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ETHNIC ONLINE NEWSPAPERS VS. MAINSTREAM ONLINE NEWSPAPERS:
A COMPARISON OF THE NEWS COVERAGE
OF THE 2010 HEALTH CARE REFORM DEBATE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agriculture and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

In

The Manship School of Mass Communication

By

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the news coverage of the 2010 health care reform in a comparative context of mainstream and ethnic online newspapers. Since health care reform had consequences among all ethnic groups in the U.S., the news coverage of this policy issue warranted an analysis in a diverse media context. The importance of this study lies in the fact that diverse news media provide a wide range of perspectives to the public and policymakers for a better understanding of an issue at stake.

In past studies, mainstream media coverage was criticized for emphasizing political conflict and gains and losses over actual policy problems and ignoring minorities' interests. Consequentially, ethnic media appeared as alternative media by promoting missing voices of ethnic minorities in mainstream media content. In this context, using the theories of agenda-setting and framing this study explored how differently mainstream and ethnic newspapers advanced agendas and framed the debate around health care reform.

This study used content analysis method to examine news stories and editorials on health care reform published from December 2009 – March 2010 in two mainstream online newspapers, and four ethnic online newspapers representing two largest ethnic minorities in the U.S., African Americans and Latino Americans. After analyzing the trends in the use of attribute agendas and frames of the reform coverage, this research came up with four observations. One, mainstream newspaper coverage of the reform debate maintained its pattern of prioritizing political conflict, maneuvering, and consequences over policy-related details and ethnic group-specific information. Two, ethnic newspaper coverage, mainly of Latino newspapers, emphasized the reform details and outcomes. Third, two African-American newspapers could not cover the reform issue like Latino newspapers because of their heavy reliance on mainstream

wire service stories. As a result, black newspaper coverage, unlike Latino newspaper stories and editorials, did not adequately include ethnic-group perspectives of health care reform. Four, this study identified that not all mainstream news outlets covered health care reform in the same way. Policy implications received prominent coverage in wire service stories of the reform, whereas political debate was the main focus of mainstream newspaper stories.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The U.S. House of Representatives passed a major health care reform bill on March 21, 2010, after about a year-long debate around the reform proposals. Health care reform in 2010 was one of the significant policy reforms as about 47 million of the U.S. population, comprising whites and ethnic minorities, were uninsured (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Because of the inadequacies in the existing health care policies, the number of uninsured populations did not see a decline in the recent decade; instead, it increased by more than five million since 2001 (Parham, Quadagno, & Brown, 2009).

Access to affordable health insurance is a common problem for both majority white populations and ethnic minority groups in the U.S. Also, reforming an established health insurance system, which involves political and business interests, is not an easy task. The health care reform process in 2009-2010 had to go through partisan and ideological debates and find compromises among different interest groups in the industry. In the context of the bill's passage and its political and social implications, this research will compare how mainstream and ethnic news media advanced different agendas and frames about health care reform. Because news media can affect public understanding of a major policy issue, it is important to analyze the coverage of a topic, such as health care reform, in a comparative context of mainstream and ethnic newspapers.

Such a comparison is also logical in the context of a multicultural society, in which a policy issue can have both shared and group-specific perspectives. One criticism is that because of their general audience orientation, mainstream newspaper coverage may not include ethnic groups' specific concerns of a policy issue. Therefore, a comparative analysis will help to identify what is missing in mainstream newspaper coverage of health care reform and is

highlighted most in ethnic newspaper coverage. However, the concern is that because of their community-focused reporting and lack of resources in covering national issues, it is impossible for much of ethnic news media to generate their own reports on national issues and events (Pride & Wilson, 1997; Wilson, Gutierrez, & Chao, 2003).

These two types of news media perform different functions as mainstream news media tend to recognize their audience as a general group, while ethnic media mainly serve their community members. Because of their reach to a large national audience, mainstream news content is more visible and more widely circulated than ethnic news media. But are the mainstream news reports adequately covering policy issues and accommodating multiethnic perspectives? If yes, then why do we see a huge growth in ethnic media industry in recent years? The following section will explore these questions in the context of mainstream media's roles in serving ethnic groups, common audiences for both ethnic and mainstream news media.

Why Ethnic Media Matter

In July 2009, when Henry Louis Gates, Jr., an eminent African-American scholar, was arrested in Massachusetts by a white police officer, the incident received prominent coverage in both mainstream and ethnic newspapers for several weeks. According to a Pew Research Center (2010) report, the incident of the arrest of Gates got “nearly four times” more coverage in mainstream news media than two contemporary national stories--economic crisis and health care. But the incident was differently covered in mainstream and ethnic news media. While the mainstream media were mainly concerned with the political implications of Gates' arrest for President Obama, the black press highlighted the incident of the arrest itself and brought up the issue of race relations in the country (Pew Research Center, 2010). The findings of that research suggest that the trend in media coverage of race in mainstream media remained the same as what

the past studies found a decade ago (Gilens, 1999; Entman & Rojecki, 2000). In mainstream news coverage, blacks receive minimal coverage and whatever is published about them is mainly in the context of criminal and violent activities and rarely in the context of achievement and success stories (Martindale & Dunlap, 1997).

The above example supports the arguments made in past studies that mainstream media coverage of a policy is criticized for giving priority to political strategies and partisan debates over details and social consequences of a proposed plan (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Lawrence, 2000). It also reflects another scholarly criticism that mainstream media coverage tends to ignore the issues of minorities (Lehrman, 2009; Funabiki & Lehrman, 2008; Pew Research Center, 2010; Gilens, 1999; Entman & Rojecki, 2000; Guzman, 2006; Loew & Mella, 2005).

From this discussion, we can clearly find a difference in journalistic practices between mainstream and ethnic news media. As mainstream news media serve a diverse group of audiences, it is expected that their policy news coverage will be inclusive of perspectives representing various communities. However, in day-to-day journalistic practice, news editors and reporters of mainstream newspapers mainly confine themselves within official sources, which rarely provide information from diverse perspectives (Peterson, 2010). Thus such “formula” news reporting can result in stories lacking diverse social experiences and needs of minorities (Peterson, 2010; Schram & Soss, 2001; Winter, 2008).

Even though ethnic media are supposed to play certain functions, which are more ethnic group-focused and different from general-audience newspapers, their news coverage of national issues often widely uses mainstream wire service stories (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2009; Pride & Wilson, 1997). The use of mainstream wire stories can affect the overall tone of original stories on a certain issue published in ethnic newspapers. Therefore, this study also

sought to examine the impact of wire service stories used in ethnic newspaper coverage of health care reform.

Media and Policy

The media can actively play a role in a policymaking process not only by scanning and monitoring political environment like a “watchman,” but also by shaping worldview or image about the outside world for the public and policymakers (Lippmann, 1922; Spitzer, 1993; Borquez, 1993). Furthermore, with continuity and reinforcement in coverage, news media strongly impact the political agenda (Zaller, 2005; Franklin, 1999).

The main rationale of a comparative analysis of health care reform coverage is to consider its *policy consequences*. The media’s agenda-setting and framing of policy debate through news and editorial coverage can set the tone for public discussion and policy decisions (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Entman, 1993a; Iyengar, 1991; McCombs and Shaw, 1972; Dearing & Rogers, 1996). But inadequate news coverage of an issue cannot give policymakers a comprehensive picture of a policy problem (Dearing & Rogers, 1996). Skewed coverage can result in an ill-informed policymaking process.

Different news media can convey a variety of perspectives in the policy agenda-setting process. While mainstream media cover all policy issues because of their political significance at the national level, some ethnic media were historically vocal on specific policy issues. Consider such cases as the Latino media is coverage of immigration (Subervi, 2008, 1999; Guzman, 2006), the black press is civil rights and racial debates (Pride & Wilson, 1997; Washburn, 2006), and Native-American newspapers dealing with native rights issues (Loew & Mella, 2005; Reaves, 1995).

Some scholars have identified a clear connection between media agenda and policy development. The Iowa Future Project (Hawthorne, 1993) is one instance of how newspapers can advocate policy agendas. In 1990, newspapers in Iowa decided to hold series of town hall meetings with the goal of outlining the economic needs, identifying new policy proposals and policy alternatives to the existing policies. All newspapers in Iowa were involved with the process of promoting stories of this project and sharing findings and final reports with the public living in different counties in Iowa (Hawthorne, 1993). The project was a success as state legislators in Iowa adopted most of the policy recommendations discussed in those town hall meetings and subsequent newspaper coverage. Likewise, the formulation of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, in the U.K. was the outcome of extensive media coverage of the institutional challenges encountered by disabled people (Pointon, 1999). Likewise, the media's continuous coverage of the cause of HIV/AIDS epidemics set the agenda for lawmakers and health experts for formulating appropriate policy interventions in developing countries, such as Ethiopia and India (Dearing & Rogers, 1996).

Many argue that the power of policy news coverage lies with the sources that actually shape news content. Political elites and wealthy interest groups are two influential sources in shaping mainstream media content (Callaghan & Schnell, 2001). As journalists rely on official and government sources for reporting policy issues, policymakers and public officials tend to exploit that journalistic routine (Borquez, 1993). Consequentially, news media may not always serve the public interest. Since the quality of policy news coverage has an important consequence for public opinion and policymakers, this research will examine the role of diverse news media in covering health care reform.

Health Care Reform

The health care reform bill, which became law in March 2010, was the continuation of reform initiatives taken since the 1930s (Blumenthal & Morone, 2009). Because of increased growth in uninsured populations and rise in health insurance premiums in recent years, the demand for health care reform was growing over politicians and electoral candidates. The problems of U.S. health care were rooted in the way the health insurance system operates. As the goal of the 2010 health care reform was to reform the health insurance system to make it affordable for uninsured and provide an extended, flexible coverage to the existing insured populations, the following section will discuss how the insurance system works in the U.S. and their inadequacies.

Insurance System. The U.S. health insurance system does not offer universal health care, that is, a government-run system that guarantees insurance to all citizens (Rovner, 2000; Blau & Abramovitz, 2004; Quadagno, 2005). The U.S. insurance market includes both private and public players. Private insurers have a larger stake in the market, because employer-sponsored insurance uses private plans. About 85% of U.S. health insurance is employer-sponsored insurance. But private insurance plan is expensive and not affordable for low-income people (Karger & Stoesz, 2008, p.321). As a cost-containment mechanism, private insurers have been denying insurance coverage to individuals with preexisting medical conditions since the late 1980s (Mechanic, 2006; Bernstein, Hing, Moss et al., 2003). Because of the growing cost of private plans, physician visits, and hospital stays, employers of many small-to-medium-size organizations have failed to provide health insurance to their employees. Thus, there has been an increased burden on public insurance programs.

Three government-managed health care programs are available. The programs are Medicaid, Medicare, and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) (Kronenfeld, 2009; Blau & Abramovitz, 2004; Karger & Stoesz, 2008; Rovner, 2000). Medicaid covers poor, unemployed, aged, blind, disabled, and families with dependent children. Medicare beneficiaries are usually elderly and disabled, while S-CHIP is for medically underserved and poor children (Rovner, 2000). But after the abolishment of the Aid to Family with Dependent Children (AFDC) program in 1996, many poor families have lost eligibility for government-managed health insurance programs. In the past, the AFDC beneficiaries were automatically enrolled into these insurance plans. It is another reason for the growing number of uninsured populations in the last decade (Raffel & Barsukiewicz, 2002; Mechanic, 2006). More than 15% or 47 million U.S. residents did not have access to health insurance in 2009 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This figure has increased by about six million in the past eight years.

Insurance was getting expensive because of the rise in health care cost, which is the highest among all developed nations in the world (Bureau of Labor Education, 2008; Starr, 1992; Mechanic, 2006). Health care cost had been on the rise since the 1980s, and by the early 1990s, the health care sector represented more than one eighth of the U.S. economy (Starr, 1992). Medicare costs increased on average by 18% for each beneficiary (Mechanic, 2006). Economy-wide inflation, increase in population, and the use of advanced technologies, including medical devices and drugs, contribute to the growth in health care spending (Raffle & Barsukiewicz, 2002). High cost of insurance premiums and employment insurance also were connected as higher insurance prices can increase the cost of business. As a result, the increasingly higher cost of premiums also negatively affects the number of employer-sponsored health insurance available. Increase in premiums from 7% in the late 1990s to 11% in 2005 was higher compared

to the increase in overall inflation (3.5%) and wage gains (3.8%) during the same time period (Kronenfeld, 2009). Moreover, the cost of copayment had been on the rise with an increase in premiums compared to the inflation rate (Karger & Stoesz, 2008). Consequently, more U.S. employers were failing to provide health insurance coverage for their employees (Navarro, 1994; Kronenfeld, 2009).

Health Reform Initiatives. The problems of access to health care and the high cost of insurance discussed above are the outcome of incremental nature of health care reform, which might have benefited some groups that already have insurance (Skocpol, 1996; Blau & Abramovitz, 2004). After the 1960s, U.S. health care did not see a major change for two reasons. One of the reasons was the clash of interests among political parties and interest groups (Rosenau, 1994; Skocpol, 1996; Starr, 1992; Blau & Abramovitz, 2004). The Democratic Party and the Republican Party saw health care differently. The Democratic Party saw health care as a government responsibility, while the Republican Party found it as another product or service in a competitive market. Stakeholders of the health care industry, including physicians, hospitals, manufacturer of medical devices, pharmaceutical companies, and insurance companies, always appeared as pressure groups in any reform initiatives that could contain their cost and compromise policy support for them (Starr, 1992). Another reason for incremental change in health care reform policy is cost containment in the backdrop of the federal budget deficit (Starr, 1992; Rovner, 2000; Raffel & Barsukiewicz, 2002). Government expenditures increased because of a rise in treatment cost and the number of enrollees in government-supported health care programs such as Medicare. While the federal budget deficit was increasing, the government could not get political and public support for an overhaul in health care that would require them to increase expenditure, budget deficit, and decrease allocation in other areas of the economy

(Navarro, 1994; Mechanic, 2006). In the time of an economic slowdown in the early 1980s, many Americans voted for a mandate that would reduce financing for welfare programs (Navarro, 1994). Moreover, middle-class cultural values are not supportive of big spending and taxes (Hays, 2003; Skocpol, 1995, 1996). Fears about increased taxes to subsidize health services and federal bureaucracy appeared as major challenges for developing a comprehensive, affordable national health insurance (Mechanic, 2006).

In the late 1940s and in the early 1950s, the Hospital Survey and Construction Act, based on the philosophy of separate but equal, was enacted to address racial discrimination in U.S. hospitals (U.S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare, 1954). Also known as the Hill Burton Act, it required hospitals to provide similar medical services to both blacks and whites in separate units in order to receive the grants from the Federal Government (U.S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare, 1954; Parham et al., 2009). In the 1960s, President Johnson's administration introduced milestone reforms, Medicare and Medicaid, the government programs that provide health care to the poor, unemployed, elderly and disable people (Social Security Amendment, 1965). These major reforms were incorporated into the Social Security Act as amendments. The Acts of Medicaid and Medicare were modified in the late 1960s and the early 1970s to expand the coverage with less government cost. After the establishment of Medicare and Medicaid in 1965, the U.S. did not see any major changes. There was an increase in grant-in-aid programs during Johnson's years, an increase from 7 billion dollars in 1961 to 24 billion dollars in 1970 (Kronenfeld, 2009). The Nixon and Carter administrations worked to introduce government-run insurance programs in parallel to private insurance, but did not see any success (Blumenthal & Morone, 2009; Reich, 2009).

The Reagan Administration reduced federal funding for managed care systems in the 1980s to minimize the government cost in health care expenditures in the backdrop of recession mired with unemployment. This reduction in government involvement increased the role of private insurance companies. The State Children Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP) was introduced during the time of the Clinton Administration (Balanced Budget Act, 1997). Children of families with incomes of 200% of poverty level can be eligible for this program (Balanced Budget Act, 1997). The goal of the 1997 Balanced Budget Act was to encourage welfare beneficiaries to join private health plans so that the government could contain its rising Medicare costs. The Act authorized Preferred Provider Organizations (PPO) and Point of Service (POS) plans for Medicare beneficiaries to seek health care from outside a health plan network. That Act provided choices, but it did not reduce the cost (Rovner, 2000).

The Clinton Administration in its big move to overhaul health insurance wanted to introduce a single-payer system and overhaul the health care system, but it did not get support from both the Republic Party members and many Democratic Party members (Kronenfeld, 2009). However, by introducing the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (1996), the Clinton Administration made some minor changes to improve health services for some groups such as employees, pregnant mothers, and people with disability. The Act created more insurance choices for only a very small portion of the population to move from one group plan to another. Furthermore, it was helpful for the employees with pre-existing medical conditions, who were in fear of switching jobs as they depend on employer's health insurance. However, the bill did not do anything to make insurance affordable (Rovner, 2000). Incremental changes in the policy might have benefited some groups, but strengthened the role of private players in the insurance market (Kronenfeld, 2009).

In summary, except for the establishment of Medicare and Medicaid of the 1960s, the rest of the health care reform was incremental. The Reagan administration introduced the managed care system to reduce government expenditure at the cost of political failure. The Bush Administration allowed private insurance companies to negotiate prescription drugs with the pharmacies for Medicare recipients. It has benefited some people, but it was not a solution that could impact the whole system. The Clinton Administration failed to reduce the dominance of private insurance companies in health care. Medicaid, Medicare, S-CHIP, and the managed care system were major modifications in health care policy initiated by different administrations in response to public concerns and dissatisfaction with health services. Therefore, the problems and concerns of the public remained with the changed systems of health care, while private players in health services found ways to preserve their interests.

Access to Health Insurance in 2008-2009. Since prior health care policy interventions could not address the problem of unaffordable health insurance for low-wage, unemployed and poor populations, the number of uninsured citizens was growing. While the number of privately-insured people decreased by one million between 2007 and 2009, largely because of a decline in employment-based health insurance, public insurance programs saw an increase in beneficiaries by more than five million during the same period (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, p. 24). The percentage of people covered by Medicaid increased by 1.6% from 2008-2009. The above trend in insurance coverage reflects the growing burden on government-managed insurance options because of an increased number of job cuts and cancellation of employer-sponsored insurance plans.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau report (2010), the number of uninsured people increased by 0.6 million in 2009 from the preceding year. The number of uninsured populations

has been on the rise among non-Hispanic white, African-American, and Hispanic/Latino populations. Uninsured populations among non-Hispanic white increased from 10.8% in 2008 to 12% in 2009. In those years, uninsured populations increased among African-Americans and Hispanics by 1.9% and 1.7% respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). For Asian-Americans, another ethnic group representing a large number of uninsured populations, the situation was slowly improving in last two years as populations without health insurance went down by .4% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care. Ethnic minorities are disproportionately uninsured compared to whites. Many argue that a weakness of the earlier health care reform discussion was its negligence in addressing the problems of poor and minorities in accessing health care (Spector, 2000, p.166; Perham et al., 2009). Racial inequalities in income and education increase the number of uninsured populations among minorities (Parham et al., 2009; Williams et al., 1994). More African-Americans and Latinos are uninsured compared to whites. Compared to 15% white uninsured populations, 32% Latinos and 21% Africa Americans are uninsured (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

Disparity in U.S. health care is more than numbers. It exists even when insurance status, age, income, and severity of health condition are equal (Smedley, Stith, & Nelson, 2001). A report of the Institute of Medicine identified reasons of unequal treatment in health care delivery including prejudices and stereotypical perceptions about ethnic minorities (Smedley, Stith, & Nelson, 2002). Another study found that “physicians are significantly less likely to participate in Medicaid in areas where the poor are nonwhite and in areas that are racially segregated” (Greene, Blustein, & Weitzman, 2006, p.239). Moreover, a patient’s racial identity can influence

physicians' choices in Medicaid participation, which also can contribute to racial disparities in access to health care (Greene, Blustein, and Weitzman, 2006).

Current Health Care Reform. Building on earlier initiatives, the 2010 reform attempted to address the longstanding problems in insurance system that stood in the way of accessing health care for about 47 million uninsured populations. One of the goals of this reform initiative was to make health insurance affordable for poor, unemployed, and low-income populations. At the same time, the reform bill focused on the policy options aiming to lower the costs as well as expand the scope of existing insurance plans. Another goal of the reform was to address the pre-existing medical conditions that private insurers used to deny a health insurance.

To address the existing problems and widen the scope of insurance plans, the bill included some provisions, such as eliminating the private insurer's practice of denying insurance on the ground of preexisting medical conditions, expansion of Medicaid, and making government subsidies available for small-to-medium size organizations offering health insurance to employees (Walkom, 2010; Pallarito, 2010; Klein, 2010). The other key components of the 2010 health care reform bill were: 1) young people could remain on their parents' insurance until age 26, 2) any organization with more than 50 employees will be required to provide 60% of health care costs, 3) both employers and employees will be able to buy insurance plans from a proposed insurance exchange market at the reduce price, and 4) expanded Medicare coverage will include preventive services such as screenings for cancer and diabetes, and close the pricing gap for prescription drugs (Rice, 2010; "Comparing the House and the Senate Health Care Proposals," 2009; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010; The New York Times, 2010).

But several reform proposals initiated ideological debates among legislators and interest groups. The reform debate in Congress and the Senate dwelled on the availability of federal funding for abortion, individual mandate (i.e. making health insurance compulsory for all citizens), and government-run health insurance as an alternative to private options (Kurtz, 2010; Lieberman, 2010). The House version of the reform bill did not include the option of federal funding for abortion, while the Senate approved such allocation. The main debate surrounding individual mandate focused on constitutional basis. Legislators opposing individual mandate argued that it would undermine the citizen's right to choice. At the initial phase of the debate, the Democratic Party members in the House made efforts to introduce government-run insurance programs, also framed as public options that would have allowed the government to sell insurance options at lower prices parallel to private insurance plans ("Comparing the House and the Senate Health Care Proposals," 2009; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). Though the final bill included individual mandate, it did not include the proposals for introducing government-run health insurance and making federal funding available for abortion. Another point of debate was how the bill would be financed, which included government subsidies and imposing taxes on big employing organizations, wealthy people with expensive insurance plans, and Medicare (Walkom, 2010; The New York Times, 2010).

Health care is an issue that affects the lives of all citizens irrespective of their ethnic and racial identities. Thus, exploring news coverage of this important policy issue warrants a diverse media perspective. Ethnic media are expanding rapidly in the U.S. as mainstream media cannot adequately cover the diverse interests and issues of multi-ethnic groups in different policy contexts (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008; Lehrman, 2009; Grose, 2006). In covering social policies, ethnic media can convey the concerns of ethnic minorities about a policy issue. Thus ethnic

media can represent the voice of ethnic minorities (Guzman, 2006), who feel ignored by mainstream media. In the absence of alternative media system, mainstream media can convey more stereotypical and homogenized understandings of social problems like unaffordable health care and, as a consequence, accentuate discrimination in addressing priorities of white majority and different ethnic minorities. In this comparative context of journalistic practices by ethnic and mainstream media, this research will explore how differently these newspapers have advanced news agendas and framed the debate around health care reform during 2009-2010.

