Ethnic Audiences In a Fragmented Media Era: Ethnic Audiences' Selective Exposure to Likeminded Media

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ETHNIC AUDIENCES IN A FRAGMENTED MEDIA ERA:
ETHNIC AUDIENCES’ SELECTIVE EXPOSURE TO LIKEMINDED MEDIA

A Dissertation

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

in

Manship School of Mass Communication

by

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ABSTRACT

The conventional wisdom that U.S. and ethnic media have distinctive effects on ethnic populations’ assimilation into the American society inspires two closely related questions: (1) how do English- and ethnic-language media differ in news content?, and (2) to what extent is ethnic audiences’ preference for English- versus ethnic-language media systematically biased such that they seek to use media congenial to their most salient ethnic identity? The first question is expected to provide insights into what ethnic audiences learn about the U.S. and their country of origin from distinct news outlets, and to explain whether and how U.S. and ethnic media may have different influences on ethnic audiences’ attitudes toward both nations. The second question furthers our understanding of why ethnic audiences’ selective exposure is a general, cross-channel pattern with consistent ethnical or political antecedents.

To examine the above questions, this project takes a multi-method approach, including one content analysis, two analyses of secondary survey data, one pilot experiment, and one Latino based experimental study. It reveals several important findings. First, the way U.S. media portray the images of the U.S. and China is not radically different from Chinese media, as both tend to cover more negative U.S. images. This indicates their different functions, with the U.S. media playing the role of watchdog and Chinese media serving as the government’s propaganda tool. Second and more importantly, this project reveals evidence that ethnic audiences prefer to use media that are congruent with their most salient cultural identity, especially when they seek for information related to politics and public affairs. This so-called “ethnic selective exposure” exists among both Latino and Asian groups, and across different media platforms.
CHAPTER 1. ETHNIC Populations IN A FRAGMENTED MEDIA ERA

The story of immigrants in the U.S. is often about their “shunning” of assimilation into the American society, despite encouraging aspects such as demographic dynamism, economic vitality, and cultural diversity. As frequently portrayed by the mainstream U.S. media, even naturalized immigrants who have obtained a U.S. citizenship seem resistant to the idea of melting into the American super pot: “I think I’m still a Mexican…. When my skin turns white and my hair turns blonde, then I’ll be an American,” said Jacinto, who made this comment about turning into a U.S. citizen (Branigin, 1991). Increasingly, some U.S. politicians point to immigrants’ alleged unwillingness to assimilate as a basis for further restricting immigration, i.e., Donald Trump’s statement during his 2016 bid for the Republican presidential nomination: “While we’re in this nation, I should be speaking English, and that’s how assimilation works…Whether people like it or not, that’s how I assimilate” (Anzeigen, 2015).

Levels of assimilation vary widely across groups and individuals in the U.S. across a host of characteristics including: country of origin, generational status, and the original intent behind migration (e.g., Gordon, 1964; Spiro, 1955; Kwak & Berry, 2001; Berry, 1997). Though some impediments to assimilation are fixed, an implicit aspect of discussions about assimilation is the question of whether some immigrants choose to assimilate more than others. A natural result is that various incentives for assimilation are often proposed (and hotly debated) as policy levers to induce faster rates of integration. Taking the 2016 presidential election for instance, Donald Trump’s sensational speech about the “Mexican Great Wall” and “ban on Muslims” and his harsh anti-immigrant position to crack down on illegal immigration. These proposals and debates – though they are largely manifested in elites’ political discourse and debates – also reach immigrants through a wide range of avenues including mainstream U.S. media, partisan media,
ethnic media, or native-language media from other nations (see Kim, 1976; Moon & Park, 2007; Yin, 2015).

Ethnic audiences, who are often bilingual speakers, usually have more media options than mainstream native-born U.S. audiences. For decades, ethnic audiences have relied on English-language mainstream media (e.g., CNN and Washington Post) and ethnic media (e.g., Telemundo) to satisfy their needs for information and entertainment (see Lee & Tse, 1994; Huang, 1993; Kim, 1977). Today ethnic audiences are also provided with a wide array of resources of homeland news media through the Internet (Yin, 2015). Ethnic audiences’ media selectivity may go beyond the U.S. domain, ranging from mainstream U.S. media (e.g., The New York Times), ethnic media produced in the United States targeting at ethnic communities (e.g., The World Journal), to online homeland media and even English-language media produced by homeland news organizations targeting foreign audiences.

