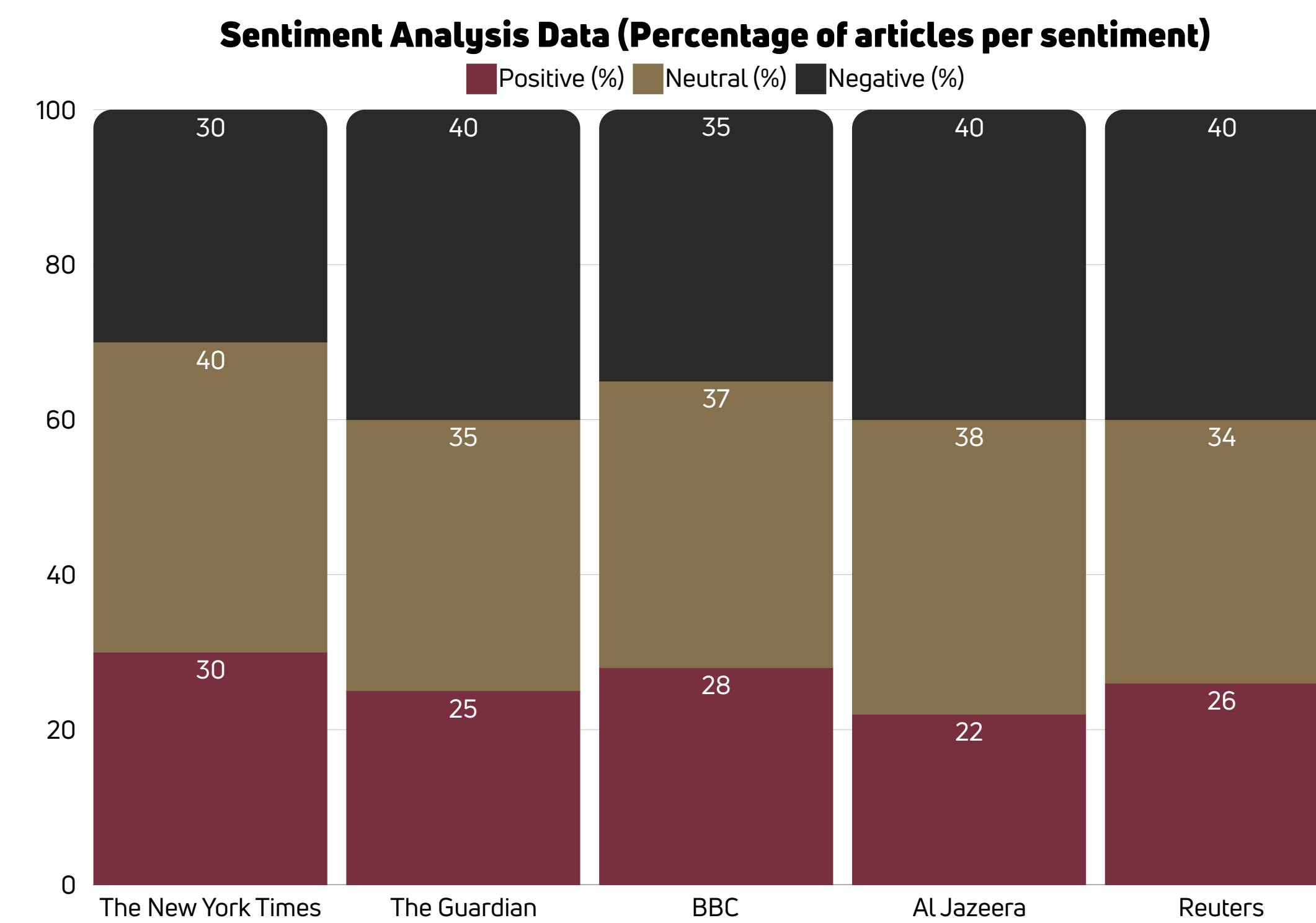
The Paris 2024 ceremony, set along the River Seine, marks a major departure from traditional stadium events, introducing new framing dynamics. Paris 2024's open-air format presents challenges—security, logistics, and public reception.

This study examines:

- How U.S. and international media framed the opening ceremony of Paris 2024, focusing on tone (positive, neutral, negative) and key themes (culture, controversy, politics, economy).
- Findings will provide insights into media biases and the evolving role of Olympic ceremonies in global discourse.