Use of Terms

Throughout the chapters of this research, I have used more than one term for several frequently-used concepts. I have used “ethnic groups,” “ethnic minorities,” and “people of color” interchangeably to refer to diversity or a diverse perspective. “Ethnic minorities” is a big umbrella term used for identifying all ethnic minority groups and non-white populations in the U.S. (Wilson, Gutierrez, & Chao, 2003). In referring to “African-American” newspapers, I used “black press” or “black newspapers.” Likewise, I used both “Latino” and “Hispanic” newspapers for Spanish-language newspapers.

This research analyzed the content of online outlets of both ethnic and mainstream newspapers. Throughout this paper, when I say “newspapers,” I mean online versions of mainstream and ethnic newspapers. Mainstream newspapers are often referred as “general-audience” news media or newspapers (Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs, 2011).

Organization of Chapters

In this introduction chapter, the existing trend in mainstream media coverage of policy issues and the necessity of ethnic media in U.S. multicultural society are discussed. It also has included an overview of the state of health care reform. Chapter II will compare journalistic

practices between ethnic and mainstream news media. In Chapter III, concepts of agenda-setting and framing theories will be discussed as this research utilizes them in analyzing health care reform coverage. News framing categories, which are used in examining news content, will also be discussed in this chapter. The methodology used in this research will be explained in Chapter IV. The findings of this research and data analysis are included in Chapter V. At the end, Chapter VI includes the implications about the findings of the study. Also, recommendations are proposed for both mainstream and ethnic newspapers in covering policy reform.

CHAPTER II: ETHNIC AND MAINSTREAM NEWS MEDIA

Ethnic media are expanding rapidly in the U.S. As of June 2009, there were more than 2,500 ethnic news newspapers, online outlets, radio, and television stations in the U.S. (New American Media, 2009a). These media have audience reach among 82% of the total ethnic population in the U.S. (New America Media, 2009b). One of the major reasons in the growth of ethnic media is to promote the interests of ethnic groups about public policy and political issues as mainstream newspapers tend to ignore the perspectives of minority communities in policy news coverage (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008; Lehrman, 2009; Grose, 2006).

There are no broadly-accepted definitions of ethnic news media. Scholars in different countries use various terms—immigrant media, ethnic minority media/minority media, diasporic media, community media--to refer to ethnic media. Matsaganis, Katz, and Ball-Rokeach (2011, p.7) broadly defined ethnic media as media that are “produced by and for immigrant, ethnic, racial, and linguistic minorities,” and indigenous groups living in different countries of the world. As this study examines newspaper coverage of U.S. health care reform, it has considered those ethnic news media that are produced in this country and tailored toward its ethnic groups. Ethnic group is a category that represents a commonly shared culture, language, history, and/or religion (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011; Alia & Bull, 2005; Riggins, 1992). Unlike ethnic media, the boundaries of mainstream media are broader as they serve a national audience, which is a mix of majority and minority populations. Therefore, mainstream media are expected to serve the interests of a general audience, whereas ethnic news media mainly promote the issues and concerns of a specific community.

This study focused on African-American and Latino online newspapers. It did not include health care reform content published in the online versions of Asian-American and

Native-American newspapers as uninsured populations are proportionally higher among African Americans and Latinos (see Chapter 1, pp.12-13). Therefore, the following discussion in this chapter will mainly focus on African-American and Latino media.

Functions of Ethnic Media

Over the years, ethnic media have served three main political, cultural, and social functions. The growth of ethnic media is rooted in the need to serve ethnic minorities by educating and guiding community members on different *political* rights, such as civil rights, racial discrimination, war, and immigration (Riggins, 1992; Azocar & Funabiki, 2008; Lehrman, 2009; Gutierrez, 1977; Martindale & Dunlap, 1997). When covering political rights, ethnic news media play a surveillance role by identifying the problems and concerns of a community (Viswanath, 2000; Lehrman, 2009). Historically, black and Latino news media have played more political roles than Native-American and Asian-American news media. In recent years, we can find more active roles of Asian-American news media during election campaigns as this ethnic group has emerged as major constituents in West Coast states (Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs, 2011; Oh & Katz, 2009). Ethnic media also cover *social* issues, such as education, employment, and community development. They regularly provide information about health care, employment and educational opportunities for community people (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011). Another important function of ethnic media is *cultural*. They play a two-fold cultural role by helping community members to assimilate with mainstream culture, while promoting their original traditions and customs (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008; Meiss & Tait, 2006; Benavides, 2008; Martindale, 1996; Pride & Wilson, 1997; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011). Upholding the culture of ethnic groups, integration

with mainstream society, and promoting community events has been the common functions of all these ethnic media.

Since the beginning of their journey in the early nineteenth century, African-American newspapers played a political role. African-Americans began publishing newspapers in reaction to the fact that the white press ignored the issues of black minorities. The first black newspaper, *The Freedom's Journal*, was published in New York City in 1827, a year when the slavery was abolished in the state of New York (Washburn, 2006). The political role of the black press is well known during the Civil Rights movement and against racial segregation between the early 1890s and the 1950s (Washburn, 2006; Martindale & Dunlap, 1997). During racial discrimination, the black press coverage placed emphasis on the issues that could create awareness among African Americans about their rights and institutional discriminations against them (Broussard & Hamilton, 2008; Mangun, 2006; Martindale, 1996). Washburn (2006) observed that during widespread discrimination and torture against blacks, "black preachers and black press appeared more influential among blacks than anyone else" (p.6). Racial discrimination against blacks was rarely covered in mainstream newspaper coverage. For example, mainstream newspaper coverage ignored the issue of voting rights for blacks in the state of Mississippi during post-reconstruction era, which was widely covered by black newspapers.

While reporting on war stories of World War II, the black press also covered the issues of race relations and discrimination in army units. By reporting in this way, black newspapers were making black minorities aware of discriminatory actions of the establishment. Besides addressing consciousness about civic rights, in these wars the black press also facilitated community empowerment through its coverage.

Because of the act of racism against blacks and mainstream media's negligence, the African-American press had to play an advocacy role since the early nineteenth century (Bronz, 2006; Washburn, 2006). Historically, mainstream news media not only ignored the issue of racial discrimination; they provided negative coverage of blacks. Whenever blacks committed a crime or got involved in a crime, they became a subject of a news story in mainstream newspapers (Washburn, 2006).

Likewise, discriminatory rules and suppression of Mexicans in the Southwest pushed the Latino press to adopt political functions (Gutierrez, 1977; Johnson, 2000). The first ethnic newspaper in the U.S. is *El Misisipí*, a Latino newspaper, which was published from New Orleans in 1808 (Gutierrez, 1977; Wilson, Gutierrez, & Chao, 2003). From the beginning, similar to the history of the black press, Spanish-language media spoke for the Latinos. During the U.S.-Mexico war in 1846, Latino newspapers published stories and articles, which had a different tone about the happenings than English-language newspapers. Spanish-language newspapers allowed Latino populations in the U.S. to express their viewpoints during the Spanish American War in 1898 (Mendoza, 2009). More than one hundred Latino newspapers were published between 1850 and 1900 in three southwest states, Texas, New Mexico, and California (Benavides, 2008). In the late nineteenth century, Latino journalists served as “instruments to resist subordinate status of Latino communities of color, which were physically subjugated and openly denied equal political, legal, and social status” (Benavides, 2008; p.256). For example, *El Clamor Publico* of Los Angeles defended the rights of Latinos and strongly denounced the lynching and other atrocities and extralegal actions against Latinos. Before immigration became a major issue, Latino newspapers emerged as a voice for Latino students in the 1930s to project their achievements and struggles in education (Gutierrez, 1977; Wilson &

Gutierrez, 1985). In recent years, we see more active political roles of Latino media on immigration issues. Ethnic news media, especially Spanish-language news media, were highly critical of the 2010 Immigration Act in Arizona (New America Media, 2010). Identity and community-related stories in Spanish-language newspapers included a political angle as legislators tend to ignore the perspective of Latino-Americans on immigration and employment (Guzman, 2006; Gutierrez, 1977; Wilson, Gutierrez, & Chao, 2003). The Latino media's political influence among their ethnic group can be best described by a congregation for immigration policy reform in California in 2006. Latino newspapers, including the influential *La Opinión*, encouraged readers to come out to the street to raise demands for immigration reform. Nearly 500,000 participated in that demonstration in Los Angeles (Mendoza, 2009).

It is evident in the above discussion that there was a need for ethnic media to play different roles for diverse ethnic groups. Ethnic media in the U.S. grew not only to serve different minorities but also to address the lack of diversity in the mainstream news coverage. Historically, mainstream newspapers ignored the issues and concerns of minorities. Even in the early 2000s, we see the continuation of racially-skewed coverage of news media. In a comparative study, Rowley and Kurpius (2003) found that two mainstream magazines, *Forbes* and *Fortune*, focused on the white corporate world while ignoring the success of black entrepreneurs. Though mainstream media are making efforts to diversify their workforce and occasionally cover race and ethnicity related issues, their news coverage still largely ignores the real issues of ethnic minorities (Pew Internet Research, 2010a).

Difference in Journalistic Practices between Mainstream and Ethnic News Media

Earlier studies on representation of race and ethnicity in the media have been critical of the coverage of social policies by mainstream news media. Azocar and Funabiki (2008) and

Lehrman (2009) argued that mainstream media content has a tendency to homogenize problems and policy issues impacting different ethnic groups of a multicultural society. Therefore, the existence of ethnic news media can create a multi-ethnic public sphere and contribute to the marketplace of ideas breaking the dominance of established discourses promoted and reinforced by mainstream news media (Guzman, 2006; Lehrman, 2005, 2009; Subervi, 2008; Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). Politicians and important policymakers usually shape news agendas and discourses on policy problems and proposals in mainstream media (Schram and Soss, 2001, Ward, 2005; Winter, 2008; Entman, 2007). As a result, mainstream media coverage becomes skewed toward political discussion and lacks diverse perspectives and policy-oriented discussion (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Lawrence, 2000; Lehrman, 2009; Jackson, 2010; Chuang, 2011).

Lack of diversity in the newsroom, journalistic storytelling approach, and over reliance on elite political sources are the main reasons we find differences in the news coverage of mainstream and ethnic newspapers (Peterson, 2010; National Association of Black Journalists, 2010). Lack of diversity in newsroom management is also considered another reason the perspectives of ethnic minorities are ignored in the content of mainstream news media.¹ People working in newsroom management play a key role in setting agendas and framing discourses. According to a survey conducted by the American Society of Newspaper Editors (2010), little over 11% supervising/ newsroom management positions in mainstream newspapers represent nonwhite journalists, while about 14% of the reporters were journalists of color. Among nonwhite newsroom managers, blacks, Latinos, and Asian-Americans had almost equal representation, ranging from 20%-22%. In a less diverse newsroom, white journalists may not

¹ A 2010 National Association of Black Journalists (2010) census has found that only 12.6 % journalists of color represent newsroom management in all TV stations owned by ten big stations, including three network stations.

have enough social experiences to include ethnic minority perspectives in stories. An alliance of minority journalists, UNITY: Journalists of Color, Inc., and a think-tank organization on black politics, culture, and business, the Loop 21, jointly conducted a survey on minority journalists in 2010 to know their opinion about the role of mainstream media in post-racial society. The survey found that 95% of minority journalists think mainstream media failed to cover racial and ethnic issues adequately in a multicultural society because of lack of diversity in newsroom and understanding of minority issues by editors and producers (TheLoop21.com, 2010).

Furthermore, in a discussion of conventional storytelling approaches, Peterson (2010) argues that a news story passes the criteria of a good story if it follows the pyramid structure of news writing and mentions news sources of information. However, such “formula” news reporting may ignore many social experiences and priorities of minorities in news stories on a policy issue (Peterson, 2010; Lehrman, 2005). This type of news reporting cannot take into account journalists’ social bias when they write reports (Peterson, 2010; Lehrman, 2005). Journalists use the filters of race, gender, generation, geography, class, and ideology when they write news reports (Lehrman, 2005). All these filters reflect journalists’ personal experiences and worldviews, which affect the practice of objective journalism. Because of inadequate knowledge of diverse ethnic groups, mainstream media journalists may ignore an important cultural issue of a community. Therefore, a study compared the coverage of spearfishing, an environmental issue concerning Native-Americans, between Native-American newspapers and general-market local media in Wisconsin (Perkins & Starosta, 2001). Spearfishing is a cultural issue of a Native-American tribe Anishinabe. However, general-market local newspapers repeatedly advanced the message that the use of ancient-type spears is troublesome for both Native-Americans and non-Native-Americans. While reporting the negative effects of spearfishing, local newspaper reports

ignored the fact that this type of fishing is an important part of a Native-American tribe's culture. Native-Americans use their ancestor's spears, which are culturally significant, in fishing. Therefore, a diverse workforce in the newsroom may be helpful in recognizing the importance of a problem encountered by minorities that a white journalist alone may not recognize (Lehrman, 2005).

In policy coverage, the relationship between mainstream newspaper journalists and policymakers is mutual. Political correspondents need information from public officials to stay in competition with other major newspapers for providing timely news updates, while a public official also wants to make full utilization of a journalist's reliance. Because of their reliance on discourses used by politicians and interest groups, mainstream media coverage negatively frame government involvement and federal spending in the health care reform debates of the 1960s and the 1990s (Skocpol, 1995, 1996).

In addressing the weaknesses of journalistic practices, scholars argue that journalism needs to go beneath the surface of a social problem or a phenomenon to help both majority and minority members of a society gain a deeper understanding about the causes of a problem and consequences of policy options (Wu and Izard, 2008; Lehrman, 2005). Failure of journalists to connect different problems of minorities—housing, education, and transportation—can result in a skewed image about minorities among the majority (Gilens, 1999; Entman & Rojecki, 2000; Lehrman, 2005; Report of the national advisory commission on Civil Disorders, 1968).

In the context of mainstream media's failure to adequately cover the issues of diverse populations, the growth of ethnic media has appeared as an alternative for many minority audiences. According to Lehrman (2005), about 40% of Arab-Americans and African-Americans prefer ethnic media over mainstream media. The same is true for other ethnic groups

as one-fourth of both Native- and Asian-Americans and about one-half of Hispanics consume ethnic media more than mainstream media. As a result, mainstream media are gradually losing market to several big ethnic media, such as *Univision*, *Black Entertainment Television*, *La Opinion*, and *El Nuevo Herald* (Lehrman, 2005). For example, in 2006-2008 the Spanish-language TV network, *Univision*, was competing on par with network TV affiliates in California (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). Therefore, mainstream media cannot ignore the fact that diversity also is a way of doing business (Hamlin, 2010). By including multiethnic perspectives in news coverage, a mainstream newspaper can attract more audiences with diverse backgrounds.

Lack of Diversity in Mainstream Media Content and Their Consequences. The growing literature on diversity in journalism and mass communication found the evidence of consequences of media content lacking the perspectives of ethnic groups. The dominance of negative news coverage of ethnic group members creates and perpetuates stereotypes and prejudices about that community among general audience. For instance, in policy news contexts, majority populations will not be able to develop better understanding of minorities' problem situations. Many argue that African-Americans are over represented as lawbreakers, victimizers, and perpetrators in contrast to the more frequent image of whites as victims and officers (Dixon and Linz, 2000; Entman, 1993b; Dixon, Azocar, & Casas, 2003). Dixon and Linz (2002) also found more pretrial prejudicial information about blacks in network television stories. In news coverage of criminal trials, compared to white suspects, blacks were framed as lawbreakers more frequently. Consequentially, consistent exposure to racially biased coverage makes the audience place responsibility of a criminal activity on a black person. Furthermore, blacks are represented with more demanding, more vocal, self-interested, and violent leaders in the political news,

while whites are portrayed as altruistic, family persons, and problem-solving personality (Entman, 1992).

In the context of poverty and welfare, Gilens (1999) found that blacks occupy most of the least sympathetic coverage on poverty in national news magazines. Instead, network television programs and news magazines constantly portrayed unemployed blacks as “lazy” and “able-bodied” welfare recipients (Gilens, 1999). On the contrary, poor whites received sympathetic coverage in news magazines during the recession in the early 1980s (Gilens, 1999). Such media portrayal clearly reflects the racial bias in mainstream media coverage and reinforces stereotypes about blacks (Gilens, 1999; Entman & Rojecki, 2000).

U.S. Ethnic Media Today

Latino and African-American media represent half of the ethnic media industry. African-Americans and Latinos are the two largest ethnic groups with relatively bigger media markets. About 15.8% of the U.S. populations are either Hispanics or Latinos, making it the largest ethnic group in the U.S. More than 12% of the population is African-American (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009). Of 2500 ethnic media outlets, more than 400 represent African-Americans, while more than 950 media organizations represent Latinos. The rest of the ethnic media serves Asian-Americans, Middle-Eastern Americans, Native-Americans, and other ethnic groups (New America Media, 2009a). In contrast to mainstream counterparts, ethnic news media were slow to adopt online outlets. As of June 2009, according to New America Media (2009a), about five hundred ethnic media were either online-only or print-and-web publications.

According to a New America Media (2009b) survey, ethnic media reach 89% of the Latino population and 78% of the African-American population. In recent years, ethnic newspaper consumption has increased among these two ethnic groups. From 2005-2009, ethnic

newspapers' reach increased among Hispanics and African-Americans by 28% and 42% respectively (New America Media, 2009b). During those years, ethnic websites' reach also increased among Hispanics and African-Americans by 90% and 29% respectively (New America Media, 2009b). These survey findings suggest that African-Americans and Latinos are increasingly consuming ethnic newspapers and online sites.

Among the ethnic media in the U.S., Latino media are in a better position than others in terms of audience reach because of a rapid increase in Spanish-speaking populations. Conversely, African-American newspapers have been continually losing circulation and readerships since the 1960s, because of a decline in advertisements and absence of in-depth coverage of national issues. However, they occasionally experienced increased but unsustainable readership numbers. In 2008-2009, the black press got temporary momentum for three reasons: 1) Obama's presidential election campaign, 2) the inauguration of President Obama, and 3) the death of Michael Jackson. As a result, the readership continues to remain low for the black press. According to a Pew project report, only 28% of African-Americans regularly read a black newspaper (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a).

Because of language factors, Latino media have seen a high growth in their business among Spanish-speaking demographics (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). This is also true for Asian-American media in the U.S. Korean- and Chinese-language newspapers have more circulation than other Asian newspapers (New America Media, 2009a). Latino and Asian populations living in the U.S. came from different cultural backgrounds. Though third and fourth generation Latino-Americans prefer to consume English-language media, many first generation or new immigrants prefer Spanish-language publications (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a).

The operation of large ethnic media is located either in major U.S. cities or in the areas of high density of ethnic populations (Hayes, 2006; Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). Large Latino media, *Univision*, *Telemundo*, and *La Opinion*, are operating from the West Coast states. A popular Spanish-language news outlet, *El Nuevo Herald*, is published from Miami, Florida, another Latino-populated city. Likewise, top African-American newspapers, such as the *Philadelphia Tribune*, the *Afro-American*, the *Pittsburgh Courier*, the *New York Amsterdam News*, and *Chicago Defender*, are published from major U.S. cities with a large number of black populations (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a; Philadelphia Business Journal, 2009).

Although the ethnic media industry is growing to advance the issues and interests of minorities, Latino media are in better situations in terms of audience reach than African-American news outlets. Despite their growth, black newspaper readership fluctuates depending on the issues covered. Therefore, it is necessary to examine how a booming growth in ethnic media industry since the early 2000 is reflecting the expectations of ethnic minorities.

Journalistic Practices by Ethnic Media

Ethnic news media tend to cover policy issues selectively. Spanish-language news media are more concerned with immigration issues, while the black press covers racial debates with relatively more importance than other issues. They are not proactive in covering other policy issues, such as the foreclosure crisis and economic stimulus package, having interests among ethnic minorities (Chuang, 2010). In addition, to cover national issues, many ethnic news media, even the large ones, often rely on mainstream wire service reports (Pride & Wilson, 1997; Wilson, Gutierrez, & Chao, 2003).

In the context of this research, it is important to understand the factors that shape journalistic practices for black, Latino and other ethnic media outlets. These factors need to be

considered while analyzing the coverage of ethnic newspapers. According to scholarly and industry research, priorities in the missions of ethnic media organizations, financial factors, and the status of ethnic media journalism, including journalistic skills, size of news operation, and their importance to news sources affect their journalistic practices (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008; Washburn, 2006; Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a; Allen, 2009, Pride & Wilson, 1997).

Mission. In 2008, the Center for Integration and Improvement of Journalism (CIIJ) at San Francisco State University conducted a national survey of the missions of U.S. ethnic media (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). The top two missions identified in the survey were promoting community voice and building collective cultural identity (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). By community voice, ethnic media journalists referred to their roles in correcting mistakes and misrepresentation of ethnic groups by mainstream newspapers. For instance, when mainstream news coverage on immigration and race-related debates exclude ethnic group perspectives, Latino and black newspapers made efforts to fill the gaps of their counterparts. But educating and adequately informing the community about complex policy issues, as Chuang (2010) argued, do not get priority in the missions of ethnic newspapers. As reported in the CIIJ survey, ethnic media journalists did not rank highly the mission of helping community understand government, businesses, and schools, and providing explanations about complex issues, including national policy issues. Efforts to investigate and challenge government's claims and policy options ranked much lower in the ethnic media's priority of missions (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). The survey findings clearly suggest that ethnic news media are not giving priority to in-depth journalism in advancing community interests on policy issues.

Finances. The financial situation can influence the priorities of ethnic news media. Like mainstream newspapers, paid advertisements are the main source of revenue for ethnic newspapers. In the past, to retain paid advertisements, some black newspapers, including *Baltimore Afro-American*, reduced the number of news commentaries and switched to more event-oriented coverage after the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s (Washburn, 2006). Pride and Wilson (1997) called this trend in the black press a sign of a “fading mission” or “relaxation of the mission.” Though the black press helped the civil rights movement gain momentum, it became the victim of its successes (Washburn, 2006). While advocating for racial integration in U.S. society, it used emotional words and phrases against whites, which, in fact, alienated many white advertisers and readers. “Eye-for-an-eye” philosophy in journalistic practice and giving an impression that “whites are not better than blacks” caused an image problem for black newspapers (Washburn, 2006). The loss of advertisements had a chain effect on news production. Lack of revenues prompted staff cuts in ethnic newspapers, which resulted in thinner coverage of policy and diverse issues affecting blacks (Washburn, 2006). Revenue also affected the size of news operations, and black newspapers had to reduce the number of news beats. As a result, they started to rely on wire service stories. Another indirect effect of losing revenue was black newspapers no longer could serve their readers with a variety of content and in-depth analysis; thus, they also lost circulation. A limited financial base has always been a major challenge or barrier for ethnic news media entrepreneurs. Generally, ethnic news media heavily rely on family ownership. Many small-to-medium scale newspapers find it hard to attract advertising contracts and investment capital (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008).