This spectrum of media choices for ethnic populations points to another layer of possible influence on assimilation: media selectivity. While the rise of the Internet has greatly transformed the modern landscape of news consumption (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010), traditional news media still rank among the primary news providers in the online environment (Hindman, 2008, 2011), retaining their reach and influence among the mass public. Because the news making process is a product of several factors within and outside the newsroom that differ across news organizations (see Shoemaker & Reese, 1996), these choices suggest differences in content that go beyond the language in which they are presented. Relative to English-language media, ethnic-language media are more likely to cover issues related to immigrants’ home nations than to the U.S. (Lin & Song, 2006), and often with a more positive tone toward immigrants (Branton & Dunaway, 2008; Abrajano & Singh, 2009). Presumably, the
effects of non-English versus mainstream English-language media are likely distinct among immigrant audiences.

Extant research shows that while exposure to English-language media is part of the process of becoming Americanized (e.g., Moon & Park, 2007), the use of ethnic-language media renews immigrants’ connections to their country of origin (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2010; Zhou & Cai, 2002; Feng & Nzai, 2014). As ethnic audiences rely on English-language media for information, they may demonstrate a higher acceptance of American cultural values (e.g., Lee & Tse, 1994; Moon & Park, 2007), better knowledge about U.S. politics (Sui & Paul, 2016), intensified participation in activities related to U.S. politics (Sui & Paul, 2016), as well as more frequent interpersonal conversations in English (Dalisay, 2012). On the other hand, the more people consume news in ethnic languages, the more likely they are to retain ethnic identifications (Jeffres, 2000) and participate in activities related to the politics of their home nations (Sui & Paul, 2016). Much in the same way that selective exposure reinforces political identities (Stroud, 2010, 2011), ethnic audiences’ selective use of ethnic media reinforces their ethnic identities, and may slow assimilation into U.S. society.

The proliferation of ethnic populations and ethnic media in the United States points to the importance of exploring media selectivity among ethnic audiences. While media proliferation has renewed scholarly interest in selective exposure and audience fragmentation, most work focuses on mainstream U.S. audiences, partitioning them according to partisanship (e.g., Stroud, 2011), ideology (Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Stroud, 2008), and political interest (e.g., Arceneaux & Johnson, 2013). This presents an opportunity to fill an important gap in the literature, especially given that race, ethnicity, occupational status, age, and socio-economic status are all quite likely to condition the effect of the choice environment (Jimenez, Mossberger, & Wu, 2011). What’s
more is that racial-, ethnic-, and age-based subgroups make up some of the most important and most coveted voting blocks for elections to come. They also face a more variable constellation of media choice than mainstream U.S. audiences of the past.

These empirical and theoretical insights underscore the importance of examining ethnic audiences’ media selectivity in host nations such as the United States. Media effects research has explored the differentiated influence of English- and ethnic-language media on ethnic audiences as well as the mainstream U.S. audiences, illuminating the significance of ethnic media selectivity for acculturation, assimilation, and transnational political engagement (e.g., Yin, 2015; Moon & Park, 2007; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2010; Zhou & Cai, 2002; Feng & Nzai, 2014; Sui & Paul, 2016). But before drawing implications regarding ethnic audiences’ media selectivity, we first need to ask: Do ethnic audiences prefer likeminded news?; and more importantly, do ethnic audiences tend to select likeminded information on the basis of their cultural identity?

Two questions guide this project’s investigation into ethnic audiences’ media choices – English- versus ethnic-language media – for news: (1) How do English- and ethnic-language media differ in news content?, and (2) To what extent is ethnic audiences’ preference for English- versus ethnic-language media systematically biased such that they seek to use media congenial to their most salient ethnic identity? Answers to the first question provide more insights into the differences between English- and ethnic-language media. The second part of this study investigates why ethnic audiences’ selective exposure is a general, cross-channel pattern with consistent ethnical or political antecedents.

Accordingly, Chapter 2 reviews prior scholarly work of selective exposure and makes a case of the importance of focusing on ethnic audiences’ media selectivity. Chapter 3 asks what
ethnic audiences learn about the U.S. and their country of origin from distinct news media, with a content analysis showing differences in the portrayals of both nations across English- and ethnic-language media. Chapters 4 and 5 examine whether ethnic audiences’ selectivity of English- and ethnic-language media is a function of their most prevailing ethnic identity, with empirical evidence drawn from both observational data and experimental studies. Eventually, the final chapter returns to the implications of ethnic audiences’ selective use of English- and ethnic-language media, in terms of its importance to scholarly research and the broad democratic consequences.
CHAPTER 2.
ETHNIC AUDIENCES AND MEDIA CHOICE

The concept of selective exposure has been around for decades, despite the persistent debate over whether people tend to acquire information that is congruent with their preexisting beliefs and avoid incongruent messages (see Sears & Freedman, 1967 for a review). While an intensive scholarly work on this topic was conducted in the 1950s and 1960s, most of the empirical attention concentrated on people’s selective seeking of information rather than their selective use of news media (see Sears & Freedman, 1967 for a review). One prevailing explanation for this scant research on selective news exposure is that there were limited media resources in prior decades. When people are constrained to a small number of media choices, they are more likely to be passive recipients of news content relative to active audiences that can choose to expose themselves to news media congenial with their predispositions.