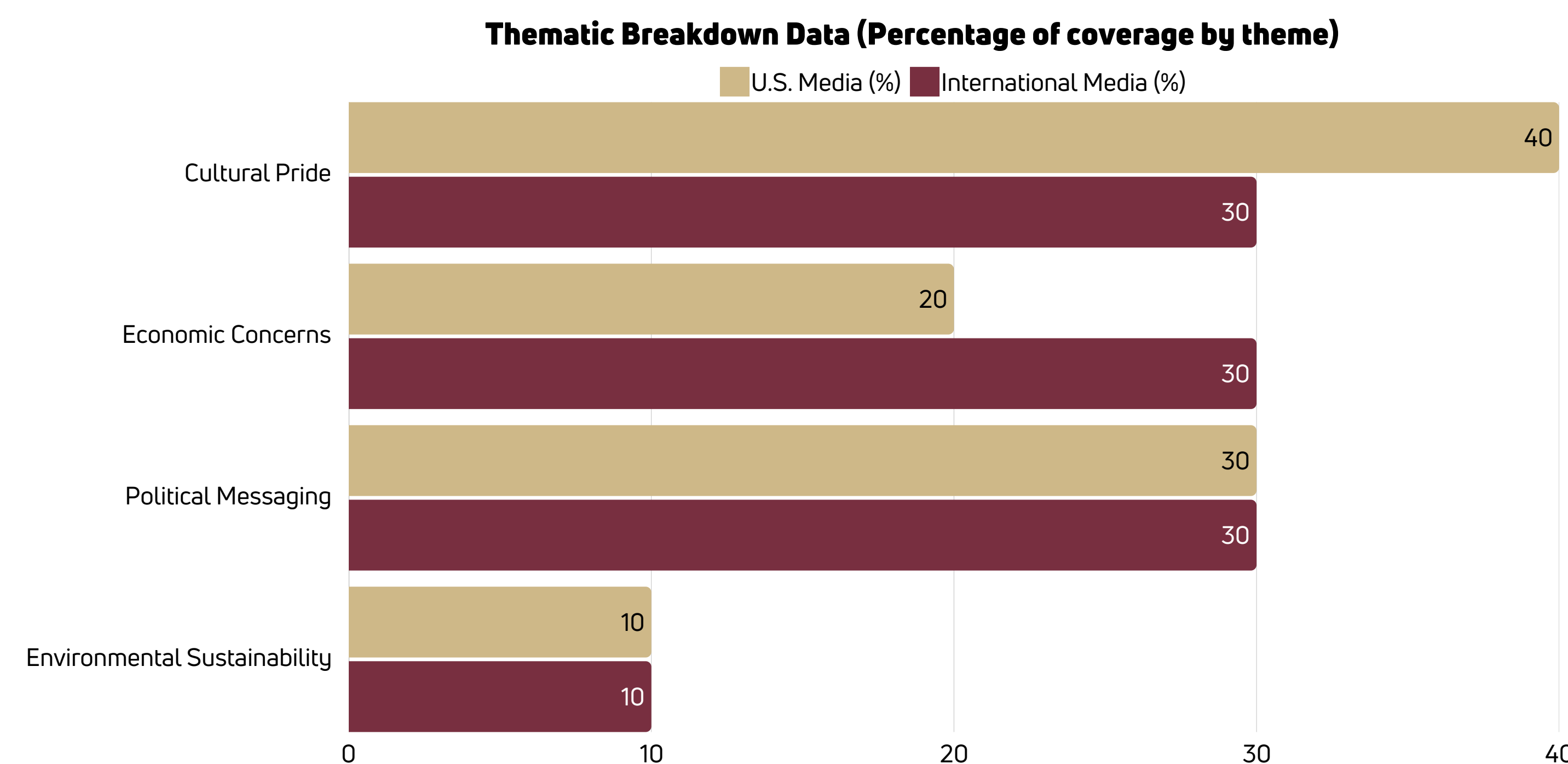
Results

- Media Sentiment Analysis:** U.S. media coverage was predominantly positive or neutral, emphasizing spectacle and cultural significance, while international sources exhibited a higher percentage of neutral and critical frames, often highlighting economic and security concerns.