Of the paid advertisements, ethnic media heavily rely on local advertisers as a majority of them operate locally. However, big ethnic media like *Univision* attract national advertisers as

they often beat the affiliates of NBC, CBS, and ABC during prime time (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). In addition, increasing purchasing power among minority group members attracts more advertisers to ethnic news media (Fiske, 2011). Ethnic purchasing power has grown among African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Latinos since 2001. Buying power among Asians, African-Americans, and Hispanics were 526 billion, 773 billion, and 778 billion dollars respectively in 2008 (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). Hence, the revenue inflow from advertisements in ethnic news media depends on their audience reach as well as the buying power of community members. Advertisement spending in the Latino media market grew by 164% in 2011 since 2001 (Fiske, 2011).

Linguistic plurality does not only reflect cultural richness of a society; it has also economic importance. In many cases, language is a deciding factor in ethnic media business. The linguistic factor makes a difference between Spanish-language and black newspapers. Likewise, the use of Asian languages was also effective for Asian-American media in reaching large audiences (Allen, 2009; Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). But African-American media entrepreneurs do not have linguistic diversity within its community. Almost all African-Americans speak in English. Ethnic newspapers published in foreign languages have more readers than ethnic news outlets published in English (Allen, 2009). The circulation of Chinese language dailies increased three times from 1990 to 2006, and four Spanish-language newspapers serve Hispanic/Latino-Americans in New York because of the growth of Hispanic/Spanish-speaking populations in the state (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011). Thus, with relatively more circulation than English-language ethnic newspapers, a Spanish or a Chinese language news outlet is capable of demonstrating political influence in its community.

Furthermore, ethnic media need to address the needs and interests of new generation ethnic audiences. The more-assimilated second, third and fourth generations of immigrants, either Hispanics or Asians, often prefer English-language news outlets (Chuang, 2010). Consequentially, some Hispanic media outlets switched from Spanish-language to bilingual or even all English-language in 2009. By doing this, Latino media went into direct competition with mainstream media (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). Thus, addressing the preferences of new generation ethnic audience and language factor are the important aspects of ethnic media's business strategy that determines the revenues for them.

Status. Skills of journalists, access to important news sources, and the size of operation can influence the depth and range of news coverage in ethnic news media. Because of their smaller operation size and relatively less significant audience reach in contrast to mainstream media reach, government agencies and important news sources tend to ignore ethnic newspaper journalists (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). As a result, many ethnic media journalists do not always have access to official sources for news reporting.

A 2008 survey found that more than 50% of ethnic media journalists were self-taught (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). They did not have either journalism education or experience prior to coming to this profession. In addition, most of the ethnic media organizations are small-to-medium-size operation. On average, five journalists work in small-size ethnic newspapers, while 15-25 journalists work in medium-size operation (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008; Biswas, 2009). Ethnic newspapers that also have online outlets usually maintain a web team ranging from 2-10 people, depending on the size of operation (Biswas, 2009). With a smaller number of staff, many ethnic newspapers cannot publish daily and cover a wide range of national and local issues.

Despite these constraints in journalistic practices, ethnic media's presence can counterbalance skewed or stereotypical coverage, if any, by mainstream media. One of the constraints is poor economic health of ethnic media that affects their scope of operation and access to resources in covering a wide range of issues. Moreover, priority to commercial interests over community concerns in ethnic news media results in the absence of in-depth coverage of the issues affecting the community most. Furthermore, quality journalism depends on the availability of skilled journalists that many ethnic news media lack. It is evident in the past studies and ethnic media literature that mainstream media can convey and promote stereotypical and homogenized understandings of ethnic minorities. Mainstream newspapers usually take a "one-size-fits-all" approach (Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). Their media coverage can exclude multi-ethnic perspectives. Conversely, through their political, cultural, and community functions, ethnic media can address ethnic-specific interests and concerns about a policy. In the context of a growing ethnic media, policymakers and ethnic minorities now have more options to get a multi-ethnic perspective about the issue at stake.

CHAPTER III: MEDIA COVERAGE ANALYSIS AND ITS THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

One way of examining the role of media in society is the analysis of media messages on an issue in a given context. Prominent media coverage of issues can affect the way people think about different issues. Therefore, scholars have sought to understand which issues and/or attributes have received more attention in news media.

Theories of agenda-setting and framing are widely-used when focusing on media messages and its effects. These theories are important as they explore how news media give more priority to certain issues by including some facts and ideas and excluding others in its coverage. By emphasizing some issues, media agendas and frames can lead policymakers and the public to think policy issues in certain ways (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Dearing & Rogers, 1996; Entman, 1993a; Spitzer, 1993; and Callaghan & Schnell, 2001). This chapter will provide an overview of the concepts of agenda-setting, attribute agenda, and media framing, and their applications in both mass communication and policy research.

Agenda-Setting

According to the agenda-setting theory, media can tell us what to think about; they can be general issues in our public life, or specific issues in politics, economy, and community (Lowery & DeFleur, 1988; Severin & Tankard, Jr., 2001). The agenda-setting function of the media can make certain issues important in news content (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Issue salience refers to situations when media give importance to certain topics by running more stories about them than others in a given timeframe. Thus the agenda-setting function of media can raise the importance of an issue in the public's mind by making certain issues or issue attributes prominent in news coverage (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Severin & Tankard, Jr., 2001).

As it is found in the literature, scholars have used agenda-setting theory in four types of research – 1) agenda-setting effects research that measures the association between media agenda and public agenda, 2) research on the factors shaping the news agenda, 3) research on intermedia agenda-setting research, and 4) research on comparing news agendas between two types of media. Earlier studies on agenda-setting research measured the impact of issue importance in the media coverage on the audience. In the first agenda-setting research, popularly known as “Chapel Hill study,” McCombs and Shaw (1972) found a strong correlation of .976 between media agenda and public agenda. They analyzed how the coverage of public affairs in national and local news media set the agendas for electorates in North Carolina during the 1968 Presidential election. Their study found foreign policy, law and order, and economy to be the most highly-ranked agendas among the media and the public in Chapel Hill before the election.

The follow-up study in Charlotte, North Carolina, adopted a cross-lagged analysis examined a representative sample of all voters during the summer and fall of the 1972 presidential election campaign. It found that the salience of all seven issues on the public agenda was influenced by the pattern of news coverage of local newspapers and national television networks (Lowery & DeFleur, 1988). A cross-lagged analysis was conducted to identify whether media agendas can impact public agendas in Charlotte in two different time periods. A substantial number of scholarship adopted cross-lagged analysis on agenda-setting and repeatedly found strong correlation between media agenda and public agenda (Borquez, 1993; McCombs, 2005).

Attribute Agenda-Setting. Initial studies in the 1960s and the 1970s were focusing on issue agenda-setting, also known as first-level agenda. Later a research shift from issues to the characteristics of issues led the scholars to revise the earlier concept of agenda-setting. The

outcome was the development of the theory of attribute agenda-setting, also known as second second-level agenda-setting. Attribute or second-level agenda-setting explores media messages at the level of sub-issues (McCombs, 2005). For example, if unemployment is an issue, then benefits and health insurance for unemployed people are the attributes or sub-issues. An attribute agenda analysis will go deeper to see what aspects of an issue are presented, such as benefits for unemployed workers/individuals in the discussion of unemployment. Hence the second-level agenda-setting function refers to the ways that news story can tell us not only what to think about, but also how to think about it (Severin & Tankard, Jr., 2001; McCombs, 2005). In the same way some issues receive more attention than others in news coverage, various dimensions of an issue can receive more attention in news content compared to others (McCombs, 2005).

The effects of attribute agenda-setting can be powerful. For example, a President's competence is always an issue before an election, and can be evaluated by different attributes; handling of a crisis situation or a problem is one of the attributes that people use to judge the performance of a President. In a 1989 study, Iyengar and Kinder (1989) found the impact of news stories' consistent reference to president's responsibility in a specific problem situation among television viewers when they evaluated the competence of the president. The study found that most of the television stories advanced the president's handling of a problem situation over other dimensions (Iyengar & Kinder, 1989). Likewise, in another study, Hester and Gibson (2003) found the presence of negative attributes in about two-third of 892 economic stories. Only approximately one-third of the stories included favorable information about the economy. They argued that more negative stories about an economic situation can lead the public to be pessimistic about the future of national economy. It is evident from these studies that attribute agendas can make news media more than a purveyor of information. Rather its coverage can set

the conditions of making political choices and decisions by signifying certain aspects of an issue (Iyengar & Kinder, 1989; Besova & Cooley, 2009; Kim, Scheufele, & Shanahan, 2002).

In the agenda-setting literature, we can find discussion of another type of agenda-setting, intermedia agenda-setting, which refers to a situation when one news medium sets the agenda for another (Severin & Tankard, Jr., 2001). Intermedia agenda-setting is the result of the reliance of news organizations on the other media for story ideas (Messner & DiStaso, 2008; Sweetser, Golan, & Wanta, 2008). According to one study, *The New York Times* drove the television news agenda of major network channels (Golan, 2006). It found a strong correlation between news agendas on international events in the morning edition of *The New York Times* and evening news bulletins of network television channels.

Agenda-setting research in the new media context also explored intermedia agenda-setting between online media, such as blogs and Internet discussion forums, and traditional news media (Sweetser, Golan, & Wanta, 2008; Lee, Lancendorfer, & Lee, 2005). Lee, Lancendorfer, and Lee (2005) examined the influence of Internet bulletin boards on newspaper coverage of the 2000 general election in South Korea. They measured the influence of online bulletin boards at both first and second levels of agenda-setting through content analysis of major newspapers and the Internet bulletin boards during the election campaign. At first, findings of cross-lagged correlation analyses showed that newspapers shaped the discussion on the Internet bulletin boards at the first level of agenda-setting (Lee et al., 2005). However, they found an opposite picture in the second-level agenda-setting effects. The Internet bulletin boards had second-level agenda-setting effects on the newspaper coverage. This finding reaffirms the argument that not only bloggers or other online content creators heavily used traditional media content, news media

journalists also sought news ideas and information from online discussion forums and bloggers (Messner & Distaso, 2008).

As this research compares news agendas of both mainstream and ethnic online newspapers, it is pertinent to see how prior studies compared the content of two or more news media. Studies that explored news agendas in a comparative media context mainly compared the use of content among different media outlets. Aikat and Yu (2005) explored issue agendas, and found similarities across mainstream news outlets on three platforms: web (Google news, Yahoo! news), print (major newspapers), and broadcasting (network stations and cable channels). Thus news coverage in mainstream media can be homogeneous. However, mainstream media coverage was significantly different in non-news category, such as entertainment (Aikat & Yu, 2005). In non-news category, mainstream news sites were flexible in content selection as they do not need to cover the same issues and events like news stories. In a different context, mainstream media and campaign websites covered similar issues. During a political campaign, news media content dictated discussion and agenda on a campaign website. Sweetser, Golan, and Wanta (2008) found a strong correlation between news agenda and campaign blog agenda. During the 2004 U.S. Presidential election, the study found strong correlations between campaign blogs and media agendas (Sweetser, Golan, & Wanta, 2008). Bush and Kerry blogs had strong correlations with media agenda, which were .921 and .819 respectively. But Bush and Kerry election campaign advertisements did not have strong correlations with media agenda.

Two different news media can be similar in terms of advancing issue agendas, but they can be different over attribute agendas. Flores and McCombs (2008) compared the news agendas of two Spanish-language television networks, *Univision* and *Telemundo* in the context of the

2004 Presidential election. They found high correlation in election-related issue agendas in both Spanish-language television stations. These two ethnic television stations prioritized the issues of an ethnic group in the news coverage of a national issue. The top two news agendas of these stations were “discussions about voting” and “Latino voters” (Flores & McCombs, 2008). The government’s performance in dealing with war, terrorism, and economy were highlighted in the election-related news stories for providing adequate context to the readers in making voting decision. Therefore, *Univision*’s voting discussion was focusing on three major sub-issues or attributes—Iraq war, terrorism, and economy, while *Telemundo*’s voting discussion was mainly centered around the issue of terrorism (Flores & McCombs, 2008). Thus we can find a difference in the coverage of two ethnic media. Two ethnic news media coverage can be similar in terms of prioritizing issues, but they can have different focus in advancing issue attributes or sub-issues. In consequence, audiences receive different perspectives about an issue from various ethnic news outlets.

This review also explored the studies that discussed the factors shaping agendas for news media. The agenda-setting function of news media can be the outcome of nature of an event and relationship between news media and policymakers. In discussing the importance of the evolving nature of an event in the agenda-setting process, Christie (2006) argued that sometimes media agendas change over time depending on the level of public support about an issue. Christie (2006) examined relationships between media and policy agendas during the period of high public support (April–May 2003) and low public support for Iraq war (April–May 2004). In her research, Christie analyzed the content of White House briefings and compared the policy agendas of briefings with news agendas of major national/international newspapers and a major television network. Results of the study found a strong relationship during a period of high

public support between the White House and media agendas on central issues of Iraq War – terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and the assembly of a coalition to prosecute the war; but it did not find any such relationship during a time of low public support (Christie, 2006).

Therefore, a news agenda about a policy depends on its implications. Media can support a policy decision in some context, such as a crisis/emergency situation, but it can change its agenda with changes in public opinion about that issue.

Moreover, the relationship between policy and news agendas depends on the political culture and audience market within which news media operate. In a longitudinal study, Tan and Weaver (2009) found that state-level political culture can influence the degree of agenda-setting effects between the newspaper coverage and the legislative policies. They referred to three types of political culture--traditionalistic, individualistic, and moralistic--that shape the relationship between news media and policymakers. Traditionalistic state culture refers to a system where government officials exert more control mechanisms in the decision making process. In individualistic state cultures, public and state legislators maintain distance from each other. Both traditionalistic and individualistic state cultures appear to be government-centered political culture (Tan & Weaver, 2009). As a result, they found a weak relationship between media agenda and policy agenda in those state cultures. But in a moralistic political culture, which allows public participation in policymaking, the study found a strong relationship between policy agenda and media agenda (Tan & Weaver, 2009).

As a whole, apart from the policy of a news organization and the evaluation of an issue importance by journalists, the nature of an event, public opinion, and political culture shape news agendas.

Media Framing

An analysis of attribute agendas cannot give us a complete picture of news coverage, unless we explore how the issue attributes are presented. Attribute agenda analysis can inform us of what aspects of an issue are prioritized in news content (Weaver, 2007). But a framing analysis can help examine the organizing ideas and interpretative framework of news content, which is different than just identifying attributes of issues (Weaver, 1997; Scheufele, 1999). Framing and second-level agenda-setting may sound similar to an extent as they focus on “how issues and other objects [are] depicted in media” (Weaver, 2007, p. 145). Some scholars believe that these two concepts are different because they think that framing analysis involves “cognitive processes” like moral evaluation and reasoning while attribute agenda research focuses on the frequencies of sub-issues or aspects of an issue (Scheufele, 1999; Weaver, 2007). This research works from this perspective. Attribute agendas provide information to understand and interpret a situation, whereas media frames make the audience judgmental about the issues affecting them. By including some facts and excluding others, the news media can craft messages for policy consideration and how the public and policymakers should think about an issue (Iyengar, 1991; Entman, 1993a).

The idea of framing is grounded in the seminal work of sociologist Erving Goffman (1974), who argued that we use “schema of interpretations” or “frames” to locate or identify occurrences in the real world. Likewise, journalists use their mental references to interpret an issue and an event. By doing this, journalists also can shape reference points for the audience in understanding different issues and events (Goffman, 1974). When media scholars adopted Goffman’s framing concept in research, they interpreted it as “central organizing idea” of media messages (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987, p.143; Severin & Tankard, 2001; Gitlin, 1980). A

researcher identifies frames in media coverage by interpreting the keywords, phrases, stereotyped phrases and images, and sources of information and sentences used in media text (Entman, 1993a).

As media framing provides an interpretative framework for the audience in their evaluation of an issue or an event, it runs the risk of providing a biased and incomplete perspective. Frames used in news stories can be either intentional or unintentional. Therefore, journalists do not always intentionally promote an idea over others. Ideologies of journalists and newspaper policies are factors that may contribute to intentional framing, while journalists' lack of social experience and knowledge about an issue can result in unintentional framing about an issue. Entman (2007) argues that framing favors one side over the others in news stories and editorials. When media have their own political agenda, they systematically assist certain political actors like political parties to induce preferred behavior in others. For that purpose, news stories are organized and packaged in a way to create certain understanding and interpretation of issues among the audience (Simon & Xenos, 2000; Gross & Brewer, 2007). Reese (2007) also argues that news framing "bracket[s] out" certain happenings via the "routinized, legitimized and institutionalized structures that favor certain ways of seeing" (p. 149). As a consequence, media frames can make certain ideas more available than others for the public by evaluating an issue and performance of an organization or an individual (Entman, 2010; Lee, McLeod, & Shah, 2008).

Not all news frames provide us enough information to develop a better understanding of an issue. News frames that provide an in-depth coverage of an issue help policymakers make well-informed decisions on key political, social and economic issues. For example, gender inequality in labor may not be addressed if news coverage fails to provide information to

policymakers about various reasons/causes of workplace discrimination (Peterson, 2010). A study found that the coverage of women empowerment in Spanish newspapers presented women caregivers only as a solution to domestic care problem in Spain. The main weakness of that coverage, as Peterson (2010) found, was that empowerment frame in Spanish newspaper coverage overlooked an important issue of gender inequality, wage discrimination against female workers.

Furthermore, journalists' tendency to rely on available and established arguments for interpreting the causes of same type of news event can affect the quality of news frames. For example, in cases of any school shooting incident, journalists tend to rely on "pop culture frames" of social breakdown, such as juvenile delinquency and youth problems, to interpret the causes of such criminal activities (Springhall, 1998). There can be a wide range of reasons that cause shooting in schools, because contexts of school shootings in different places may not be the same. However, some good reporting can broaden readers' understanding of a problem. Birkland and Lawrence (2009) found that the coverage of Columbine school shootings provided some new perspectives about causes, policy tools, and political advocacy (Birkland & Lawrence, 2009). In reporting that school shooting, breaking away from a traditional notion of youth gun fights, news media provided new information about the causes of shootings, which included the influence of violent media, and lack of family guidance and good parenting. This explains that there is always room for inclusion of new frames about an issue.

Media frames may not properly represent a community or their policy needs. For example, rural policy is not always agriculture policy. But news media apparently support the myth that agriculture policy is a rural policy by reinforcing "rural icons," such as "family farms" and "small farming communities" in their coverage of rural America (Flora, Flora, & Fey, 2001,

p.23). Such framing of rural America cannot yield a policy outcome that can satisfy rural advocates (Aubrun & Grady, 2003). Thus a rural policy can be an outcome of an ill-informed process (Webb, 2006).

Because of their different emphases, news frames are labeled and defined in various categories. Scholars in past studies identified the use of different types of frames in media coverage. The early media framing research introduced episodic and thematic frames (Iyengar, 1991). These are two broad categories of frames that are used to interpret the nature of organizing ideas in news stories. The “episodic” news frame is event-oriented and short-lived in media coverage as it dwells on some specific incidents. The “thematic” frame places emphasis on the causes and the effects dimensions of news topics (Iyengar, 1991). Iyengar (1991) found television news more episodic than thematic in its depiction of social and political events. In the 1980s, television networks showed hundreds of reports on acts of terrorism without referring to socioeconomic and political causes of the problem (Iyengar, 1991). People did not see more abstract connections between social issues and politics due to more episodic stories (Iyengar, 1991). More episodic stories make people interpret any issue through images set by televisions. As a result, citizens and voters were unable to evaluate their elected officials' performance in curbing terrorism because they did not see any connection between the two (Iyengar, 1991). Consequentially, more episodic frame-based coverage may be an easy task for news media as it involves less research, but it makes citizens “ill equipped” to take part in democracy (Iyengar, 1991). Politicians benefit from the episodic coverage trend of television as they feel less responsible for any social problem. Thus Iyengar suggests that the media should mirror political and social realities for people to understand the connections between government actions and social issues.

However, overuse of certain thematic frames may not be helpful either. More uses of thematic frames about political rivalry and tactics in news stories cannot lead to making a well-informed decision (Gross & Brewer, 2007; Patterson, 1994; D'Angelo, 1999; de Vreese, 2004). In a policymaking context, information about policy proposals and its consequences are more important than politics involved with the process. Thus better media coverage of a policy issue should place more emphasis on substance than on politics.

Media Framing of Policy Issues/Policy Debate. Later studies on media framing developed theme-oriented frames, such as conflict, strategy, value/ideology, substance, reassuring, and evaluation/consequence frames (Lee, McLoed, & Shah, 2008; Gross and Brewer, 2007; Shih, Wijaya, & Brossard, 2008). These frames are used to advance details, arguments, and counter arguments around policy proposals. The following discussion will give us a better idea of what these policy frames are about:

A *substance frame* in newspaper coverage advances the details of a policy (Adriaansen, van Praag, & de Vreese, 2010). In their study on media coverage of the 2001 campaign finance reform, Gross and Brewer (2007) also included pros and cons of policy details in the concept of substance frame. Along with providing details of a plan, a substance frame conveys information about the positions of political actors about different policy proposals (Adriaansen et al., 2010). In explaining policy positions of politicians, news stories also include opposing ideas, known as *conflict frames*. In contrast to a frame that only informs readers about competition and rivalry, a substance news frame can make a political process of a country accountable to the public and help the citizens to make an informed decision by providing the details of policy options (Adriaansen et al., 2010; Gross & Brewer, 2007).

A *conflict frame* is common in political journalism. Coverage using this frame presents politics as a horse race, a battle or a competition (Gross & Brewer, 2007). Thus news stories adopting conflict frames are organized around various parties in contention over issues of public concern (Lee, McLeod, & Shah, 2008). Conflict frames can be further subdivided according to how journalists portray the conflict. For example, the conflict may be framed as a clash of values or as a strategic battle between competing actors (Lee, McLeod, & Shah, 2008, p.700). Because of the journalistic norm of objectivity, conflict frame often overshadows the presence of substance frame in media coverage (Gross & Brewer, 2007). By framing political issues in the form of debate or battle, reporters can stay away from being politically biased (Kerbel, Apee, and Ross, 2000; Lawrence 2000).

In the context of policy and politics, journalists prefer to frame or package a story as political competition. As a result *strategy frame* in media coverage is usually concerned with political and procedural maneuvers or tactics and actions to drum up support for and against a political issue or policy proposal (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Gross & Brewer, 2007). There is a blurring distinction between conflict and strategy frames in politics. Conflict frames present opposing political ideas or ideological standpoints on various issues, while strategy frames dwell on the actions and process of implementing ideological and partisan agendas. For example, when a news story promotes competing ideas of liberals and conservatives about more government involvement in health care outcome, it becomes a conflict frame. Likewise, when a news story highlights the steps taken by either Republicans or Democrats in support of or against a policy option, it becomes a strategy frame. Cappella and Jamieson (1997) defined strategy frame as emphasizing gains and losses in a political game. The strategy frame is widely used in media coverage of elections and national-level policy discussion (Lawrence, 2000; Kerbel et al. 2000;

Valentino, Beckman, & Buhr, 2001). However, a study found that in contrast to a national-level issue, news coverage of a state-level policy tends not to emphasize strategy frames (Lawrence, 2000). As national level policy discussion does have broad political implications, journalists might be interested in highlighting political maneuvering in their stories. Therefore, media coverage of the 1996 welfare reform debate was mainly about the strategies employed by politicians in realizing their political goals; reform stories did not give much attention to the content and implications of welfare reform proposals (Lawrence, 2000).