Revolutionary changes in technology – e.g., cable, the Internet and social media – have facilitated an exponential growth of the news media and thus reinitiated scholarly interest in selective exposure. Relative to the 1960s when news organizations were owned by several monopolies (Schudson, 1981), modern social and technological changes have expedited the production and dissemination of news, providing people with a wider variety of media choice: taking broadcast television for instance, while the average American household had about six channels in the 1970s, over 90 percent of U.S. homes had access to more than 130 channels by the end of 2010 (Nielsen, 2008, as citied in Arceneaux & Johnson, 2013).

Greater media choice is the product of an increasingly fragmented media landscape, in which people can easily perform a practice of insular news consumption by requesting customized news from like-minded sources while eschewing uncongenial avenues (e.g., Sunstein, 2001; Bennett & Iyengar, 2008). In particular, the rise of partisan media and
ideological polarization between the Republican and Democratic parties are driving U.S. audiences to use partisan media congruent with their partisan identification or political ideology (e.g., Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Stroud, 2011). In 2014, while 47% of interviewed conservatives identified Fox News as their main news provider, liberals were scattered among MSNBC (12%), CNN (15%), NPR (13%), and The New York Times (10%), indicating striking differences in media preferences between liberals and conservatives (Pew Research Center, 2014a). As the implications of media choice are of significant importance to questions of political attitudes and behavior (Abrajano, 2010), this phenomenon of partisan selective exposure is increasingly associated with democratic consequences such as political polarization (Stroud, 2010), political compromise (Gutmann & Thompson, 2010), political knowledge (Prior, 2007a), and political engagement (Prior, 2007b).

The proliferation of media choice and the according practice of media selectivity go well beyond the mainstream U.S. audiences, leading to inquiry about other subgroups in the U.S. population. Given that race, ethnicity, occupational status, age, and socio-economic status are all quite likely to condition the effect of the choice environment (Jimenez, Mossberger, & Wu, 2011), it is important to examine the practice of media selectivity beyond the mainstream U.S. audiences. This chapter is dedicated to painting a full picture of the ethnic audiences’ selective use of English- and ethnic-language media. To that end, I have four main objectives. First, to explain ethnic populations’ – especially immigrants’ – media use patterns, with a discussion of why they choose to use English- versus ethnic-language media. Second, I present social and media changes that help facilitate ethnic audiences’ media selectivity. Third, I articulate the differentiated functions of ethnic- and English-language media on ethnic audiences, which also demonstrate the empirical importance of examining their media selectivity. Finally but not least,
I explain how this project contributes to the literature of selective exposure and our understanding of ethnic populations’ political practices in the United States.

**Ethnic Audiences’ Consumption of News Media**

Ethnic populations’ reliance on both English- and ethnic-language media for news is not a post-immigration behavior. Ever before their migration to the United States, many immigrants may have used English-language media for news; upon their arrival to the United States, they tend to use more English-language media than pre-immigration, while still maintaining their use of ethnic-language media (Kim, 1977; Dalisay, 2012). According to Princeton University’s New Immigrant Survey (2003), while the average immigrants spent 4.77 hours per week watching English-language TV before they came to the United States, their post-immigration watching time increased to 8.73 hours (Dalisay, 2012). This increase in the time spent on English-language media after immigration also applies to the other types of media including radio and print, even though their differences are not as big as the variation in TV use (Dalisay, 2012). On the other hand, immigrants’ post-immigration use of ethnic-language media is less frequent than their pre-immigration use (Dalisay, 2012). This increase in the post-immigration use of English-language media and decrease in their post-immigration use of ethnic-language media can be attributed to several factors, including the wider availability of English-language media and a smaller number of ethnic-language media (Kim, 1977), as well as the new immigrants’ curiosity to learn about the host nation and their willingness to socialize in into U.S. society (e.g., Moon & Park, 2007; Lee & Tse, 1994).