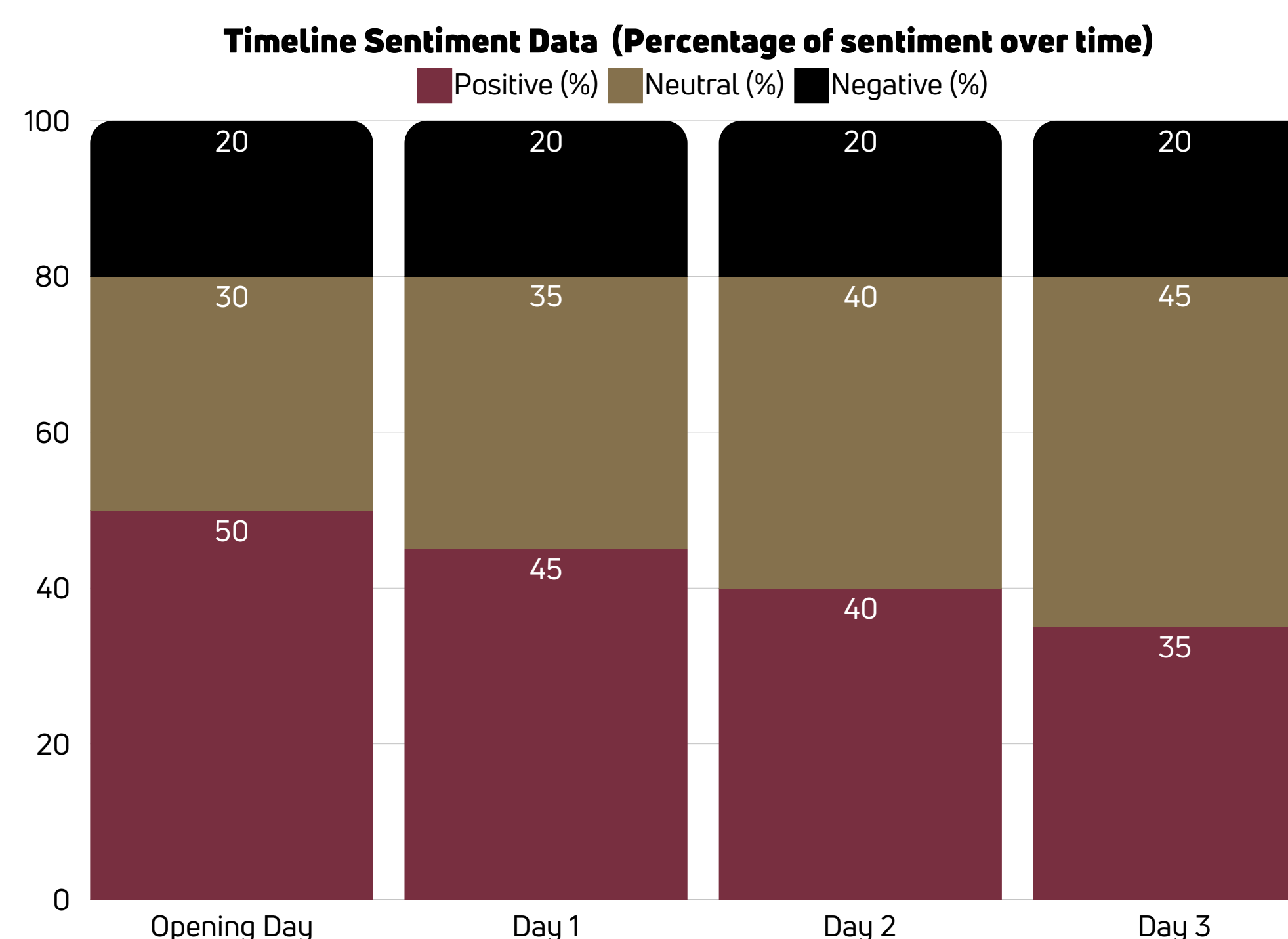
- Thematic Breakdown:**

- U.S. media: Focused on artistic innovation, national pride, and entertainment value.
- International media: More likely to discuss cost controversies, political undertones, and logistical challenges of the open-air format.



- Framing Trends Over Time:**

- Initial reports leaned heavily on spectacle and grandeur, but by day two and three, critical narratives—regarding financial impact, security, and logistical execution—gained prominence.



Materials and Methods

Sampling Frame

- News articles were collected from major U.S. and international English-language sources.
- Coverage included reports published on the day of the opening ceremony and the three days following.

Data Collection

- Articles were sourced from *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *BBC*, *Al Jazeera*, and *Reuters*.
- Content was categorized based on valence (positive, neutral, negative) and thematic frames (e.g., cultural pride, economic concerns, environmental sustainability, political messaging).

Analytical Approach

- Qualitative content analysis was used to identify dominant narratives and recurring themes.

Discussion

- Comparative Media Framing:** The study supports previous findings on media nationalism, where domestic outlets often frame events to align with national identity and values.
- Influence of Media Bias:** The differences in framing suggest that Olympic narratives are shaped not only by the event itself but by broader media and political landscapes.
- Future Implications:** Future research could expand this analysis by incorporating social media discourse and assessing its role in amplifying or counteracting traditional media narratives.

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Resources