The concern is that a strategy frame that dwells on political tactics can have negative consequences among the audience. Studies found that the dominance of strategy frames in news coverage makes the audience skeptical about the roles of politicians and policymakers (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997; Valentino et al., 2001). D'Angelo (1999, 2002) argued that audiences heavily exposed to strategy frame also become apathetic to news media. The audience with high exposure to strategy news frame can interpret the media as more negative than individuals exposed to informative coverage. While the effects of a strategy frame are strong on those with less political knowledge, it makes politically-conscious citizens cynical about the future of politics (Jackson, 2010; Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Valentino et al. 2001).

Along with political strategies and debates, news coverage also includes information about political, economic, and social implications of policy options (Dursun, 2005).

Consequence frames in media messages focus on the implications or the effects of policy options (Shih, Wijaya, & Brossard, 2008). In the context of policy, media messages can convey different types of effects of various policy options. Therefore, a consequence frame can have more than one dimension. Quality of frame depends on what type of consequence got prominence in the coverage. In media coverage analysis on European Union (EU) enlargement, Dursun (2005)

found that the political consequence frame in news stories. The frame included the effects of EU enlargement on the decision-making process in the European Parliament, peace and stability in Europe, and the EU's standing in the international political arena (Dursun, 2005). News stories advancing the economic consequences of the EU enlargement focused on its effects of employment, cost of funding for new member states, and investment opportunities in a bigger market (Dursun, 2005). As a result, different emphases within consequence frames not only shape the news coverage but also influence the public understanding of a policy in question.

Diversity in Media Coverage and Need for Diversity Frame. Earlier framing studies on policy debate did not explore the multi-ethnic perspective in media messages. The focus on conflict, strategy, substance, and consequence frames used in mainstream news media coverage is very abstract in the context of a multicultural society. Their coverage tends to ignore ethnic-group specific information about policy issues. The absence of multi-ethnic perspective in media content results in the incomplete understanding of a policy problem, and potential misperception and prejudicial information about people of color (Dixon & Linz, 2002; Entman & Rojecki, 2000; Gilens, 1999). As discussed in chapter 2, mainstream media that ignore the diversity perspective in their coverage run the risk of offering skewed and stereotyped coverage of ethnic minorities (Dixon & Linz, 2000; Entman, 1993b; Dixon, Azocar, & Casas, 2003; Miller & Ross, 2005).

Furthermore, many members in the audience may lack adequate social and personal experiences about members of other ethnic groups. Amid the trend of generalized or homogenized framing of a problem and the dominance of politics in the discussion of policy proposals, mainstream media coverage usually excludes the needs, interests, and concerns of different ethnic groups. In this context, Wilson, Gutierrez, and Chao (2003) talked about the need

of reporting from a multiracial perspective, which is the “antithesis of exclusion” in media coverage (p.124). Thus a policy issue needs to be reported from multi-ethnic perspective so that news reports can represent all citizens of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. While performing the surveillance function of mass communication, news media need to inform society about “perspectives, aspirations, and contributions” of all its members (Wilson, Gutierrez, and Chao, 2003, p.125). If a society is represented by people of multicultural backgrounds, then mainstream media’s function would be to identify the status of all ethnic groups in a given situation.

As opposed to a homogenized or generalized depiction, a diversity news frame of a policy debate can advance policy concerns, needs, and priorities of multiethnic groups. Therefore, a diversity frame, inclusive of multiethnic perspectives, provides adequate information about the concerns of ethnic minorities to the public as well as the policymakers for better understanding a policy problem. Fedler, Smith, Marzolf, and Jeter (1996) described this type of multiracial and inclusive coverage as “complete coverage.” They argued that the definition of news needs to be broadened by including the issues of interest to more Americans with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds (Fedler et al., 1996, p.1).

Because the mainstream news coverage tends to treat their audience as a homogeneous group, in the context of this study it will be important to see how news content on health care reform advances diversity or the multi-ethnic perspective. However, a diversity frame can be found with other frames. Since policy discussion often includes provisions for ethnic minorities, in cases of substance or consequence frames, policy details and evaluation of the policy can refer to ethnic groups. Likewise, a consequence frame in newspaper coverage also includes the implications of the bill among ethnic groups. In this research, any consequence frame referring to

an ethnic group will be considered a diversity frame, because inclusion of a diverse perspective distinguishes that story from other stories.

In addition, a comparative analysis in this research will explore how ethnic and mainstream newspapers advanced other policy news frames--substance, conflict, strategy, and consequence frames--in their coverage of health care reform. As discussed earlier, these news frames were used as an analytical framework in past studies on media and politics.

Furthermore, this research will analyze content emphases in each frame. The earlier studies, except the study by Dursun (2005), did not investigate the content emphasis within each policy frame. Dursun (2005) mainly explored three types of consequence frame in the news coverage of EU enlargement. Likewise, conflict frames can have political or clash of community interest dimensions. Some newspaper coverage may have more focus on political conflict over clash of interests within a community around an issue. Content focus in conflict, consequence, substance, consequence, and diversity frames about an issue can be dissimilar among different news media. Because mainstream and ethnic newspapers have disparate missions as news organizations, this research assumed that ethnic newspaper coverage of health care reform would have a different focus in each policy frame than mainstream newspaper coverage.

CHAPTER IV: THE STUDY AND ITS METHODOLOGY

This study examined the health care reform coverage in the comparative context of mainstream and ethnic online newspapers. As discussed in Chapter III, this study employed framing and attribute agenda-setting theories to interpret the differences and similarities in the news coverage of health care reform by these newspapers. In the analysis of attribute agendas, this research examined what aspects of health care reform received more attention than others in ethnic and mainstream newspaper coverage. In the analysis of frames, this study has utilized five frames—conflict, consequence, strategy, substance, and diversity—to interpret the organizing ideas in the newspaper coverage of the reform debate.

The comparative analysis in this research involved three types of content: newspaper stories, wire service stories, and editorials. As ethnic news media tend to use wire services for national news (Washburn, 2006; Wilson, Gutierrez, & Chao, 2003; Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs, 2011), the sample in this research included wire stories used in ethnic newspapers. Because of lack of resources, ethnic news media cannot always run original stories on health care reform. Also, to increase original content on this policy debate from ethnic news media, this research analyzed editorials on health care reform published in both types of newspapers.

Sample

The sample for this study was collected from six online newspapers, two mainstream and four ethnic online newspapers. The four ethnic online newspapers included two African-American and two Latino/Hispanic-American newspapers. This study included only African-American and Latino newspapers in the sample because they represent two large ethnic minority groups with higher numbers of uninsured populations. Latino populations represent 15.8% of

total U.S. populations, while the African-American populations 12.9% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Proportionally, uninsured populations are higher among Latino and African-American populations than other ethnic groups. About 32% of Latinos, about 21% of African-American populations, about 19% of Asian-Americans, and a little over 15% of whites were uninsured in 2009 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

This study analyzed health care reform content from two popular mainstream newspapers, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Many past studies analyzed the content of these two newspapers because these newspapers are considered as two opinion-leading newspapers in the U.S. (Ten Eyck & Williment, 2003). *The New York Times* not only has the ability to reach American leaders and citizens but also has the potential to impact news coverage produced by other national or regional newspapers (Malek, 1997; McCombs, Einsiedel, & Weaver, 1991). *The New York Times* also is known as America's "newspaper of record" (Chang, Shoemaker, & Brendlinger, 1987). Referring to Nielsen data, the PEW's Project of Excellence in Journalism (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a) reported that online outlets of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* were the top two online newspaper sties that received more unique visitors than any other online newspapers in the U.S.²

The two African-American newspapers included in the sample of this study were *The Philadelphia Tribune* and the *Chicago Defender*, and the two Latino newspapers were *La*

² The *USA Today* and *The Huffington Post* were ranked right after *The Washington Post*. In 2009, *The New York Times* was visited by 18,520,000 unique visitors, while the *Post* 9,810,000 unique visits (PROJECT FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM, 2010a). But *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* were ranked 5th and 9th in terms of unique visits among all types of news sites, search engine news, aggregators, newspapers, and network/cable television sites. Non-newspaper websites received more traffic than newspaper websites. Yahoo News, MSNBC Digital Network, AOL News, CNN.com were the top four news sites in 2009 in terms of the use by unique visitors (PROJECT FOR EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM, 2010).

Opinion and *El Nuevo Herald*. The ethnic online newspapers were selected on the basis of three criteria: 1) circulation and web traffic, 2) the active presence on the web as online newspapers, and 3) the continued coverage of health care reform between December 2009 and March 2010. All these three criteria were important as circulation and web visits represent the popularity and reach of a newspaper. Latino newspapers have more circulation than African-American newspapers, Asian-American newspapers, and Native-American newspapers (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). Also having an active news website and continued coverage of a news event reflect the degree of visibility online. Since this study could not identify reliable web traffic data for African-American newspapers, it considered circulation figures, the existence of an active news site, and continued news coverage in selecting newspapers. All these ethnic newspapers are published in the U.S. and distributed among U.S. ethnic audiences.

Among African-American newspapers in the U.S., *The Philadelphia Tribune* was ranked the number one circulated newspaper. This top-circulated newspaper had an average circulation of more than 25,000 in 2009 (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). Though the *Amsterdam News* in New York was the second largest-circulated daily among African-American newspapers (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a), its online outlet published more community news than national news. That is why this study did not consider the *Amsterdam News* in the sample. Likewise, the third largest circulated daily *Baltimore Afro-American* did not have an up-to-date website during the time of data collection, and thus was not included in the sample. In such a situation, this study considered the *Chicago Defender*, a historically influential black newspaper, for collecting content on health care reform. This black newspaper is well-known among media historians for its important role during the World War II and Civil Rights

movement (Martindale and Dunlap, 1997; Washburn, 2006; Pride & Wilson, 1997; Wilson & Gutierrez, 1985; Wilson, Gutierrez, & Chao, 2003).

Both the *Chicago Defender* and *The Philadelphia Tribune* maintained active websites that post news stories of both national and local interest. Both of these African-American newspapers have been serving African-Americans for more than a hundred years. *The Philadelphia Tribune* was founded in 1884, whereas the *Defender* started its journey in 1905 (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). But neither was a daily newspaper. The *Tribune* was publishing its printed version three times a week. Because of economic constraints, the *Defender* switched from daily to weekly in February 2008 (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). The *Defender* was updating its website once a week when data were collected.

Representing Latino news media in this study, *La Opinion* and *El Nuevo Herald* are the two top-circulated Latino newspapers with active news sites (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). *La Opinión*, an ImpreMedia publication in Los Angeles, has remained the largest-circulated Latino/Hispanic newspaper in the U.S. with an average weekday circulation of 91,977 (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). The newspaper maintained an up-to-date news website like any online outlet of major mainstream newspapers (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). Miami's *El Nuevo Herald*, jointly published by McClatchy Company and ImpreMedia, was the second largest Latino newspaper with circulation of 60,483 newspapers (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010a). The newspaper started its journey in 1976, and was, initially, the Spanish translation of the *Miami Herald*. It got its name, *El Nuevo Herald*, in 1987, but it became an independent publication in 1998 ("About Us," *El Nuevo Herald*, 2011). To include a wide range of issues in the coverage, ImpreMedia publications went in a content-sharing agreement with the McClatchy Company (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2010b).

The Miami Herald also is owned by the McClatchy Company. While analyzing the data, this study identified that *El Nuevo Herald* not only ran its own stories, but also used stories from Spanish-language wire services, McClatchy news service, and the *Miami Herald*.

Two Latino newspapers included in this study are owned by large media chains. According to *Who Owns the Media*, an online database of media ownership of the Pew Internet Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism (2010), the McClatchy Company is the third largest news media company in the U.S. McClatchy Company owns 20 daily newspapers, 50 nondaily papers, and direct marketing and direct mail operations. It also owns a minority share of CareerBuilder.com and is the parent company of Cars.com and Apartments.com. ImpreMedia is the largest Hispanic newspaper company that owns nine print-online Spanish-language newspapers, including *La Opinion* (ImpreMedia, 2011). Similarly, African-American newspapers included in this research sample are owned by private owners. The Real Times Media, a newspaper chain, owns black newspapers including the *Chicago Defender* (Real Times Media, 2008). The Philadelphia Tribune Company owns *The Philadelphia Tribune*. It is a private newspaper company headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia Business Journal, 2009).

Sampling Unit. This study analyzed all health care reform stories and editorials published during the reform debate from December 2009 to March 2010. During this time, the health care reform bill was debated in the House, passed by house members, debated in Senate, and, finally, the house adopted the final reform bill on March 21, 2010. Purposive sampling was used to select all available content published about this issue.

For mainstream newspaper content, this study downloaded stories and editorials from the web archives on health care reform. *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* regularly

archived stories and editorials on health care reform. In the *Times*, a health care reform archive was available in the “Times Topic” section on the website. On the *Post* website, health care related stories and editorials/opinionates were archived in the “Post Politics” section. These archives included health care reform stories published in different news sections on the website. Both mainstream and ethnic newspaper editorials in this sample included editorials and opinion columns by columnists and newspaper writers only. Mainstream newspaper stories included the newspaper’s original stories on reform debate. This research found seven wire service stories in mainstream newspaper coverage, but they were not included in the sample because there were very few compared to the 287 original stories published in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*.

The ethnic newspapers included in the sample did not have a separate archive section on health care reform. For ethnic newspapers, this study considered stories published in the national news section and top story sections, and editorials published in the opinion section. Ethnic newspaper stories included ethnic media-originated stories and reports from Spanish-language wire services. Both the Latino newspapers used Hispanic wire service stories, such as Spanish language wire service EFE’s reports along with their original stories.³ Mainstream wire service stories published in ethnic newspapers were mainly from the Associated Press (AP).

This research downloaded the stories from the websites of all the newspapers included in the sample as traditional news databases, such as LexisNexis, do not archive the news stories of all ethnic newspapers. This study used HTTrack, a website copier software, to copy the

³ Agencia EFE, a global Spanish-language wire service, distributes three million news stories every year in the forms of news text, photographs, audio, video and multimedia, and serves more than 2,000 news media in the world every day. This Spain-based news agency has operation in the U.S., and its headquarter in the U.S. is in Washington D.C. (Source: <http://www.efe.com/quesefe/principal.asp?opcion=1&idioma=INGLES>)

mainstream papers' web archives on health care reform, and national news, top story, and opinions sections linked to front pages on ethnic online newspapers.⁴ For gathering a reliable data, this study used a web-based “Google Translate” application to identify health care reform stories from the Spanish-language news headlines on the copied web pages of *La Opinion* and *El Nuevo Herald*. The authenticity of the Google’s translation was checked by a Spanish-speaking translator [See more in the reliability and translation section at the end of this chapter].

Online News Outlets. This research chose online news content for two reasons. First, increased numbers of people are now using the Internet for news consumption and social networking. According to a web audience measure of the Nielson Online for the Newspaper Association of America (2010), on an average 70 million unique visitors, 35% of Internet users in the U.S., visited newspaper websites from December 2009 through April 2010. Second, news consumption patterns of new generation ethnic minorities include mainstream and ethnic online news sources (Chuang, 2010; Reilly Center for Media and Public Affairs, 2011). To get minority perspectives on a news topic and immigration-related stories, ethnic audiences usually seek information from ethnic online media (Pew Hispanic Online, 2010). Moreover, ethnic minority groups are increasingly using the Internet. About 57% of African-Americans and 49% of English-speaking Hispanic population use broadband Internet (Horrigan, 2010). Because of free and easy access, people of any racial and ethnic background can access any news sites (Prince, 2011). Online media have reduced the degree of power that traditional, elite news media once exerted. Many argue that web technologies also help people get connected with “like-minded” people and websites (Bruns, 2005; Castells, 2000; Meraz, 2011). In line with this argument, ethnic media sites are the “like-minded” online media for ethnic minorities. Perhaps this is the

⁴ HTTrack software can also copy linked web pages of a web site. When it copies a web page, a researcher could access the linked content, such as news stories and editorials, from that web page.

reason Latino news outlets received millions of visits to their site every month. According to *El Nuevo Herald* (2011) website information, the newspaper's website received an average of 209,899 readers per day. Overall, all four newspaper sites of the ImpreMedia, a leading Hispanic newspaper company, received 9.4 million visits each month in 2010 (ImpreMedia, 2011).

Data

Between December 1, 2009, and March 31, 2010, the six sampled online newspapers published a total of 441 news stories and 62 editorials on health care reform. Of the news stories, 376 were original newspapers stories and 65 were wire service stories (Table 1). Proportionately, mainstream online newspapers published more original stories than ethnic online newspapers. Of those published in ethnic newspapers, more than 90% of original stories were published in the Latino newspapers (Table 1). The sample included 58 mainstream wire service stories published in ethnic newspapers. Among those, 22 stories were published in Latino newspapers and 36 in African-American newspapers. This did not include duplicate wire service stories used in more than one newspaper.

Because of a lack of original news items on health reform in the African-American newspaper coverage, this study included editorials to increase the amount of original content on health reform from African-American newspapers. The *Philadelphia Tribune* ran four editorials on the reform debate. Of the two Latino newspapers, the sample included 18 editorials from *El Nuevo Herald*. *La Opinion* and the *Defender* did not include any editorial content.

Limitations. This study conducted a comparative analysis between two groups of newspapers: ethnic and mainstream newspapers. But it is important to mention here that because of the sample distribution, this comparison was mainly between Spanish-language newspapers

and mainstream newspapers. Among 89 original newspaper stories, 85 news stories were published in Spanish-language newspapers. Wire service stories mainly dominated the African-

Table 1
Sample of Health Care Reform Coverage

| Types of Content | Mainstream Newspapers | | Ethnic Newspapers | | Total (n) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| | New York Times | Washington Post | Latino Newspapers | African-American Newspapers | |
| Original Newspaper stories | 123 | 164 | 85 | 4 | 376 |
| Wire Stories | 2* | 5* | 22 | 36 | 65 |
| Original Editorials | 5 | 35 | 18 | 4 | 62 |
| Total (n) | 130 | 204 | 125 | 44 | |

*Though the number of wire service stories used in mainstream newspaper coverage is reported in this Table, they were not analyzed in this research. Mainstream newspapers included very few wire reports compared to original news reports.

American newspaper coverage on health care reform (Table 1). Both the African-American newspapers, *Chicago Defender* and the *Tribune*, heavily relied on Associated Press (AP) stories for health care reform news. The *Philadelphia Tribune* published only three original stories, while *the Chicago Defender* ran only one original story. To address these limitations, this study has compared original stories with mainstream wire service stories published in online ethnic newspapers. But this limitation in African-American newspaper coverage can itself become an important finding of this study.

Content Analysis

This study used content analysis method to explore health care reform-related stories and editorials published in mainstream and ethnic online newspapers. Content analysis is an appropriate method in this study as it is used to identify different characteristics of media messages including issue attributes and frames. Before getting into the discussion about sample and data analysis approaches, it is pertinent to discuss the concept and process of content analysis.

Content analysis is a research technique of systematically analyzing media messages, which can be text, visual, or audio. A systematic analysis of media messages can help researchers to identify the trends and patterns in content (Krippendorff, 2004). More importantly, content analysis can provide findings that we can replicate and use to make valid inferences about media content or newspaper coverage (Krippendorff, 2004; Riffe, Lacy, and Fico, 2005). Content analysis can be quantitative and qualitative (Krippendorff, 2004; Babbie, 2004). This research conducted quantitative content analysis.

In the systematic analysis of media text, a content analyst first determines the criteria for selecting a sample for research. The goals and scope of research guide the selection criteria of sample. The second important step in content analysis is coding. Media text needs to be coded to get results about the trend and pattern in media messages. Coding is the process of transforming raw data into a standardized form (Babbie, 2004). Thus, coding protocols need to be developed, operationalized, and tested before conducting the coding process (Krippendorff, 2004; Neuendorf, 2001; Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2004). Coding protocols or coding categories usually follow the theories used in the study, and their main function is to systematically interpret and

classify words, sentences, paragraphs or a whole article (Krippendorff, 2004). Content are coded or classified in terms of conceptual categories, e. g. different types of media frames.

This study has taken a quantitative analytical approach, also known as manifest analysis, to explore its research questions. Quantitative analysis is concerned with the manifest content that is apparently visible and identifiable in media text (Babbie, 2004), while latent or qualitative content refers to underlying meaning of content (Neuendorf, 2002). A researcher does not need to look for underlying meaning of the text in manifest analysis. Manifest content can be words, phrases, or idea/theme expressed in news stories and editorials. Unlike latent analysis, manifest analysis of findings is presented in numbers. Quantification of data can make it easier to interpret the trend and pattern in media messages and compare content of two different media in a given time (Wimmer & Dominick, 1994).

While this study will not examine the effects of media frames and attribute agendas about health care reform on the public, it will draw inferences from the findings of analyzed manifest and latent content in news stories and editorials. For drawing observations or inferences from media text, this study will use the extrapolation technique (Krippendorff, 2004). Three forms of extrapolations are trends, patterns, and differences. Trends refer to frequencies of subject matters present or absent in media text; patterns refer to commonality among genres and categories used in coding; and differences refer to a comparison between similar types of components representing two samples or sub-samples (Krippendorff, 2004). As this study compares content between mainstream and ethnic online newspapers, it expects to identify 1) trends in attribute agendas and frames in both newspaper coverage, 2) patterns—similarities and differences--in coding categories of frames and attributes, and 3) differences within coding categories between two types of newspaper coverage. All these forms of extrapolations can inform us about the

quality and degree of inclusiveness in news and editorial content on health care reform published in mainstream and ethnic online newspapers.

Coding and Analysis

In coding attribute agendas and frames in news stories and editorials, this study used syntactical units in media text as coding units. Sentences, quotations, paragraphs, and articles are the syntactical units in a media text (Krippendorff, 2004).

Coding Attribute Agenda. Words and phrases were analyzed to identify health care reform attributes in news stories and editorials. After scanning news stories, the researcher developed a list of attributes for coding purposes. Those attributes were:

- Political (politics and political strategies);
- Medicaid/ Medicare;
- Individual mandate;
- Insurance Coverage;
- Ethnicity/ ethnic group (including “immigrants”);
- Private insurance;
- Health care cost (including “premiums”)
- Finance;
- Insurance exchange (including discussion about “public option”);
- Children’s insurance;
- Interest groups;
- Abortion; and
- Employer-sponsored insurance.

While coding attribute agenda manually, this study identified a few new attributes, such as local/state hospital system, administrative and legislative aspects of a bill, and public reaction about the bill. For coding, this research has used “Local” to code state-level implications of the reform in newspaper coverage, “Bill/Legislation” to identify administrative and legislative aspects of the bill, and “public reaction” to code public opinion in news content. A full list of attributes identified in the attribute agenda-setting analysis is available in Appendix D. As this study has found the presence of more than one attribute on health care reform in most of the stories, the coder recorded all those aspects for analysis. For reporting the findings, this study considered only the top ten attribute agendas in the news and editorial coverage. The findings of coded attribute agenda were reported in descriptive statistics.