For many ethnic audiences, especially new immigrants, post-immigration preference for ethnic-language media is often a function of an English deficiency (Lee & Tse, 1994; Kim, 1977). The more fluent ethnic audiences’ English is, the more likely they are to consume
English-language news (Kim, 1977). Language is associated with audiences’ ability to use media in different languages, such that people often find it hard to use languages other than their mother tongue (Lee & Tse, 1994). Ethnic audiences’ prior habitual use of ethnic-language media is another commonly proposed reason for selection. Shi’s (2005) examination of the media use patterns among the Chinese diaspora shows that due to previous media use habits, many Chinese immigrants still tend to use ethnic-language media and even follow familiar media perspectives, regardless of the fact that they only have limited access to ethnic-language media in the host nation. This is reflected in their habitual use of Chinese-language websites for information related to their country of origin (Shi, 2005).

On the other hand, there are a myriad of factors that drive ethnic audiences to use English-language media. Kim (1977) found a positive relationship between media availability and media use, such that immigrants tend to consume English-language news as they are provided with more English-language media options. Consistent with this finding, Shi (2005) contends that ethnic audiences “have to adjust their media consumption habits according to the availability of resources and find out new ways to get information” (p. 65). Thus the vast English-language media serve as complementary media resource for ethnic audiences, helping to meet their needs for information that cannot be satisfied due to limited access to ethnic-language media in the host nation. Moreover, ethnic audiences’ preference for English-language media is also a function of their willingness to learn about American culture and participate in the host society (Kim, 1977; also see Moon & Park, 2007).

Altogether, bilingual ethnic audiences often rely on mainstream U.S. media and ethnic media to fulfill different purposes (Kim, 1997; Lee & Tse, 1994; Hwang & He, 1999). By applying uses and gratifications theoretical frameworks to ethnic audiences’ media use, extant
studies have suggested that ethnic populations would rely heavily on ethnic media for information but use English-language media as a supplementary source of information. Meanwhile, they may use English-language media to meet their needs for entertainment and learning English (Hwang & He, 1999). Although ethnic groups may demonstrate differentiated attributes of media use patterns (Hwang & He, 1999), they are all comprised of a big proportion of ethnic media users.

**Expanding Media Choices for Ethnic Audiences**

Although whole ethnic populations can be referred to as ethnic audiences, this study defines ethnic audiences as first-generation immigrants and their offspring who are often bilingual speakers with an ethnic background and multiple national identifications (also see Yin, 2015). These ethnical characters differentiate ethnic audiences from the mainstream U.S. audiences in significant ways. First, ethnic audiences’ abilities to use multiple languages (Kim, 1977; Abrajano & Singh, 2009) enables them to use both English- and ethnic-language media (Hwang & He, 1999; Shumow, 2010), while by contrast the majority of mainstream U.S. audiences are dependent on English-language media only. Second, ethnic audiences’ pre-immigration experience and their ethnic backgrounds may facilitate their access to ethnic-language media. Extant studies demonstrate that in ethnic neighborhoods where a large number of ethnic populations congest, ethnic-language media are not only diverse in their ownership but also provide homeland relevant news (e.g., Lin & Song, 2006). As ethnic populations tend to settle in immigrant concentrated areas (Logan, Zhang, & Alba, 2002), the blooming ethnic media in immigrant enclaves allows them a greater access to ethnic-language media. Moreover, ethnic audiences’ multiple identifications may translate into their binational engagements and behaviors
Presumably, driven by their binational activities, they may rely on distinctive media outlets for news related to both nations.

Ethnic media are the major alternative media to English-language media in America, which are often defined as “media by and for ethnics in a host country with content in ethnic languages” (Shi, 2009, p. 599; also see Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011; Elias & Lemish, 2011).\(^1\) Ethnic media have a long history that can be traced back to 1732 when Benjamin Franklin published the first German-language newspaper in North America – the *Philadelphische Zeitung* (Sneed, 2014). As the ethnic press was initially created to serve non-English immigrants from the other nations, the number and diversity of ethnic media have increased alongside with the growth of immigrants and ethnic populations since the 19\(^{th}\) century. In 1808, the first Spanish-language newspaper in the United States – *El Misisipí* – was founded in New Orleans (Kanellos, n.d.). In 1827, two African Americans established the first black newspaper *Freedom’s Journal* in New York (Sneed, 2014). Nowadays, ethnic media in America are speaking to an increasingly larger proportion of the U.S. population. As of 2005, 29 million ethnic adults – about 13\% of the entire adult population of the United States – were primary consumers of ethnic media (Bendixen & Associates, 2005). When viewed by ethnicities, the share of primary consumers of ethnic media were 55\% for the Hispanics, 42\% for African Americans, 40\% for Arab Americans, and 25\% for Asian Americans (Bendixen & Associates, 2005). Thus across different ethnic groups, there is a considerable proportion of ethnic media users.