Coding Frame. This study coded all the stories and editorials in the sample to explore the trends in use of five different frames: substance, conflict, consequence, strategy, and diversity. Text analysis software, Atlas.ti was used to identify news frames from all the sampled news stories and editorials. This coding was done to achieve the goal of research question 2 -- examining the frames used in news stories and editorials. This research developed coding protocols (Table 2) for the five frames to analyze text in newspaper stories, mainstream wire service stories, and editorials.

While coding for frames in news stories and editorials, the coder sometimes had to read several paragraphs to understand a coded paragraph or sentence and to crosscheck a coded news frame. In content analysis literature, the surrounding paragraphs and sentences of a coded text is known as context unit (Krippendorff, 2004). Context unit is used in content analysis to ascertain the validity of a coded category in a media text.

All sampled news stories and editorials were formatted as text (.txt) documents in preparation for analysis in Atlas.ti. Five framing categories were entered as codes in Atlas.ti before starting the coding process. Relevant search expressions were used to identify codes in news stories and editorials. Using the “search expression” function is a technique of identifying codes in Atlas.ti software. “Search expression” refers to words and phrases suggesting a frame. For example, “opposition” was one of the search expressions entered for identifying conflict frame, while “maneuvering” entered for identifying strategy/action frame. Coder recorded the use of more than one frame in a news story. For example, a story or an editorial could include three frames, substance, consequence, and diversity. In that case all three frames were recorded for one story. Thus in the reporting, frequency of frames will go beyond 100%. Though the “search expression” function of Atlas.ti selected paragraphs and/or sentences on the basis of search words or phrases, the selections were each manually checked. After coding the stories and editorials, the researcher generated a report from Atlas.ti that included frequency information about coded frames as well as the coded text.

Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were run to interpret the data. This study ran independent sample t-test to compare statistical differences in the presence of each news frame in three different contexts between mainstream and ethnic newspaper stories, or between mainstream wire service and ethnic newspaper stories, or between mainstream and ethnic newspaper editorials. In cases where no statistical differences were found, this research would conclude that two types of newspapers basically used frames on health care reform in the same way. While running t-test analyses for each frame, presence of that media frame was coded as 1 and absence of that frame was coded 0. In every comparative analysis two types of media

were coded 1 and 2, for example in comparison between ethnic and mainstream newspaper stories, all ethnic newspaper sources were coded 1 and mainstream newspaper sources coded 2.

Table 2
Coding Protocol for Framing Analysis

| Categories/Indicators | Definitions | Examples/Scenario | Sources |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|
| Substance frame | This type of frame is more informative and refers to the details about policy proposals, e.g. information about allocation, provisions, financing, and service delivery of health care reform. | <i>Government will provide subsidy to those employers that offer average salary of \$50,000 to employees.</i> | (Gross & Brewer, 2007) |
| Consequence frame | This type of frame predicts the outcome and evaluates the consequences of policy options. Predictions can be either positive or negative. The prediction can be made with reference to a specific ethnic group. | <i>An extension of Medicaid will ensure health insurance for 10 million currently uninsured populations. But this would increase both government spending.</i> | (Shih, Wijaya, & Brossard, 2008). |
| Conflict frame | This type of frame presents a policy debate as a clash of ideologies and political interests or party politics. This type of frame also presents conflicting | <i>The Democrats disingenuously argue their reforms will not diminish the quality of our health care even as government involvement in the delivery of health care</i> | (Gross & Brewer, 2007; Lee, McLeod, & Shah, 2008; Shih, Wijaya, & Brossard, 2008) |

(Table 2 continued)

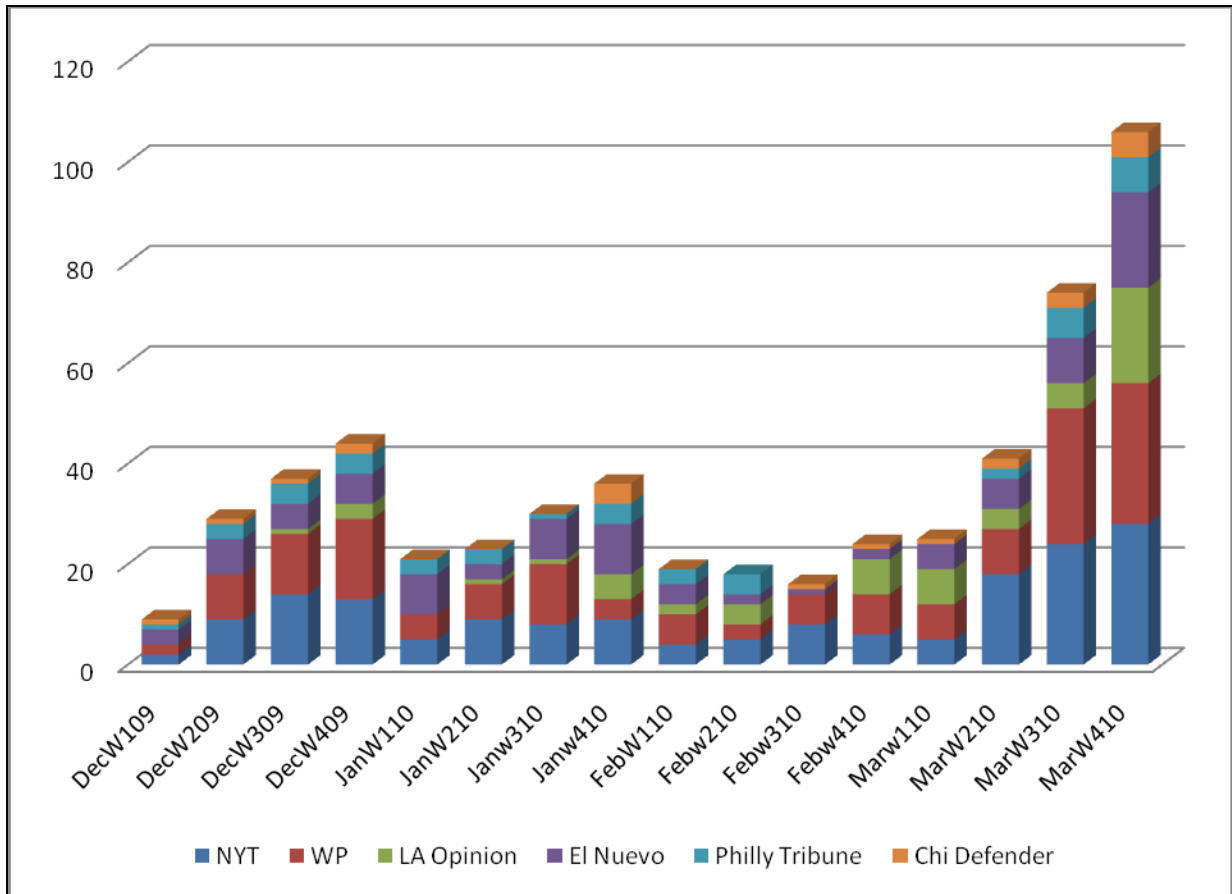
| Categories/Indicators | Definitions | Examples/Scenarios | Sources |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|
| | stance of interest groups, such as drug and insurance companies, and public interests. | <i>increases massively. Citing the frustrating performance of Federal Emergency Management Agency in response to hurricanes, Republicans foresee an inefficient health care if the reform bill is enacted into a law.</i> | |
| Strategy frame | This type of frame presents information about political and procedural maneuverings and mobilization in support of and against a policy proposal. | <i>“Republicans are planning to energize town hall meetings against the proposed health care plan.</i> | (Lee, McLeod, & Shah, 2008) |
| Diversity frame | This type of frame covers policy options or reform debate in the context of an ethnic group or ethnic groups or undocumented and legal immigrants within Latinos. | <i>The government is planning to expand Medicaid to cover recently-unemployed poor people. Statistics show that the number of uninsured people is growing among African-Americans and Latino/Hispanic populations because of job loss in service sectors.</i> | A priori frame (inducted from initial review of stories) |

This study also ran One-Way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) to measure the variance in the use of each frame among three sub-samples (called “between groups” in ANOVA),

mainstream newspaper stories, ethnic newspaper stories, and mainstream wire service stories.

ANOVA tests are conducted to compare means among three or more groups. The goal was to see the overall similarities and differences in the use of five media frames (conflict, consequence, diversity, strategy, and substance) among three sub-samples. Mainstream newspaper stories were coded as 1, while mainstream wire service and ethnic newspaper stories were coded as 2 and 3 respectively. The presence/absence of each frame in the respective category was coded as 1/0.

Frame Emphasis. Atlas.ti was used to help analyze the trend of news frames advanced by ethnic and mainstream newspapers, but it could not provide the details about the focus of each news frame. Because a same news frame can be constructed in different ways in different newspapers, this research took into account the emphases found in each news frame. To do this, a more focused content analysis was conducted on news stories and editorials published in the respective third and fourth weeks of December 2009 and March 2010. These weeks were identified as high frequency news weeks (Figure 1). During these weeks, mainstream and ethnic newspapers published 49% and 64% of all the sampled original stories. Also more than 50% mainstream wire stories, used by ethnic newspapers, were published during the high frequency news week. This research derived categories of framing emphasis after reading coded paragraphs and sentences of the news content in those four weeks. This phase of content analysis did not include all sampled stories and editorials because the researcher wanted to see the content emphases in each frame during high news frequency weeks of health care reform coverage. An earlier study found that heavy exposure to one type of news content can set the agenda for the audience (Kim, Scheufele, and Shanahan, 2002). Thus content focus or emphasis on different news frames during the peak period of coverage does have an important agenda-setting potential.



Note: Week 1 (W1), Week 2 (W2), Week 3 (W3), Week 4 (W4).

Figure 1
Trend in Health Care Reform Coverage

After reading the coded stories and editorials, the coder identified five emphases in conflict frame: ideological and partisan, intraparty struggle, legal debate, abortion debate, and competition among interest groups (Table 3). In different consequence frames, seven content focus or emphases were identified: effects on health care cost, effects on insurance coverage, Medicare, political/legal consequences, effects on businesses/employers, effects on local/state health system or hospitals, and macro/national economic consequences. In strategy frame, four

Table 3
Frame Emphasis

| Frame | Emphasis |
|-------------|--|
| Conflict | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideological and partisan; • Intraparty struggle; • Legal debate; • Abortion debate; and • Clash of interests among interest groups. |
| Consequence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political/legal consequences; • Economic consequences (macro/national economic consequences on budget deficit, Taxes, government expenditure); and • Effects on health care cost; effects on insurance coverage; effects on Medicare; effects on businesses/employers; and effects on local/state health system. |
| Diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisions for minorities; • Effects on Latinos/African-Americans/Minorities; • Effects on the immigrants; • Roles of minority advocacy groups; and • Insurance coverage for employers employing minority and immigrants. |
| Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political maneuvering (tactics and strategies for winning votes); • Procedural maneuvering (legislative tactics, such as filibuster or reconciliation), negotiation or compromise; and • Challenging the bill. |
| Substance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits; • Cost; • Insurance coverage; • Financing; • Individual mandate; • Medicaid; and • Medicare. |

content focuses were identified: political maneuvering (tactics and strategies for winning votes), procedural maneuvering (legislative tactics, such as filibuster or reconciliation), negotiation or compromise, and challenging the bill. Focus in diversity frames included immigrants, funding

for clinical research trial, roles of minority advocacy groups, insurance coverage for employers and workers, and provisions for minorities/ effects on minorities. In substance frames, various policy details were included. Those were: benefits, cost, insurance coverage, financing, individual mandate, Medicaid, and Medicare (Table 3).

While identifying these derived categories of frame emphasis, the coder recorded the frequency information. The findings of this coding were reported in descriptive statistics.

Reliability and Translation. This study ran an intercoder reliability test on five framing categories. The goal was to use a well-defined and mutually-exclusive coding protocol for identifying news frames in health care reform stories and editorials. A mass communication graduate student (second coder) helped the researcher to do the intercoder reliability test. Before conducting a reliability test of the framing categories, the researcher briefed the second coder about coding procedure and provided written guidelines for coding, details about coding categories, and coding sheets (See Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C). While training the coder, the researcher had to revise the definition of strategy frame to make it clear to the second coder. The researcher and the second coder followed the coding guidelines and independently coded same 35 randomly-selected newspaper stories from the sample, which were 10 percent of total number of original stories published in both ethnic and mainstream newspapers. These randomly-selected stories included 10 original stories from ethnic newspapers and 25 stories from mainstream newspapers. Usually in content analysis research, intercoder reliability test is conducted over 10% of the representative sample (Dursun, 2005; Neuendorf, 2002). Only original newspaper stories were used for intercoder reliability purpose as they represented about 75% of study sample. As per the Scott Pi's calculation, both coders achieved .86 agreement on average in intercoder reliability scores, which was ranged between .77 to 1 (Table 4). After

attaining higher level agreement, the researcher applied framing coding categories on all the stories and editorials included in the sample.

Table 4
Intercoder Reliability

| Frame | % Agreement | Scott's Pi | Agreements | Disagreements | Cases |
|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|---------------|-------|
| Substance | 91.4 | 0.82 | 32 | 3 | 35 |
| Conflict | 94.3 | 0.87 | 33 | 2 | 35 |
| Consequence | 91.4 | 0.82 | 32 | 3 | 35 |
| Strategy | 88.6 | 0.77 | 31 | 4 | 35 |
| Diversity | 100 | 1 | 35 | 0 | 35 |

As the Latino newspaper stories were written in the Spanish language and translated into English with the Google translator, a translator was hired to check the quality and reliability of the Spanish-to-English translation of health reform stories. The translator checked about 20 % of the Google-translated newspaper stories, and did not find any serious problem for the purpose of this quantitative content analysis. Google’s translation, however, had some grammatical issues, such as some “awkward” sentence construction, which actually did not change the meaning of news stories. After getting consent from the translator, the researcher used Google’s translated copies for coding.

Research Questions

Because of differences in journalistic practices and functions between mainstream and ethnic news media, this research expected that newspaper coverage in these types of media

would highlight different attribute agendas on health care reform. Thus to compare news agendas between ethnic and mainstream online newspaper coverage, this study sought to explore the following questions:

RQ 1: What are the attribute agendas on health care reform covered by news stories and editorials in mainstream and ethnic online newspapers, and mainstream wire service stories? How similar and different were mainstream newspaper, ethnic newspaper, and mainstream wire service coverage in terms of attribute agendas about health care reform?

Because of the political nature of health care reform, this research expected to find more politics-related attributes than others in both mainstream and ethnic newspaper coverage. This study also assumed that ethnic newspaper stories would include more ethnic group attributes of health care reform than mainstream newspaper stories.

Framing Question. As discussed at the end of Chapter III, this study will use five frames, (substance frame, conflict frame, strategy/action frame, consequence frame, and diversity frame), to interpret how ideas around health care reform were organized in mainstream and ethnic newspaper coverage (Table 2). Therefore, this study examined:

RQ 2: How were substance, conflict, strategy, consequence, and diversity frames used in news stories and editorials about health care reform in ethnic and mainstream online newspapers and mainstream wire service stories? How differently, in terms of importance and prominence, did ethnic and mainstream online newspapers, and mainstream wire service stories advance these media frames?

As found in past studies, this research expected to find more conflict and strategy frames in mainstream newspaper coverage than in ethnic newspaper coverage. Likewise, it also assumed that ethnic newspaper stories would include more diversity and consequence frames than mainstream newspaper and wire service stories. Against the criticisms of mainstream newspaper coverage, as discussed in Chapter II and Chapter III, it was expected that ethnic newspaper stories and editorials would include more policy-oriented and diverse aspects, and less political dimensions than the mainstream media coverage.

Emphases in Framing. Framing categories were used to identify the trend in the use of different frames in news coverage. However, the findings based on categories would not inform us of the major focus in each news frame. The same news frame present in ethnic and mainstream newspaper coverage could be organized differently. Like sub-issues of a news agenda, a news frame could have sub-categories. For example, when a consequence frame in mainstream newspaper coverage placed more emphasis on a political outcome, the same news frame in ethnic newspaper coverage focused more on policy implications for different social groups. Therefore, an analysis of frame emphasis would inform the research of what ideas were prominently used in different news frames. This study explored content emphasis in all five media frames.

RQ 3: What were the content emphases within these five frames advanced by newspaper stories, editorials, and wire service stories? How did the content focus of frames in mainstream newspaper coverage differ from that of ethnic newspaper coverage?

In response to research question 3, this research expected to see a more balanced approach in consequence frames on health care reform in ethnic newspaper coverage. It would not be surprising to find more political emphasis in conflict and strategy frames used in ethnic newspaper stories, but consequence frames would place more importance on the discussion about the impact of reform proposals than on political outcomes. On the other hand, mainstream newspaper stories that used conflict, strategy, and consequence frames were expected to include more political and ideological aspects than others. Also, this research expected to find more dimensions within diversity frames used in ethnic newspaper stories than in mainstream newspaper stories.

CHAPTER V: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The goal of this research was to explore similarities and differences in the coverage of health care reform, in a comparative context of ethnic and mainstream online newspapers. Analysis of policy news coverage in a comparative media context can inform us of how two different types of news media represent and serve U.S. multicultural society. Thus this study has analyzed attribute agendas and news frames of health care reform in ethnic and mainstream newspaper coverage. An analysis of issue attributes and news frames provides a picture about the quality and inclusive nature of policy news coverage. The findings of this study are presented in two sections in this chapter. The first section reports the trends in attribute agendas, frames, and emphases of frames in all the different types of news coverage: ethnic newspaper stories, mainstream newspaper stories, mainstream wire service stories used by ethnic newspapers, and ethnic and mainstream newspaper editorials. By using the key findings of this study, the second section will draw conclusions and discuss major observations about the similarities and differences on health care reform coverage in mainstream and ethnic newspapers.

News Coverage Trends

Mainstream Online Newspaper Stories. Attribute Agenda. In mainstream newspaper stories, the majority of news coverage on health care reform was oriented around a political attribute agenda. About 53.31% of the stories of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* included political attributes (Table 5). Political attributes used in news coverage referred to the actions and positions of political parties and legislators around the reform proposals. The other top attribute agendas on health care reform, in order of importance in the stories, were: Medicaid/Medicare (25.44%), finance (22%), and legislative/administrative aspects of the bill

(18.81%) (Table 5). As expected in Research Question 1, this research found prominent use of political attribute agenda in mainstream newspaper coverage.

Table 5
Attribute Agenda Analysis: Mainstream vs. Ethnic Newspaper Stories
(Top 10 Attribute Agendas)

| Mainstream Newspapers (n=287) | Ethnic Newspapers (n=89) |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Political (53.31%) | Political (40.5%) |
| Medicare/Medicaid (25.4%) | Ethnic groups/ Immigrants (31.5%) |
| Finance (21.9%) | Insurance coverage (23.6%) |
| Bill (18.8%) | Finance (19.1%) |
| Premiums/Health Cost (14.3%) | Premiums/health cost (15.6%) |
| Interest groups (11.5%) | Medicare/ Medicaid (14.6%) |
| Insurance coverage (11.3%) | Local (14.6%) |
| Abortion (9.40%) | Insurance exchange/ public option (11.2%) |
| Private Insurance (8.7%) | Bill (8.90%) |
| Insurance Exchange/Public Option (8%) | Individual Mandate (6%) |

Media Frames

This research found the presence of more conflict and strategy frames over substance, consequence and diversity news frame in mainstream newspaper stories in response to Research Question 2. The two mainstream newspapers published more conflict and strategy news frames than substance, consequence, and diversity news frames. As discussed in Chapter III, conflict frames in news stories advance opposing political and ideological ideas, whereas strategy frames

Table 6
 News Frame Analysis: Mainstream vs. Ethnic Newspaper Stories

| | Substance | Consequence | Conflict | Strategy | Diversity |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mainstream Newspaper Stories (n=287) | 38.68% (<i>M</i> = 0.39, <i>SD</i> = 0.49) | 44.95% (<i>M</i> = 0.45, <i>SD</i> = 0.49) | 62.02% (<i>M</i> = 0.62, <i>SD</i> = 0.49) | 59.93% (<i>M</i> = 0.59, <i>SD</i> = 0.49) | 5.22% (<i>M</i> = 0.05, <i>SD</i> = 0.22) |
| Ethnic Newspaper Stories (n=89) | 64.04% (<i>M</i> = 0.64, <i>SD</i> = 0.48) | 51.69% (<i>M</i> = 0.52, <i>SD</i> = 0.50) | 34.83% (<i>M</i> = 0.38, <i>SD</i> = 0.48) | 44.94% (<i>M</i> = 0.45, <i>SD</i> = 0.50) | 31.46% (<i>M</i> = 0.32, <i>SD</i> = 0.47) |
| Mean Difference | -0.25 | -0.07 | 0.24 | 0.14 | -0.27 |
| <i>t</i> | -4.29 | -1.11 | 4.63 | 2.51 | -7.24 |
| <i>p</i> | 0.01* | 0.27 | 0.01* | 0.05* | 0.01* |

**p* < .05

dwell on the tactics and efforts of political actors and interest groups in implementing a political or an ideological standpoint about a policy issue. Conflict and strategy frames were present in 62.2% and 59.9% respectively of the mainstream newspaper coverage (Table 6). These two political frames included political dimensions of the debate, and it was because of the presence of a higher number of political attribute agenda in mainstream newspaper stories. Consequence frames were present in 45% of the mainstream newspaper coverage followed by 38.7% of the news coverage reflected substance frames and 5.2% diversity frames (Table 6).

Content Emphasis of Media Frames

Almost all of these frames placed more emphasis on one or two ideas over the others. Ideological and partisan debate dominated conflict frames in mainstream newspaper stories with

80% presence. The rest of the articles reflect conflict frames referred to intraparty struggle, abortion, and differences among interest groups around the reform bill (See Appendix E for all the findings on news frame emphases). Likewise, political aspects received more attention in consequence news frame used in mainstream newspaper coverage of health care reform. In consequence frames used in news stories, political and legal consequences received more prominence than other types of consequences, present in about 60 % of the stories. The mainstream newspaper stories using strategy frames also prioritized political maneuvering (45.5%) over other types of tactics applied during the reform debate.

Like other frames, the focus on substance frame in mainstream newspaper stories was not skewed toward any particular subject. It covered all important points, such as cost, finance, insurance coverage, Medicaid, Medicare, and benefits. Fewer articles using diversity frames referred to the bill's outcome for immigrants, roles of minority advocacy group in mobilizing policymakers, and policy provisions for minorities.

As assumed in Research Question 3, content analysis found that mainstream newspaper coverage placed more emphasis on political or partisan aspects in conflict, strategy, and consequence news frames than other aspects of these frames. Overall, much like previous studies, this research found the same trend in the use of news frames in mainstream newspaper coverage—the emphasis on political debate over policy details and their consequences.

Ethnic Online Newspaper Stories. Attribute Agenda. The largest number of ethnic newspaper stories on health care reform included political attribute agenda. About 41% of these stories referred to the stance of legislators and their maneuvering around health care reform discussion. The second most discussed attribute agenda was ethnic group (31.5%). Ethnic group agenda also included the news content on immigrants' access to health insurance. Other top

attribute agendas found in news coverage were: insurance coverage (23.6%), finance (19%), premiums/health care costs (15.6%), Medicaid/ Medicare (14.6%), and localism (14.6%) (Table 5).

Though this research found the dominance of political attribute agenda in health care reform coverage in ethnic newspaper stories, it identified more ethnicity related attributes in ethnic newspaper coverage than mainstream newspaper coverage. As expected in Research Question 1, other than politics, this research found the presence of more ethnicity attribute agenda than other attributes in ethnic newspaper stories.

Media Frames

Ethnic newspaper stories included more substance and consequence frames than strategy, conflict, and diversity news frames on health care reform (Table 6). Substance and consequence frames were present in 64% and 51.7% of the ethnic newspaper stories respectively. There were more strategy frames than conflict frames in ethnic newspaper stories on health care reform. Strategy and conflict frames about the reform debate were present in 45% and 34.8% of ethnic newspaper stories respectively. About 32% of ethnic newspaper stories included diversity frames (Table 6).

As discussed in Chapter III, a substance news frame about a policy focuses on policy details and pros and cons of policy proposals. Consequence frames in news stories predict political, economic, and social outcomes of a policy or policy proposals. Diversity news frames in newspaper coverage present policy information—details about proposed policy options, effects of those proposals, and problem situation--from the context of ethnic groups. In contrast to mainstream newspaper coverage, though the political attribute agenda dominated the information used in ethnic newspaper stories on health care reform, strategy and conflict frame

did not overshadow the substance and consequence news frames on health care reform coverage in ethnic newspaper coverage.

Furthermore, in response to Research Question 2, it was not surprising to see more substance and consequence frames than conflict and strategy frames in ethnic newspaper coverage of health care reform. As expected this research has found more diversity news frames on health care reform in ethnic newspaper coverage ($M = 0.32, SD = 0.47$) than in mainstream newspaper coverage ($M = 0.05, SD = 0.22$); the difference was statistically significant, when $t(374) = -7.24, p = .000$. Likewise, the use of substance frame on the reform was significantly higher in ethnic newspaper coverage ($M = 0.64, SD = 0.48$) than in mainstream newspaper coverage ($M = 0.39, SD = 0.49$), when $t(374) = -4.29, p = .000$. Conversely, the use of conflict ($M = 0.62, SD = 0.49$) and strategy frames ($M = 0.59, SD = 0.49$) on health care reform was significantly higher in mainstream newspaper coverage than the use of conflict ($M = 0.38, SD = 0.48$) and strategy frames ($M = 0.45, SD = 0.50$) in ethnic newspaper stories, when $t(374) = 4.63, p = .000$, and $t(374) = 2.51, p = .013$. But the use of consequence frame was not significantly different between mainstream and ethnic newspaper stories (Table 6).

Content Emphasis in Media Frames

More than 60% of ethnic newspaper stories that advanced substance frame were about finance, cost, and insurance coverage (See all the frame emphasis findings in Appendix E). Newspaper stories with substance news frames also included details about Medicare, Medicaid, individual mandate, and benefits.

Majority of the ethnic newspaper stories (70%) that included consequence frames on health care reform was organized around the effects on insurance coverage, the effects on health care cost, and the effects on a local/state health system. Less than 20% of the stories that

advanced consequence frames placed emphasis on political and economic consequences of the reform.

Like mainstream newspaper coverage of health care reform, political and procedural tactics got priority in strategy frames used in ethnic newspaper stories. Political and procedural maneuvering was present in more than 75% stories that included strategy frame. Negotiation or efforts for a compromise and legal challenges were the other strategies or tactics included in ethnic newspaper stories. In ethnic newspaper stories, the majority of conflict frames were oriented around political and ideological ideas. Ideological and political conflict was found in more than 80% of the stories.

Ethnic newspaper stories that included the diversity frame mainly focused on the reform bill's provisions for minorities, the implications of the bill for minorities, and the roles of minority advocacy groups, such as Hispanic Congressional Caucus Group. The diversity frame included in news stories also covered the bill's implications for immigrants.

The goal of Research Question 3 was to identify emphases within different news frames used in news coverage. As expected, the effects of the bill on minorities and the bill's relevance for Latinos and blacks were prominently discussed in diversity news frames of ethnic newspaper coverage. In addition, ethnic newspapers stories that included consequence frames focused more on health care cost, insurance coverage, and the implications of the reform bill on local/state hospitals that treat many uninsured and undocumented immigrants.

Mainstream wire service reports made up 40% of total health care reform coverage in ethnic newspapers. The following findings reflect the attributes, frames, and emphasis of frames available in those wire service stories published in ethnic newspapers.

Table 7

Attribute Agenda Analysis: Mainstream Wire Stories found in Ethnic Newspapers vs. Ethnic Newspaper Stories (Top 10 Attribute Agendas)

| Mainstream Wire (n=58) | Ethnic Newspapers (n=89) |
|---|---|
| Political (66%) | Political (40.5%) |
| Bill (30%) | Ethnic groups/ Immigrants (31.5%) |
| Insurance Coverage (18.18%) | Insurance coverage (23.6%) |
| Finance (17%) | Finance (19.1%) |
| Premiums/Health Cost (15%) | Premiums/health cost (15.6%) |
| Insurance Exchange/ Public Option (10.6%) | Medicare/ Medicaid (14.6%) |
| Medicare/Medicaid (10.6%) | Local (14.6%) |
| Abortion (10%) | Insurance exchange/ public option (11.2%) |
| Ethnic groups/immigrants (7%) | Bill (8.90%) |
| -- | Individual Mandate (6%) |

Mainstream Wire Stories. Attribute Agenda. As in ethnic and mainstream newspaper stories, the majority of wire service stories published in ethnic newspapers included politics related attribute agenda. About 66% of those wire service stories were oriented toward political attributes around health care reform (Table 7). However, the second most-used attribute agenda in wire service stories was legislative/administrative aspects of the bill, which comprised 30% of the coverage. The next three attributes found in wire service stories were insurance coverage (18.18%), finance (17%), and premiums/health cost (15%) (Table 7). The analysis has found a

relatively smaller presence of attributes related to government-run health insurance plan/insurance exchange and Medicaid/Medicare in the wire service coverage. Each of these attributes was present in the 10.6% of the wire service coverage (Table 7).

Media Frames

Consequence, conflict, and strategy frames dominated the mainstream wire service stories found in ethnic newspapers. In this study, Associated Press (AP) stories were considered mainstream wire service stories. Spanish-language wire service reports were considered as ethnic newspaper stories. Consequence news frames dominated the mainstream wire service stories on health care reform with its presence in about 43% of the coverage (TABLE 8). However, both strategy and conflict frames ranked equally in the second position and were present 39.7% of wire service stories. The use of substance and diversity frames in news coverage received less importance in mainstream wire stories. Substance frames were found in 27.6% of the wire service stories, when diversity frames were available in 8.62% of the wire service stories (Table 8).

In comparison to mainstream wire service coverage, original stories of ethnic newspapers included proportionally higher numbers of substance, consequence, strategy, and diversity frames on health care reform. But the use of substance frame was significantly higher in ethnic newspaper coverage ($M = 0.640$, $SD = 0.483$) than in mainstream wire coverage ($M = 0.276$, $SD = 0.451$), when $t = 4.59$, $p = 0.030$. Similarly, the use of diversity frame was significantly higher in ethnic newspaper coverage ($M = 0.32$, $SD = 0.47$) than in mainstream wire coverage ($M = 0.09$, $SD = 0.28$), when $t = 3.34$, $p = .000$. In the use of other three frames--consequence, conflict, and strategy--this study did not find any significant difference between ethnic newspaper stories and wire service stories used in ethnic newspaper coverage (Table 8).

Table 8

News Frame Analysis:

Ethnic Newspapers Stories vs. Mainstream Wire Stories found in Ethnic Newspapers

| | Substance | Consequence | Conflict | Strategy | Diversity |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mainstream wire stories (n=58) | 27.59% (<i>M</i> = 0.28, <i>SD</i> = 0.45) | 43.10% (<i>M</i> = 0.43, <i>SD</i> = 0.49) | 39.66% (<i>M</i> = 0.39, <i>SD</i> = 0.49) | 39.66% (<i>M</i> = 0.40, <i>SD</i> = 0.49) | 8.62% (<i>M</i> = 0.09, <i>SD</i> = 0.28) |
| Ethnic newspaper stories (n=89) | 64.04% (<i>M</i> = 0.64, <i>SD</i> = 0.48) | 51.69% (<i>M</i> = 0.52, <i>SD</i> = 0.50) | 34.83% (<i>M</i> = 0.35, <i>SD</i> = 0.48) | 44.94% (<i>M</i> = 0.45, <i>SD</i> = 0.50) | 31.46% (<i>M</i> = 0.32, <i>SD</i> = 0.47) |
| Mean Difference | 0.36 | 0.09 | -0.04 | 0.05 | 0.23 |
| <i>t</i> | 4.59 | 1.01 | -.59 | 0.63 | 3.34 |
| <i>p</i> | 0.01* | 0.31 | 0.56 | 0.53 | 0.01* |

**p* < .05

Content Emphasis in Media Frames

Conflict frames in mainstream wire service stories mainly reflected ideological and partisan aspects of the reform debate (See all the framing emphases findings in Appendix E). The effects on businesses/employers, the effects on health care cost, and the effects on politics were the top three emphases in wire service stories using consequence frames. While political maneuvering, present in 60% of strategy frame stories, was the main focus of strategy frames. The efforts for negotiation and compromise and legally challenging the bill were the other two focuses in strategy frames. Substance frame in wire stories equally covered financing, insurance coverage, and Medicare. Other focuses in substance frame included cost and individual benefits.

The few stories that included the diversity frame were constructed around immigrants, funding for clinical research, and appropriate reform measures for minorities in the bill.

As the analysis found, political maneuvering was emphasized in the wire service stories that advanced strategy frames. The important presence of political and bill-related attributes in wire service stories support the findings of the framing analysis. Democrats and Republicans employed political maneuvering in implementing their political standpoints of passing or obstructing the reform bill.

As it is evident in the findings, like mainstream and ethnic newspaper coverage, mainstream wire service stories used in ethnic newspapers were oriented around political attributes of health care reform. Bill or legislation related aspects ranked second in mainstream wire service stories; but this attribute did not rank highly in ethnic and mainstream newspaper stories. Thus in answer to Research Question 1 that examined the use of attribute agendas in the reform news coverage, this research found a difference between wire service stories and original newspaper stories. The second important agenda attribute in mainstream newspaper stories was Medicare/Medicaid, whereas the reform bill related attributes were prominently covered in wire service stories outside political topics. It appears that not all mainstream news media covered this policy debate in the same way. In response to Research Question 2, it was expected that like every other mainstream news media, wire service stories would also prominently use conflict and strategy frames over substance, consequence, and diversity frames. Though diversity and substance frames ranked low in health care reform coverage of wire service stories, this research found more use of consequence frames over strategy and conflict frames in those stories. Mainstream wire service stories used in ethnic newspapers included equal percentages of conflict

and strategy frames. Unlike mainstream newspaper stories, this research found more use of consequence frames in mainstream wire service stories.

The emphases in strategy and conflict frames used in wire service stories were not different from mainstream and ethnic newspaper coverage; these frames were oriented around partisan and ideological debate and political maneuvering. But, unlike mainstream newspaper stories, wire service stories that used consequence frames placed more emphasis on the effects of the bill for businesses and employers and the effects on health care cost.

Variance in the Use of Frames - A Multiple Comparison. Overall, the use of conflict and strategy frames in health care reform coverage was higher in mainstream newspaper stories than in ethnic newspaper and mainstream wire service stories. The use of substance, consequence, and diversity frames was higher in ethnic newspaper stories than in mainstream newspaper and wire service stories (Appendix G). One-Way ANOVA test found significant difference in the variance of the use of substance, $F(2, 431) = 12.57, p = .000$; conflict, $F(2, 431) = 13.35, p = .000$; strategy, $F(2, 431) = 6.01, p = .003$; and diversity frames, $F(2, 431) = 26.76, p = .000$ among mainstream newspaper stories, ethnic newspaper stories, and mainstream wire reports. It did not find significant difference in the use of consequence frames among these three types of news content (Appendix H).

Tukey's HSD test, included in post hoc analysis of ANOVA, confirmed all the significant differences found between ethnic and mainstream newspaper stories, or between ethnic newspaper and mainstream wire reports (Appendix I). Though mainstream wire service reports and mainstream newspaper stories represented mainstream media, this study found that mainstream newspaper stories used significantly higher numbers of conflict and strategy frames than wire service stories, when $p < .05$. This study found same significant difference between

ethnic and mainstream newspaper stories, while it did not find any significant difference in the use of conflict and strategy frames between ethnic newspaper and wire service stories. But in the use of diversity, consequence, and substance frames on health care reform, Tukey's HSD test found no difference between mainstream newspaper and wire service stories, which confirmed the findings of independent sample *t*-tests. Though these two mainstream news sources were similar to some extent, the use of diversity and substance frames on health care reform was significantly higher in ethnic newspaper stories than in wire service stories. Post hoc analysis did not find any difference in the use of consequence frames among mainstream newspaper, ethnic newspaper, and wire service stories. From the findings, it can be said that the coverage of health care reform in ethnic newspaper stories was different than mainstream newspaper stories in more respects in comparison to wire service coverage.

Mainstream and Ethnic Newspaper Editorials. Attribute Agenda. As mentioned in the methodology discussion, because of a dearth in original content on health care reform in ethnic newspapers, the research sample in this study included editorials from both groups of online newspapers. There was a total of 62 editorials in the sample. Of them, 40 editorials were published in mainstream newspapers and 22 editorials in ethnic newspapers.

The majority of the editorials of mainstream and ethnic newspapers were oriented around the political attribute agenda. About 48% of the mainstream editorials discussed the political viewpoints and strategies in the reform debate (Table 9). Finance was the second top-ranked attribute in mainstream newspaper editorials followed by Medicare/Medicaid. In comparison, about 41% of the ethnic newspaper editorials mentioned politics-related attribute agenda. Ethnic groups (31.8%), including immigrants, was the second important agenda attribute found in

Latino and black newspaper editorials followed by insurance coverage (22.7%) and Medicare/Medicaid (13.7%).

Table 9
Attribute Agendas in Editorials: Mainstream vs. Ethnic Newspaper Editorials
(Top Attribute Agendas)

| Mainstream Newspapers (n=40) | Ethnic Newspapers (n=22) |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Political (48%) | Political (41%) |
| Finance (45%) | Ethnic groups/immigrants (31.8%) |
| Medicare/Medicaid (30%) | Insurance Coverage (22.7%) |
| Public reaction (18%) | Medicare/Medicaid (13.7%) |
| Insurance Exchange/public option (15%) | --- |
| Abortion (15%) | --- |
| Bill (15%) | --- |
| Private Insurance (13%) | --- |
| Premiums/health cost (10%) | --- |
| Insurance coverage (8%) | --- |

Media Frames

In the editorials of mainstream newspapers, consequence (65%) and conflict (40%) were the two dominant frames followed by strategy frame (20%). Both diversity (5%) and substance (5%) frames got minimum coverage in mainstream newspaper editorials (Table 10).

In ethnic newspapers, consequence and conflict frames were present in 62% and 42.8% of the editorials. About 33% ethnic newspaper editorials advanced a diversity frame, which was

higher than the number of substance and strategy frames respectively. But only the use of substance and diversity frames on health care reform was significantly higher in ethnic

Table 10
Editorial Frame Analysis: Mainstream vs. Ethnic Newspaper Editorials

| | Substance | Strategy | Conflict | Consequence | Diversity |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mainstream newspaper editorials (n=40) | 5.00% (<i>M</i> = 0.05, <i>SD</i> = 0.22) | 20.00% (<i>M</i> = 0.20, <i>SD</i> = 0.41) | 40.00% (<i>M</i> = 0.40, <i>SD</i> = 0.50) | 65.00% (<i>M</i> = 0.65, <i>SD</i> = 0.48) | 5.00% (<i>M</i> = 0.50, <i>SD</i> = 0.22) |
| Ethnic newspaper editorials (n=22) | 19.04% (<i>M</i> = 0.18, <i>SD</i> = 0.39) | 28.57% (<i>M</i> = 0.27, <i>SD</i> = 0.46) | 42.85% (<i>M</i> = 0.41, <i>SD</i> = 0.50) | 61.90% (<i>M</i> = 0.64, <i>SD</i> = 0.49) | 33.00% (<i>M</i> = 0.32, <i>SD</i> = 0.47) |
| Mean Difference | 0.13 | 0.07 | 0.01 | -0.01 | 0.18 |
| <i>t</i> | 1.69 | 0.65 | 0.07 | -0.11 | 3.03 |
| <i>p</i> | 0.01* | 0.52 | 0.95 | 0.92 | 0.01* |

* *p* < .05

newspaper editorials than in mainstream newspaper editorials. The use of conflict, strategy, and consequence frames did not have significant differences between ethnic and mainstream newspaper editorials.

Emphasis in Editorial Frames

Mainstream newspaper editorials for the selected weeks in December 2009 and March 2010 included all the five frames. On the other hand, ethnic newspaper editorials included all media frames except the substance frame for those weeks (See all the findings on editorial frame emphases in Appendix F). As it was found in the editorial frame analysis, the presence of

conflict frames dominated the editorials in both newspapers. Conflict frames of the mainstream newspaper editorials referred to various issues, including partisan/ideological, legal, abortion, interest group, and intraparty struggle. About 50% of conflict frames in the mainstream newspaper editorials were about legal and partisan/ideological issues. Political maneuvering is the main emphasis in strategy frames included. Substance frames in mainstream newspaper editorials referred to cost of the bill, financing of the bill, information related to insurance coverage, and individual mandate.

Conflict frames in the ethnic newspaper editorials referred to mainly two types of conflict – ideological/partisan and legal. Legal conflict was mainly revolved around the argument about the constitutional basis of the reform bill.

Consequence frames in both mainstream and ethnic newspaper editorials evenly covered the discussion about the effects on health care cost, the effects on politics/political consequences, the effects on businesses and employers, economic consequences, the effects on insurance coverage, and the effects on state/local health care system. But mainstream newspaper editorials did not include any information about the effects of the bill in local/state health care system. Likewise, consequence frames in ethnic newspaper editorials did not have any emphasis on the bill's effects on businesses/employers. Very few editorials included diversity frames. Two diversity frames in ethnic newspaper editorials referred to the bill's provisions for minorities and immigrants, while only one diversity frame in mainstream newspaper editorials referred to the roles of minority journalist groups.

After analyzing the editorials, we do not see a huge difference between mainstream and ethnic newspapers in terms of content emphasis. Ethnic newspaper coverage referred to ethnic

groups in few occasions; otherwise most of the editorials dwelled on the issues of political and economic consequences, and ideological/partisan nature in conflict.

Analysis of Findings

Four major observations may be drawn from the findings reported in the earlier section. First, politics over policy substance dominated mainstream newspaper coverage of health care reform. Mainstream newspaper stories also ignored the multiethnic perspective of the bill. Second, all ethnic media may not equally cover a national policy issue that affects ethnic minorities. Instead, sometimes ethnic media coverage of a policy debate can have heavy reliance on mainstream wire service stories. Third, despite some weaknesses, ethnic newspapers provided more complete and policy-oriented coverage on health care reform than mainstream newspaper coverage. Complete news coverage promotes the marketplace of ideas by avoiding narrow focus on only one aspect of an issue, such as politics. Therefore, the idea of complete news coverage refers to a journalism that not only covers political aspects of an issue but also makes an effort to adequately highlight policy details and its broad social and economic implications, including the consequences for diverse group of populations.

The fourth observation about the findings is that all mainstream media may not cover a policy issue in the same way. This research could identify differences in the use of news frames and focus in news frames between mainstream wire service reports found in ethnic newspapers and mainstream newspaper stories. The following discussion in the section will further explain these observations.

I. The Pattern in Mainstream Newspaper Coverage has Remained the Same.

Mainstream newspapers prioritized political rivalry, political maneuvering, and political consequences over the reform content that deals with the real problems of health insurance.

Political discussion overshadowed the coverage of policy details and its implications for extended insurance coverage and health care cost in the mainstream newspaper coverage. From the findings, it is evident that mainstream newspaper stories included more conflict and strategy frames than substance and consequence frames (Table 6). Political aspects of the debate were not only the most important attribute agenda in mainstream newspaper coverage; they also were prominently present in conflict, strategy, and consequence frames used in news stories of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Hence, this research supports the findings of past studies that policy coverage places more emphasis on politics and less focus on the details of policy proposals (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Lawrence, 2000; Jackson, 2010; Valentino, Beckmann, & Buhr, 2001; Kerbel, Apee, & Ross, 2000; D'Angelo and Lombard, 2008).

The findings suggest that even as general-audience media, mainstream newspapers did not prioritize the discussion of health care reform in the context of citizens. Conflict frames in mainstream newspaper coverage mainly highlighted the ideological debate and party politics around health care reform. One *New York Times* story captured the essence of one of the partisan conflict issues around expenditure and deficit. The article focused on the facts that while Democrats were arguing that huge investment for health care reform will benefit the country in the long run, Republicans were referring to citizen's concerns with the deficit (Pear and Herszenhorn, 2010, March 18). After the passage of the bill on March 21, the focus in news stories reflected the conflict frame involving trading blame between two parties (Copper, 2010, March 25). Moreover, mainstream newspaper stories that reflected conflict frames included the opposing ideas among interest groups (lobbyists for private insurance companies, American Medical Association, labor union, and religious groups) around different policy options for health care reform. As we can see, the competing interests of political parties, private enterprises,

and pressure groups received more attention in mainstream newspaper coverage over health care related concerns, policy details, and possible outcomes of policy options for general populations.

Mainstream newspaper stories also significantly advanced political and procedural maneuverings through strategy frames. These maneuverings were the mechanisms of either passing or blocking the bill. As filibuster and reconciliation became much-discussed topics in health care reform debate, procedural maneuvering got more priority in news stories. For example, when the voting on the Senate version of the reform bill was approaching in December, *The Washington Post* writers Shailagh Murray and Lori Montgomery emphasized the Democrat's securing of the crucial 60th vote to win the deal. Likewise, consequence frames of health care reform in mainstream newspapers dwelled on political outcomes of the reform initiative more than other types of effects. About 57% of consequence frames in mainstream newspaper stories dwelled on political or legal effects (Appendix E). This study also found that mainstream newspapers did not prominently cover the bill's effects in the following areas: health care cost, local/state health care system, insurance coverage, Medicare, and businesses/employers. These aspects of the reform bill have significant consequences in access to health care in the U.S. Instead, in the coverage of political consequences, the effects of the reform bill in midterm election were the main focus. For example, a consequence frame used in a *Washington Post* story mentioned that two reform supporters in the Democratic Party will not gain politically as they are going to face unhappy voters in their states during the 2010 midterm election (Cillizza, 2009, December 1). The concern is that this type of political orientation of policy coverage only promotes sensationalism and competitive nature in a policy debate. Consequently, actual content and discussion about policy implications for citizens are buried in the overuse of political predictions in news stories. This type of skewed policy coverage does not provide quality

information to the public for developing a better understanding on a key policy issue. Though insurance system overhaul was the main focus of health care reform, the two most influential mainstream newspapers instead promoted the interests and perspectives of political parties and pressure groups.

The findings suggest that mainstream newspaper stories ignored the perspectives of ethnic groups in health care reform. When the gains and losses of political actors and interest groups overwhelmingly ruled the mainstream newspaper coverage, ethnic groups received scant attention. Mainstream newspaper stories referred only to ethnic groups or diversity issues when news sources included minority Congressional Caucuses, such as the Hispanic Congressional Caucus, or when reference was made to immigrants (Appendix E).

Likewise, in comparison to mainstream newspaper coverage, ethnic newspaper coverage did not give us a rosier picture either. Spanish-language and African-American online newspapers did not equally cover this important policy issue, while uninsured populations were proportionally higher among Latinos and blacks.

II. Dissimilar Coverage of Health Care Reform among Ethnic Newspapers. It is not surprising that this research found more ethnic/diversity perspectives in ethnic newspaper coverage of health care reform than in mainstream newspaper coverage. But, overall, compared to African-American newspapers, Latino newspapers made better efforts to cover health care reform. Latino newspapers used more original news articles on the reform than black newspapers. The coverage found two leading African-American newspapers relied greatly on wire service stories.

This research found heavy reliance of ethnic newspapers on mainstream wire service stories that diminished the uniqueness of health care reform coverage in ethnic newspaper

stories. If mainstream wire service stories were considered in ethnic newspaper coverage, ethnic groups might not be the second top-ranked attribute agenda in ethnic newspaper coverage. Insurance coverage and bill-related attribute agenda could rank higher than ethnic group attributes. As in mainstream newspaper coverage, this research found scant presence of ethnicity and local dimensions in mainstream wire service stories. These two attributes ranked highly among attribute agendas in ethnic newspaper coverage. However, none of the wire service stories had a story with a local dimension, while only seven percent of the stories mentioned ethnic minorities in reference to health care reform provisions. It is expected that when a mainstream wire service feeds local news media with stories, it customizes some stories in terms of a policy implication for a state. On the contrary, Spanish-language newspaper stories included the reform implications for local hospital system in Latino-populated Miami and Los Angeles.

When this research separated ethnic newspaper stories from mainstream wire service stories, it found a significant difference in the use of substance and diversity frames on health care reform. More than 31% of ethnic newspaper stories advanced diversity frames as opposed to 8.62% of mainstream wire service stories (Table 8). The presence of substance frames in ethnic newspaper stories was more than twice the presence of such frames in mainstream wire service stories. About 64% of ethnic newspaper stories advanced substance frames in contrast to approximately 27% of mainstream wire service stories (Table 8). Ethnic newspaper stories and mainstream wire service stories were significantly different in substance frame ($p < .05$) and diversity frame ($p < .01$) categories. In addition, ethnicity ranked second among the attribute agendas in ethnic newspaper coverage, while legislative and administrative aspects of the bill alone received the same level of importance in mainstream wire service stories. Therefore, these

findings suggest that the heavy use of wire service stories reduced the prominence of ethnic groups and local dimensions in the overall ethnic newspaper coverage of health care reform.

Though the reliance on wire service stories could effect the uniqueness of ethnic newspaper stories in the overall coverage, it was the ethnic newspaper editors who selected the wire service stories. It could be the case that while selecting wire service stories, ethnic newspaper editors took into consideration which stories would better serve their audiences. In fact, mainstream wire service stories placed more emphasis on policy consequences than political debate.

III. Ethnic Newspaper Stories, Mainly of Latino News Outlets, Provided More Policy-Oriented, Diverse Perspectives than Mainstream Media Coverage. In quality of news coverage of health care or insurance reform, it was expected that the substance of the bill, analysis of its consequences in terms of society's neediest, and multi-ethnic perspectives would get priority. The findings clearly show that ethnic newspaper stories and editorials included those attributes and frames, and emphasized those aspects of frames that referred to actual content and insurance-related goals of the reform. Since more than 90% of the sampled ethnic newspaper stories were published in Latino newspapers, the discussion in this section mainly reflect Latino newspaper coverage.

Ethnicity, insurance coverage, and localism attributes were among the other top five salient attribute agendas in ethnic newspaper coverage. These three attributes can not only highlight the main goal of the reform bill - expanding the insurance coverage - but also diverse contexts both culturally and locally. In contrast, ethnicity and localism attributes did not rank highly either in the mainstream newspaper stories or in wire service stories. Instead, interest group related aspects, such as debate around abortion and fear about more government

involvement in the private insurance market, received prominence in the mainstream newspaper coverage.

Compared to mainstream newspaper stories, ethnic newspaper stories published more substance and consequence frames in health care reform coverage. Proportionately, more diversity frames were present in ethnic newspaper stories, which was six times higher than the presence of diversity frame in mainstream newspaper stories (Table 6). Conflict and strategy frames in policy and political news coverage cannot advance quality information (D'Angelo, P., & Lombard, M. 2008; D'Angelo, 1992, and 1994), as these types of newspaper coverage can cause frustration and cynicism among the audience (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997). The emphases of these frames were ideological or partisan debates and political maneuvering. The use of conflict and strategy frames in mainstream newspaper coverage was significantly higher than their inclusion in ethnic newspaper coverage (Table 6). Likewise, compared to mainstream newspaper coverage, ethnic newspapers published significantly higher numbers of substance and diversity frames in their coverage of health care reform (Table 6).

Consequence frames included in ethnic newspaper stories referred to more policy proposal-oriented implications for citizens than political future of the involved parties. Though this study did not find any statistical difference in the use of consequence frames between mainstream and ethnic newspaper stories, it found a difference in how consequence frame were constructed in these newspapers. In the construction of consequence frames, mainstream newspapers mainly used the arguments and opposing ideas advanced by the above groups. But in ethnic newspaper stories, construction of consequence frames included not only official and politically influential sources but also their analysis of the impact of the bill in health care cost, insurance practices and regulations, insurance coverage, and local/state health system. As a

result, health care cost and local/state health system were the main emphases in consequence frames advanced by ethnic newspaper stories. For example, a consequence frame in *El Nuevo Herald* advanced a fact that the reform bill would reduce the cost of Medicare drug coverage (Lightman & Talev, 2010, March 19). Another story in the same newspaper emphasized the bill's implications in local health care system in Florida that will affect many Latinos living in Miami and its adjoining areas. It described how the proposal for extended Medicaid in the reform bill would help address the problems of Jackson Memorial hospital in Miami, such as the problem of uncompensated care for uninsured populations (Ivonne, 2010, March 23).

Though ethnic newspaper stories included political predictions, it was not their main focus in the coverage. Conversely, proportionally more political consequences were included in the mainstream coverage. It appears that mainstream newspapers tend to look for political angle in any incident.

In diversity news frames, unlike mainstream newspaper coverage, ethnic newspaper coverage included more perspectives from ethnic groups on health care reform. In ethnic newspaper stories, about 55% of diversity frames on health care reform included information of the reform provisions and their effects on minorities, which were ignored in mainstream newspaper coverage (Appendix E). The rest of the diversity frames in ethnic newspapers covered the roles of minority advocacy groups and implications of health reform for undocumented Latino immigrants. As mentioned earlier, very few mainstream media stories that included the diversity frame mainly dwelled on the roles of minority caucus leaders and the bill's implications for undocumented immigrants.

It is evident that ethnic newspaper stories, mainly published in Latino newspapers, analyzed how the reform bill would affect the lives of uninsured Latinos and insurance cost of

working class Latinos. Araceli Martínez Ortega (2009, December 25) wrote a story in *La Opinion* about the impact of the reform bill among Latinos after the Senate version of the bill was approved in December. The story emphasized that Latinos without any insurance would benefit from reform proposals. After passage of the final version of health care bill in March, *La Opinion* ran a story with a headline, “Medical access for the neediest: 67% of Latinos without a plan will benefit from the expansion of Medicaid.” The story highlighted the fact that 58 % of uninsured populations in Los Angeles were Latinos. In an evaluation of the reform bill, an *El Nuevo Herald* report mentioned that though the reform plan was not perfect, the measures included in the bill will expand the insurance coverage to an additional nine million uninsured Latinos (Lightman & Talev, 2010). Also, as immigration is a big issue for Latino news media, news stories in *El Nuevo Herald* and *La Opinion* included information of what the reform bill meant to both undocumented immigrants and legal immigrants. The bill’s consequence for new immigrants was not discussed in mainstream newspaper stories. Latino newspapers reported that the reform bill will prohibit undocumented immigrants from accessing the benefits and will increase their dependence on emergency rooms in public hospitals. Apparently mainstream media downplayed the important implications of the reform bill for many new and undocumented immigrants. But these discussions got prominence in Latino newspaper coverage as they were the major concerns for many Latinos living in the U.S.

In the analysis of health care reform coverage, the role of ethnic newspapers was also educational as they provided more information about policy details through substance news frames. Ethnic newspaper stories included proportionally higher numbers of substance frames than mainstream wire service reports or mainstream newspaper reports (Table 6, Table 8). About 69.23% of substance frames in ethnic newspaper coverage were about health reform cost,

expanded insurance coverage in reform bill, sources of financing health reform, and Medicare provisions. Substance frames in ethnic newspaper coverage during high news frequency weeks of December 2009 and March 2010 focused mainly on the cost involved with health reform proposals, scope of insurance coverage proposed by reform provisions, sources of financing the reform, and changes in Medicare (Appendix E). These emphases in the substance frames were oriented around the goals of health care reform, reducing health care cost while expanding insurance coverage and ways of financing a reform. Therefore, it can be said ethnic newspaper stories advanced more policy-oriented information than political and ideological debates and tactics around the reform bill.

Despite efforts to provide better and policy-oriented coverage of health care reform, ethnic newspaper coverage had a weakness. Like their mainstream counterparts, their coverage failed to identify a pressing issue in the reform debate. The ethnic newspaper coverage did not address the problems of racially-biased medical practices. As discussed in the “Health Care Reform” section of Chapter I, physicians usually do not like to participate in Medicaid program in low-income and nonwhite neighborhood (Greene, Blustein, & Weitzman, 2006). This study did not find a single story in either mainstream or ethnic newspaper coverage that discussed the absence of policy interventions when addressing such bias in medical practices.

IV. Mainstream Wire Service Coverage can be Different from Mainstream Newspaper Stories. Unlike mainstream newspaper coverage of health care reform, mainstream wire service stories used in ethnic newspapers advanced more consequence frames than strategy and conflict frames. Mainstream wire service stories, selected for use in ethnic newspapers were not significantly different from ethnic newspaper stories in advancing consequence, conflict, and strategy frames on the reform. In contrast to wire service stories, ethnic newspaper coverage

advanced more consequence, substance, strategy, and diversity frames. However, the difference in the use of these frames between their coverage was not as same as what this research found between mainstream and ethnic newspaper stories (Table 6, Table 8). This study did not find significant differences in the use of consequence, conflict, and strategy frames between ethnic newspaper and wire service stories. In contrast, mainstream newspaper coverage used significantly higher numbers of conflict and strategy frames than ethnic newspaper coverage. Thus, compared to mainstream newspaper coverage, less difference existed between wire service and ethnic newspaper stories in the use of news frames on health care reform.

Unlike the dominance of political consequence in mainstream newspaper stories, the effects on businesses/employers, the effects on health care cost, and the effects on politics were the top three emphases in wire service stories (Appendix E). In contrast to political nature of the consequence frame in mainstream newspaper coverage, this research found more policy-oriented consequence frames in wire service stories used in ethnic newspapers. However, political maneuvering, present in 60% of stories, was the main focus of strategy frames used in wire service stories (Appendix E). The efforts for negotiation and compromise and legally challenging the bill were the other two focuses in strategy frames in wire service stories, which provided additional information than that of mainstream newspaper stories. Apparently wire service stories provided a wider range of perspectives on health care reform than mainstream newspaper coverage. Furthermore, ethnic groups/ immigrants and Medicare/Medicaid-related attributes proportionally got more coverage in mainstream wire service stories than in mainstream newspaper stories. From these findings, it is evident that mainstream wire service coverage did not have as high a level of political orientation as mainstream newspaper stories.

This discussion suggests that, unlike a mainstream newspaper, wire services may be more careful about skewed coverage of certain types of issues because a mainstream wire service needs to serve different types of news media, including ethnic news media. As discussed earlier, wire service reports were more comprehensive than mainstream newspaper stories in terms of covering a variety of issues on health care reform. Therefore, there is a possibility that a mainstream wire service produces reports that have relevance for specialized audiences such as Latinos or African Americans. Thus, in the event of lack of original stories on an issue, wire service stories may offer an attractive alternative for ethnic newspaper editors.

Overall, given that health care reform is itself a political process, it was expected that politics would be an important part of the news coverage of health care reform in both ethnic and mainstream newspaper stories. It was also expected that news coverage of reform in both newspapers would also importantly advance policy-related information and their consequences on the public. But mainstream newspaper coverage heavily focused on politics, mainly partisan clashes and tactics, and political consequences around health care reform. The problem is that health care problem does have a multicultural dimension as the priorities vary among ethnic groups. Health care for new and undocumented immigrants are special concerns for Latinos. However, mainstream newspapers presented the problem for a monolithic group of readers.

Among the ethnic newspapers, Latino newspapers appeared to be more comprehensive in terms of covering politics, strategies, concerns of Latinos about health care, and implications of the bill among the Latino community. Because it had more original content than African-American newspapers, Latino newspaper coverage could advance more policy-oriented and diverse perspectives, making it easily distinguishable from mainstream newspaper stories. Conversely, as two popular black newspapers ran very few original news stories and editorials,

they could not advance the perspectives of African Americans in the way the Latino newspapers did for their community. But African-American newspapers used wire service reports that included a wide range of perspectives about the details and consequences of health care reform and used significantly fewer stories employing politically-oriented conflict and strategy frames than mainstream newspaper stories. In addition, unlike mainstream newspaper stories, wire service stories used in ethnic newspaper coverage of health care reform emphasized the impacts of the bill on health care cost and businesses/employers beyond political outcomes. Thus, wire service stories used in ethnic newspapers reflected the pattern of ethnic newspaper stories to some extent. Mainstream wire service might have provided the options to ethnic newspaper editors in selecting the stories that they considered useful for their audience. Interviews with ethnic newspaper editors in a future study can investigate the criteria used by ethnic newspaper editors in selecting health care reform stories.

In summary, original ethnic newspaper stories on health care reform were better than mainstream newspaper stories as they provided relevant policy details and information about the outcomes of the bill for a specific ethnic group. Mainstream newspaper stories were designed mainly for general audience, not for a specific group. It was the policy orientation of wire service stories that might have made them preferable alternatives for ethnic newspaper audience. The following chapter will explore the possible reasons for the differences in health care reform coverage between ethnic and mainstream online newspapers.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

For over a hundred years, scholars have been talking about the weak presence of ethnic minorities in the mainstream media coverage of national policy issues. People of color are usually the subjects of crime, sports and entertainment stories in mainstream news media rather than successful scholars or entrepreneurs (Martindale & Dunlap, 1997). Even today something negative needs to have happened for people of color to become a part of top news agendas in newspaper coverage (Butler, 2011). Unfortunately, it is a trend in mainstream media journalism to prefer promoting controversies and sensational stories. These types of stories appear to be more appealing to journalists and partisan readers than the pressing issues of ethnic minorities. In recent times, mainstream media importantly covered another racial controversy when a blogger manipulated the context of a comment about a white farmer made by Shirley Sherrod, a black official at the Department of Agriculture (Rose, 2010). By posting that comment the blogger tried to establish that Sherrod made a racist comment. Without investigating the accusation of the blogger, a section of mainstream media reported on it with prominence and created a situation that “forced” Sherrod to resign from her post (Rose, 2010). While covering this incident, mainstream newspapers forgot that their coverage could potentially complicate race relations in the country. Racial attacks should be treated as a serious problem in a major society, along with other problems encountered by ethnic minorities, such as unemployment and unaffordable health insurance. However, mainstream media usually do not include minority perspectives in policy news coverage.

This study is rooted in the argument that incomplete and generalized news coverage of a policy issue in a multicultural society often may not adequately inform the policymaking process. Many people rely on media coverage to make political decisions or form opinions.

Therefore, better, complete newspaper coverage should emphasize the policy details and their implications on diverse populations over discussions of political gains and debates. Multicultural perspectives around an issue can be advanced through this type of reporting. But this research found the dominance of politics in mainstream news coverage of health care reform, while the content in ethnic newspaper stories included more diverse and policy-oriented perspectives.

The trend in mainstream newspaper coverage of health care reform directs this research to the issue of diversity in newsroom management. It is widely argued in media diversity literature that dearth of minority journalists in newsroom management positions results in news coverage lacking multiethnic perspectives and skewed toward the political dimension of an issue (Pride & Wilson, 1997; Wilson, Gutierrez, & Chao, 2003; Washburn, 2006). Compared to about 36% of minority populations, only a little over 12 % of U.S. newsroom positions represents minority journalists (2010). Also, job loss among minority journalists in recent years and poor recruiting and retaining of black and Latino-American journalists by major mainstream media, including *The New York Times*, could be another reason that might have resulted in the absence of multicultural dimension in the mainstream newspaper coverage of health care reform (Cottman & Jones, 2008; American Society of Newspaper Editors, 2010). Minority journalists believe that the state of diversity in newsroom management can influence storytelling approach, including content selection and the decision about framing a news story (National Association of Black Journalists, 2010; TheLoop21, 2010). Lack of minority journalists in newsrooms can limit the access of a mainstream newspaper to minority sources and the viewpoints of ethnic groups on different issues. Often, news sources are capable of shaping the agendas in news stories and editorials.

If the absence of newsroom diversity, elite influence, and corporate ownership were the possible reasons for less diverse coverage of health care reform in mainstream newspapers, then a question may arise as to why African-American newspapers, in comparison to Latino newspapers, did not extensively cover health care reform. There might be other reasons such as the interests and news consumption pattern of new generation ethnic audience, political economy, resource constraints, lack of access to official news sources, and organizational mission that could affect ethnic newspaper coverage of health care reform. The following discussion will elaborate on the above factors that could shape health reform coverage by mainstream and ethnic newspapers.

Political Economy. Money is always a long-term problem for ethnic news media. However, funding may not be a major issue for some ethnic media, such as ImpreMedia or McClatchy Company-run newspapers. Both *La Opinion* and *El Nuevo Herald* are owned by these two large media chains. Therefore, these newspapers can afford to independently cover important policy issues. They can deploy reporters to many places, run bureaus, and maintain daily production of both print and web outlets. Most of the original stories of *La Opinion* and *El Nuevo Herald*, which is more than 80%, originated locally. Those reports focused not only on politics but also on the impact of the reform bill among Latinos and local health system and details of the bill. *El Nuevo Herald* and *La Opinion* being part of two big media chains, generated reports from D.C. *La Opinion* also received reports from a correspondent stationed in D.C.

As ethnic newspapers, even those owned by big media chains, rely on paid advertisements to stay in media business. These advertisements are mainly coming from community and local entrepreneurs as many ethnic media operate within a small geographic area

or a community. Depending on the audience reach and buying power of community members, an ethnic newspaper can attract national advertisers as well. In the literature, we can find evidence for expanding advertisement spending in the Hispanic market. Growing advertisements targeting Latino audiences is an advantage for Spanish-language newspapers. Not only as a rapidly growing ethnic minority group but also for their increased buying power, Latino news media have become attractive to the advertisers (Fiske, 2011). Increasing advertisement revenues might be another factor that kept popular Latino newspapers like *La Opinion* and *El Nuevo Herald* financially viable to allocate resources, such as recruiting more correspondents and opening bureaus, for providing a comprehensive coverage on a national policy issue. Compared to black newspapers, Latino newspaper coverage ran twenty-one times more original stories on health care reform. But from this comparison, it is hard to say whether the reform coverage in *The Philadelphia Tribune* and the *Chicago Defender* had anything to do with their ownership or financial situation.

Resource Constraints. Unlike their mainstream counterparts, ethnic media do not always have access to federal government sources. It is mainly because many ethnic media organizations do not have correspondents in Washington, D.C., to cover major policy issues (Chuang, 2011). A lack of financial strength cannot allow many ethnic news media to operate a bureau in D.C., the hub of all legislation and policy discussion. This must be the reality which led *The Chicago Defender* and *The Philadelphia Tribune* to use Associated Press stories. But it clearly suggests that they did not have reporters stationed in the U.S. capitol.

Audience. Mainstream newspaper audiences mainly represent upper-middle and upper class urban populations in which ethnic minorities are under-represented (Wilson, Gutierrez, & Chao, 2003). Perhaps it is one of the reasons why mainstream newspaper coverage lacks the

perspectives about ethnic minorities. Moreover, media consumption preferences of new generations of minority audiences can shape ethnic media content (Chuang, 2010). New generation ethnic minorities are more active online as they tend to form online communities and engage in a debate using mainstream newspaper information (Chuang, 2010). Ethnic minorities using the Internet have access to many sources for gathering information about national issues. In contrast, ethnic news media tend to focus more on community news and/or political issues in their home country (Chuang, 2011; Funabiki & Azocar, 2008; Chuang, 2011; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011).

Like any other news media, ethnic media's survival depends on the audience demands. Therefore, to reach new generations of audiences and to keep their businesses economically viable, many ethnic media often prefer to use non-political topics than extensive coverage of policy issues (Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs, 2011). Community events and entertainment appear to be market demands for many Spanish-language news media, and content focus often depends on media market. Thus, to stay in viable business, ethnic news media need to present it as relevant to the audience (Fiske, 2011; Lehrman, 2005 & 2009). Maintaining relevancy of a news outlet is also related to finances. If a newspaper loses its appeal among its audience, it will lose circulation as well as advertising revenues.

Relevancy. The simple equation is: If ethnic media cannot maintain their relevance among the target audiences then will they be profitable? One of the strategies is to cover both ethnic group-specific and general market issues to attract more advertisers (Cohen, 2002; Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs, 2011; Funabiki & Azocar, 2008; Izard & Biswas, 2010). It is possible for ethnic media to expand their economic opportunities by covering national issues relevant to their community and majority populations. While Latino newspapers filed more

original reports on this national issue, the black press heavily used mainstream wire service stories. If black newspapers ignore community perspectives in news coverage to make them look like general market media for national marketers, then it is not a good sign from the perspective of ethnic media mission. Community concerns and their points of view should be regarded as actual content for the ethnic minority audience (Reilly Center for Media and Public Affairs, 2011; Chuang, 2011). To stay relevant to their audience, Latino newspapers brought up the perspectives of immigrants in health care reform coverage as undocumented and many new Latino immigrants were uninsured. Immigration and the status of immigrants are the two persistent news agendas of Latino news media in the U.S.

Adoption of Online Media. Latino newspapers included in this research regularly updated their online outlets with original stories on health care reform while the debate was going on in the Congress and the Senate. On the contrary, except for a few editorials and news stories, this research did not find any original content on health care reform in African-American online newspapers. They might have run more original stories in the printed versions to retain their circulation, which was much less than Latino newspapers. A prior study found that ethnic newspapers sometimes do not use same content for their online version to retain circulation of their print version (Izard & Biswas, 2010). The decision of content use on multiple platforms depends on the economic plan of a news organization (Chuang, 2009). If entrepreneurs think they will lose revenue or print readership, they may not put all the original content online. Therefore, the strategy of not using all the original content online might have affected the health care reform coverage of African-American newspapers included in this research. While with more circulation and growth in advertisement revenues, two Latino newspapers actively updated their news section with original stories on health care reform.

From the above discussion, it is clear that survival in media business is a tough reality for many ethnic newspapers. Economic factors could affect the health care reform coverage in the *Chicago Defender* and *The Philadelphia Tribune*. Sometimes, revenue generation gets priority for many ethnic newspapers over educating the community on complex policy issues (Izard & Biswas, 2010; Azocar & Funabiki, 2008). Though advancing the community voice and concerns is the number one reason in the growth of ethnic media, health care reform coverage of the *Chicago Defender* and *The Philadelphia Tribune* did not give an impression that they served the purpose efficiently. This study found only a few original news reports in black newspapers that resonated with the voice of millions of African-Americans, the second largest uninsured ethnic group (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). An ethnic group is better represented when community concerns are reflected in the newspaper coverage.

Future Research

This study is the beginning of a larger media coverage analysis in a comparative context. Content analysis can only provide us the trends and foci of newspaper coverage about an issue. Based on the findings, this research has already presented evidence of factors that could contribute to ethnic and mainstream newspaper coverage on health care reform. A future study could be based on interviews with both mainstream and ethnic newspaper editors to identify the factors that influence policy news coverage. As discussed in the literature, a difference in ethnic media coverage from mainstream media journalism is the outcome of the type of audience they serve, the size of news operation, ownership, economic factors, and community interests. Interviews with newspaper editors will yield information about how these factors influence the agenda-building process of policy coverage.

Also, as this research has used an online news sample, Latino and mainstream newspaper stories included readers' comments. A time-series analysis can be conducted to see whether attributes or frames highlighted in audience comments influenced the use of attributes or frame in newspaper stories in the following weeks. The rationale for doing this research lies in understanding journalists' use of new media tools in gathering information in a comparative media context of ethnic and mainstream newspapers.

Furthermore, news agendas and policy-related discourse used in news stories can be the outcome of values shaping the practice of journalism (Schudson, 2004). Depending on the ideology of news media and journalists, and their way of practicing journalism, various news outlets can advance a discourse about a policy option differently. Textual or discourse analysis can be another way of expanding this research to examine the meaning of discourse used in news stories. Discourse used in news coverage has the potential to shape the schema or mental framework of the audience. In such a case, a discourse analysis of the 2010 health care reform coverage can be compared with the last reform initiative, Clinton's health care reform in the 1990s. This type of analysis can help us to understand dominant discourse used in health care reform coverage over time in both mainstream and ethnic newspapers. Because of the influence of news sources in shaping news frames, a discourse analysis would analyze media texts in relations to different news sources on health care reform.

How to Improve Policy Coverage

Mainstream news media, especially *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and the Associated Press, have more audience reach and influence among policymakers. Media's diversity scholars acknowledge that new generation ethnic populations tend to rely more on mainstream news media for policy and political information. Hence, a mainstream newspaper

needs to adopt a framework for practicing a kind of journalism, which not only covers political aspects of an issue but also makes an effort to adequately highlight the details and its actual implications on a diverse population. Such complete coverage can help general audiences develop a better understanding of the multi-ethnic dimensions of a policy problem. The U.S. is a multicultural society, and mainstream newspapers need to use diverse news sources to promote a more complete picture of a problem situation and policy implications. The development and maintenance of an enlightened citizenry depend on the comprehensive nature of news coverage (Wilson, Gutierrez, and Chao, 2003). Furthermore, a comprehensive, inclusive storytelling approach can be a business strategy for a newspaper. By broadening their coverage, newspapers can attract and retain more readers (Fedler et al., 1996).

As found in past studies and in this research, conflict, political strategies, and political/procedural maneuvering usually dominate the way policy issues are covered in mainstream media. The objectives of health care reform of increasing insurance coverage and providing affordable health insurance were buried in overuse of politics in the mainstream coverage. While political debates and sensational journalism can mobilize discussion on partisan blogosphere, at the same time, it can make the knowledgeable audience cynical about media reporting and political prospects. Hence, a deficit of details in newspaper coverage does not promote quality information, which results in an ill-informed decision making situation for the general public. Moreover, policymakers will remain uninformed about many problems, and they will make policy based on incomplete information. Therefore, it is not surprising to see that in the history of U.S. health care reform, we found more incremental changes that only helped those who already had health insurance. As mainstream media coverage tends to focus on politics and legislative process over actual content of a policy, previous health care reform initiatives might

not be adequately informed about the problems and concerns of ordinary citizens and ethnic groups with health care. If we look back, the failure of mainstream news media in properly communicating the causes of problems of blacks added frustration within that minority group during the Civil Rights movement (National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968). To avoid such consequences, this research is proposing the following guidelines for better policy coverage in mainstream newspapers:

- Use more substance, nonpolitical consequence, and diversity frames than conflict and strategy frames;
- Provide relevance of possible consequences and details of policy proposals for multiethnic groups in news stories;
- Use diverse sources: quoting and interviewing experts and leaders representing ethnic groups along with public officials;
- Introduce sub-sections for ethnic minorities on policy and issue specific news sections of a mainstream newspaper;
- Make an effort to highlight policy implications for ethnic minorities in front page stories, or in headlines and news lead.

Like mainstream news media, ethnic news media also need to work on their coverage of a policy issue. A group of journalists working for local media in Texas, Louisiana, Florida, and Mississippi met in January 2002 at the Fred Friendly Seminar in Baton Rouge to discuss improved coverage of minorities in mainstream media. Discussants in the seminar suggested that the best way to promote multicultural reporting or comprehensive coverage of an issue is to make media managers and editors get involved in it (Fred Friendly Seminar, 2002). As editors play the supervisory role in mainstream news media, news agenda and framing of a story can

depend on their editing and story selection and planning. Based on their practical newsroom experience, journalists in the seminar suggested that the issue of minority coverage be incorporated into the employee evaluation in order to ensure accountability (Fred Friendly Seminar, 2002). Also, in a special column in *The Seattle Times*, Julie Pham (2009) emphasized the development of partnerships between mainstream and ethnic newspapers based on content sharing; this type partnership is feasible in the cities where many minority populations live. She suggested that ethnic newspapers should translate their community news in English for mainstream local newspapers.

In a meeting on ethnic media at the American University School of Communication, eminent black media journalist and editor Trice Edney said that ethnic media need to play a proactive role in exposing systemic disparities in national policy issues, such as health care, unemployment, and foreclosure rates, along with just informing their community about a policy (Chuang, 2011). In the ethnic media literature, it is always argued that ethnic media saw a boom in growth because of the inadequate representation of multicultural composure of U.S. society in mainstream media coverage. As experts discussed in the 2010 Breaux Symposium in New Orleans (Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs, 2011) and based on what this research has found, ethnic media need sustainable and newer sources of revenues and capacity building. For attaining the goals, this research proposes some suggestions for ethnic newspapers:

- Generate more original stories on a policy issue affecting ethnic groups and reduce dependence on wire service stories;
- Assign at least one correspondent to report from the U.S. Capitol on legislative and policy issues;

- Integrate online news coverage with ethnic minority citizen journalists who write blogs on policy issues affecting minorities;
- Provide equal coverage to all national policy issues affecting ethnic group members, and avoid the tendency to prioritize one policy over others.

To address financial problems that can constrain news gathering, ethnic newspapers might consider these two strategies. One, they should find a balance in content to reach both ethnic and general market audiences to attract more revenue sources, particularly the national advertisers. Two, their economic model needs to combine both print and online platforms for generating revenues through advertisements and other promotional content, such as supplements. More important, major support needs to come from policymakers, foundations, and media educators. There is also an option for policymakers in providing subsidies to ethnic media not owned by media groups. If providing a subsidy is not a feasible option, government organizations should increase advertisement allocation for ethnic media. As suggested in the Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs (2011) report, university journalism programs should offer programs for ethnic media journalists on the effective use of new technology and critical coverage areas, such as reporting on politics and policy. Furthermore, media literacy efforts in journalism schools should include an ethnic media component. Media literacy programs should encourage future journalists and citizens to read, watch and listen to ethnic media as well as general-audience media to get a comprehensive picture about an issue (Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs, 2011). Media literacy education needs to be made compulsory for the students of all mass communication disciplines who will end up having a career not only journalism but also in other fields of mass communication.

This study concludes that mainstream newspaper coverage of health care reform focused on politics. Conversely, Spanish-language newspaper stories prioritized the policy outcomes and Latino perspectives around the reform. Black newspaper coverage heavily relied on wire service stories that, while not crafted specifically for the ethnic audience, emphasized policy implications. As a policy reform issue, it was expected that health care reform coverage in newspapers would prominently include policy details, the consequences of the bill on uninsured populations and health care costs, and the perspectives of ethnic groups. But the politically-skewed coverage of mainstream newspapers might have shifted the public focus from a policy problem toward party politics. Instead, ethnic newspaper coverage, including wire service stories, could be helpful in understanding key issues of health care reform. In addition, Spanish-language newspaper stories could contribute to the policymaking process by informing it of Latino perspectives about health care issues.

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APPENDIX A

INTERCODER RELIABILITY INSTRUCTION

Coding Instruction for Framing

(To be followed by coders)

- **Table:** No. of stories/editorials and titles of news/editorials are placed in rows. Three separate coding sheets will be used for coding locally-originated/ newspaper reporters' stories, wire service stories, and editorials. Framing categories are placed in columns. Please read the enclosed coding protocol to understand framing categories.
- **Coding units:** It can be a sentence or a paragraph. You may also need to read the whole news/editorial to identify frame(s).
- **Coding:**
 - You may find multiple frames in a story/editorial. Insert the multiple frames separately in designated rows. For example, if you get conflict frame, strategy frame, and consequence frame then code "1" for each frame in its designated rows for each story/editorial.
 - You may also find more than one same type of frame in a story. In that case, count that frame "1" time in a story/editorial.
 - In case of absence of a frame in a story, insert "0" in the designated row.

APPENDIX B

CODING PROTOCOL FOR MEDIA FRAMES

| Categories/Indicators* | Definitions | Examples/Scenario** | Sources |
|------------------------|---|---|---|
| Substance frame | This type of frame is more informative and refers to the details about policy proposals, e.g. information about allocation, provisions, financing, and service delivery of health care reform. | <i>Government will provide subsidy to those employers that offer average salary of \$50,000 to employees.</i> | (Gross & Brewer, 2007) |
| Consequence frame | This type of frame predicts the outcome and evaluates the consequences of policy options. Predictions can be either positive or negative. The prediction can be made with reference to a specific ethnic group. | <i>An extension of Medicaid will ensure health insurance for 10 million currently uninsured populations. But this would increase both government spending.</i> | (Shih, Wijaya, & Brossard, 2008; Dursun, 2005) |
| Conflict frame | This type of frame presents a policy debate as a clash of ideologies and political interests or party politics. This type of frame also presents conflicting stance of interest groups, such as drug and insurance companies, and public interests. | <i>The Democrats disingenuously argue their reforms will not diminish the quality of our health care even as government involvement in the delivery of health care increases massively. Citing the frustrating performance of Federal Emergency Management Agency in response to hurricanes, Republicans foresee an inefficient health care if the reform bill is enacted into a law.</i> | (Gross & Brewer, 2007; Lee, McLeod, & Shah, 2008; Shih, Wijaya, & Brossard, 2008) |

| Categories/Indicators | Definition | Examples/Scenario | Source |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Strategy frame | This type of frame presents information about political and procedural maneuverings and mobilization in support of and against a policy proposal. | <i>“Republicans are planning to energize town hall meetings against the proposed health care plan.</i> | (Lee, McLeod, & Shah, 2008; Cappella & Jamieson, 1997) |
| Diversity frame | This type of frame covers policy options or reform debate in the context of an ethnic group or ethnic groups or undocumented/legal immigrants. | <i>The government is planning to expand Medicaid to cover recently-unemployed poor people. Statistics show that the number of uninsured people is growing among African-Americans and Latino/Hispanic populations because of job loss in service sectors.</i> | A priori frame (inducted from initial review of stories) |

Note: This Table is adopted from this source: Swan, K., and Shih, L.F. (2005). On the nature and development of social presence in online course discussions. *Journal of asynchronous learning network*, 9(3), 115-136

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE CODING SHEET FOR FRAMING ANALYSIS

Name of Newspaper :

Timeframe :

Type of sample : Ethnic Newspaper/ Mainstream newspapers
(circle one)

Type of content : News/ Editorial/ Mainstream Wire Service Stories
(circle one)

| Serial No. | Titles of Stories/ Editorials | Framing Categories | | | | | Comments/ Observation |
|------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| | | Substance | Consequence Frame | Conflict Frame | Strategy Frame | Diversity Frame | |
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APPENDIX D

LIST OF ATTRIBUTE AGENDAS

Attribute Agenda

- Political (Politics and political strategies)
- Medicaid/ Medicare;
- Individual mandate;
- Insurance Coverage;
- Ethnicity/ ethnic group (including “immigrants”);
- Private insurance;
- Health care cost (including “premiums”);
- Finance (cost of reform, subsidies, taxes, and the like);
- Abortion;
- Employer-sponsored insurance;
- Local (Local/ State health care system);
- Bill (Legislative, administrative and implementation aspects of the reform bill);
- Public Reaction/ Outcome (Public opinion, evaluation of the bill);
- Insurance exchange/Public Option;
- Children’s insurance;
- Interest groups (Drug companies; Physician/Medical Association; Trade Unions; Activists groups, such as the Tea Party; Religious groups, such as Catholic Church)

APPENDIX E

NEWS FRAME EMPHASES

Emphasis of Frames in Mainstream, Ethnic, and Wire Service Stories
between December 15-28, 2009 and March 15-28, 2010 (By Frequency)

| | Ethnic Newspaper Stories (n=57) | Mainstream Newspaper Stories (n=140) | Wire Stories found in Ethnic Newspapers (n=30) |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Conflict | | | |
| Partisan/ideological | 14 | 55 | 13 |
| Legal | 2 | -- | -- |
| Abortion | -- | 7 | 1 |
| Interest group | -- | 6 | -- |
| | 17 | 69 | 14 |
| Consequence | | | |
| Effects on health care cost | 7 | 5 | 3 |
| Coverage & Medicare | 13 | 2 | 3 |
| Political/Legal Consequences | 3 | 24 | 3 |
| Effects on businesses/employers | - | 1 | 3 |
| Effects on local/state health system | 7 | 3 | -- |
| Economic Consequence | 3 | 7 | 1 |
| | 33 | 42 | 13 |
| Strategy | | | |
| Political | 8 | 30 | 12 |
| Procedural | 5 | 15 | 1 |
| Negotiation/Compromise/ Legal challenges | 3 | 21 | 7 |
| | 16 | 66 | 20 |
| Substance | | | |
| Benefits | 3 | 3 | -- |
| Cost | 5 | 7 | 1 |
| Insurance Coverage | 5 | 6 | 3 |
| Financing | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| Individual Mandate | 2 | -- | 1 |
| Medicaid/Medicare | 6 | 10 | 3 |
| | 26 | 30 | 11 |
| Diversity | | | |
| Provisions for minorities | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| Roles of minority groups | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Immigrants | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| | 11 | 5 | 3 |

APPENDIX F

EDITORIAL FRAME EMPHASES

Emphasis of Frames in Mainstream and Ethnic Newspaper Editorials
between December 15-28, 2009 and March 15-28, 2010 (By Frequency)

| | Mainstream Newspaper Editorials (n=22) | Ethnic Newspaper Editorials (n=12) |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Conflict | | |
| Partisan/ideological | 3 | 3 |
| Legal | 2 | 1 |
| Abortion | 1 | -- |
| Interest group | 2 | -- |
| Intraparty struggle | 2 | -- |
| | 10 | 4 |
| Consequence | | |
| Effects on health care cost | 2 | 2 |
| Insurance Coverage/Medicare | 1 | 1 |
| Political/Legal Consequences | 2 | 1 |
| Effects on businesses/employers | 1 | -- |
| Effects on local/state health system | -- | 1 |
| Economic Consequence | 2 | -- |
| | 8 | 5 |
| Strategy | | |
| Political | 5 | 1 |
| Procedural | 2 | 1 |
| | 7 | 2 |
| Substance | | |
| Cost | 2 | -- |
| Insurance Coverage | 1 | -- |
| Financing (Subsidies/Revenues) | 1 | -- |
| Individual Mandate | 1 | -- |
| | 5 | -- |
| Diversity | | |
| Provisions for minorities | | 1 |
| Roles of minority groups | 1 | -- |
| Immigrants | | 1 |
| | 1 | 2 |

APPENDIX G

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS IN ANOVA

| | | N | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-------------|-----------------|-----|----------|-----------|
| Substance | Mainstream News | 287 | 0.39 | 0.49 |
| | Ethnic News | 89 | 0.64 | 0.48 |
| | Mainstream Wire | 58 | 0.28 | 0.45 |
| | Total | 434 | 0.42 | 0.49 |
| Strategy | Mainstream News | 287 | 0.59 | 0.49 |
| | Ethnic News | 89 | 0.45 | 0.50 |
| | Mainstream Wire | 58 | 0.39 | 0.49 |
| | Total | 434 | 0.54 | 0.49 |
| Conflict | Mainstream News | 287 | 0.62 | 0.49 |
| | Ethnic News | 89 | 0.39 | 0.47 |
| | Mainstream Wire | 58 | 0.39 | 0.49 |
| | Total | 434 | 0.53 | 0.49 |
| Consequence | Mainstream News | 287 | 0.45 | 0.49 |
| | Ethnic News | 89 | 0.52 | 0.50 |
| | Mainstream Wire | 58 | 0.43 | 0.49 |
| | Total | 434 | 0.46 | 0.49 |
| Diversity | Mainstream News | 287 | 0.05 | 0.22 |
| | Ethnic News | 89 | 0.32 | 0.47 |
| | Mainstream Wire | 58 | 0.09 | 0.28 |
| | Total | 434 | 0.11 | 0.31 |

APPENDIX H

ANOVA

| | | <i>Sum of Squares</i> | <i>Degrees of Freedom</i> | <i>Mean Squares</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>p (Sig.)</i> |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|----------|-----------------|
| Substance | Between Groups | 5.84 | 2 | 2.92 | 12.57 | .000* |
| | Within Groups | 100.15 | 431 | 0.23 | | |
| | Total | 105.99 | 433 | | | |
| Strategy | Between Groups | 2.93 | 2 | 1.47 | 6.03 | .003* |
| | Within Groups | 104.82 | 431 | 0.24 | | |
| | Total | 107.75 | 433 | | | |
| Conflict | Between Groups | 6.29 | 2 | 3.15 | 13.35 | .000* |
| | Within Groups | 101.68 | 431 | 0.24 | | |
| | Total | 107.98 | 433 | | | |
| Consequence | Between Groups | .368 | 2 | 0.18 | 0.73 | .479 |
| | Within Groups | 107.46 | 431 | 0.25 | | |
| | Total | 107.83 | 433 | | | |
| Diversity | Between Groups | 4.71 | 2 | 2.39 | 26.76 | .000* |
| | Within Groups | 37.98 | 431 | 0.09 | | |
| | Total | 42.69 | 433 | | | |

* $p < .05$

APPENDIX I

POST HOC TESTS: MULTIPLE COMPARISONS

Tukey HSD

| Dependent Variable | (I) Content type | (J) Content Type | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|--------|------|
| Substance | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | -.25369* | .05849 | .000 | |
| | | Wire Reports | .11090 | .06940 | .248 | |
| | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | .25369* | .05849 | .000 | |
| | | Wire Reports | .36459* | .08135 | .000 | |
| | Wire Reports | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | -.11090 | .06940 | .248 | |
| | | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | -.36459* | .08135 | .000 | |
| | Strategy | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | .14986* | .05983 | .034 |
| | | | Wire Reports | .20275* | .07100 | .012 |
| | | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | -.14986* | .05983 | .034 |
| | | | Wire Reports | .05289 | .08322 | .801 |
| | | Wire Reports | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | -.20275* | .07100 | .012 |
| | | | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | -.05289 | .08322 | .801 |
| Conflict | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | .27189* | .05893 | .000 | |
| | | Wire Reports | .22366* | .06993 | .004 | |
| | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | -.27189* | .05893 | .000 | |
| | | Wire Reports | -.04824 | .08197 | .826 | |
| | Wire Reports | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | -.22366* | .06993 | .004 | |
| | | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | .04824 | .08197 | .826 | |

| Dependent Variable | (I) Content type | (J) Content Type | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------|------|
| Consequence | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | -.06738 | .06058 | .507 | |
| | | Wire Reports | .01844 | .07189 | .964 | |
| | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | .06738 | .06058 | .507 | |
| | | Wire Reports | .08582 | .08426 | .566 | |
| | Wire Reports | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | -.01844 | .07189 | .964 | |
| | | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | -.08582 | .08426 | .566 | |
| | Diversity | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | -.26234* | .03601 | .000 |
| | | | Wire Reports | -.03394 | .04273 | .707 |
| Ethnic Newspaper Stories | | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | .26234* | .03601 | .000 | |
| | | Wire Reports | .22840* | .05009 | .000 | |
| Wire Reports | | Mainstream Newspaper Stories | .03394 | .04273 | .707 | |
| | | Ethnic Newspaper Stories | -.22840* | .05009 | .000 | |

* $p < .05$

VITA

Masudul Biswas completed his doctoral program of study in media and public affairs at the Louisiana State University in summer 2011. He obtained a Master of Arts degree in international affairs with a concentration in communication and development studies from Ohio University in 2007. Before that he completed his Bachelor of Arts in mass communication and journalism at the University of Dhaka in Bangladesh in 2001. He also earned a Master of Social Science in mass communication and journalism from the University of Dhaka in 2003.

His primary research interests include: online media and journalism, the Internet and democracy, media and social policy, media diversity, and international and development communication. His research has appeared in scholarly journals including *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator* and *Journal of New Communications Research*. He also has presented more than 20 papers at national and regional conferences.

His teaching interests include new media, online journalism, visual communication, public relations writing, communication campaign, introduction to journalism, mass communication theory, and research methods. He has several years of experience in web design, and news reporting and editing for print and online news media. His dissertation examines online news coverage of health care reform in a comparative context between ethnic and mainstream news media.

He will join the Shippensburg University's Department of Communication/Journalism as Assistant Professor in fall 2011.