\(^1\) Note that while most of the ethnic media appear in languages other than English, some are produced in English, for example, the Irish press uses English.
This flourishing market of ethnic audiences also facilitates the growth of ethnic media. From 2010 to 2015, the number of ethnic news organizations listed on New America Media’s (NAM) directory has grown from 2,500 to over 3,000, currently serving over 57 million ethnic adults in the United States. A remarkable increase was also found in Asian American media. From 1999 to 2010, the total number of Asian American media grew from 102 to 1,239, which translates into an 1115% increase (Nielsen, 2012). Moreover, despite the shrinking market of traditional media (e.g., print newspapers) in recent years, both the overall number and the circulation of some ethnic newspapers (e.g., Hispanic media) remain relatively stable (Pew Research Center, 2011, 2016), indicating a prospective media market comprised of ethnic audience.

Another set of ethnic-language media – which can be referred to as mainstream homeland media – are produced in nations other than the United States, which thus may not fall into the category of ethnic media. This is mostly due to the rise of trans-nationalized or trans-nationalizing media, which are often ethnic-language media for ethnic audiences residing in the United States but with news content produced by their parent news outlets in their country of origin (Yin, 2015; Shi, 2009). Taking one Chinese-language newspaper Xinmin Evening News as an example, it is aimed at Chinese audiences residing in America, however, its content is mostly produced in China by domestic Chinese journalists. In addition, ethnic-language media also expand to immigrants’ homeland media that are “produced in the home country without specifically targeting, yet easily accessible to, overseas migrants” (Yin, 2015, p. 558).

Increasingly, with the Internet breaking down geographical barriers, online homeland media

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2 This is because ethnic media often refer to ethnic-language media that are produced in host nations (e.g., the U.S.) to serve ethnic communities (Shi, 2009).
could reach ethnic audiences at a lower cost, thus helping to enrich the resource of ethnic-language media. Thus, although both appear in ethnic languages, ethnic media and ethnic-language media may differ in many ways including country of origin, ownership, and circulation pattern (Shi, 2009). In accordance with this difference and especially given the rise of transnationalized media, in this study I use ethnic-language media to refer to the other non-English language media that the ethnic audiences may have access to while residing in the United States, which is a broader category that embraces ethnic media.

Altogether, these suggest a diversified media landscape for ethnic audiences (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2014). Specifically, beyond the choices of mainstream U.S. media (e.g., CNN & New York Times) or partisan media that the mainstream U.S. audiences also have access to, ethnic audiences are provided with additional options including ethnic media that are produced in the United States for specific ethnic communities (e.g., The World Journal for Chinese immigrants), online homeland media (e.g., People’s Daily that is produced in China for the mainstream Chinese audiences), and even English-language media produced by homeland news organizations for foreign audiences (e.g., China Daily that targets at English speakers from the other nations). Given the boom of media choices afoot in the contemporary U.S. context, the influence of English- versus ethnic-language media on ethnic audiences has drawn scholarly attention, as are the priorities of extant research.

**Differentiated Effects of English- versus Ethnic-language Media**

Changes in media landscape – e.g., the growth and diversification of news disseminators – have facilitated scholarly examination of the distinctive effects of English- and ethnic-language media. This is largely because English- and ethnic-language media differ in many significant ways other than the languages in which they are presented, including personnel (e.g.,
composition of editors, and journalists), organizational aims (e.g., civic vs. professional model of journalism), institutional structures (e.g., ownership) and target audiences.

In the United States, mainstream media lag behind in the recruitment of ethnic journalists, in spite of growing ethnic readership. For example, the average proportion of minority journalists in newsroom has remained between 12 and 14 percent for a decade (ASNE, 2015). Canadian mainstream media’s newsrooms shows similar absences of minorities in the reporting team and among editors and managers (Ojo, 2006). Although these findings may not completely apply to the U.S. case, they still suggest a reasonable and possible conjecture: that is, ethnic-language media are likely comprised of more ethnic journalists and editors than English-language media (also see Nishikawa, Towner, Clawson, & Waltenburg, 2009).

Another primary difference between English- and ethnic-language media that may result in varied content is target audience composition. Mainstream U.S. media audiences are primarily English speakers that represent the majority white audiences. By contrast, ethnic-language media are created to serve ethnic communities (Shi, 2009; Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2011), and target their audiences accordingly. English- and ethnic-language media tailor their news content with the tastes of their target audiences, as explained by Hamilton (2004). For example, in order to serve ethnic audiences who are often in need of homeland information, ethnic-language media may cover more events related to immigrants’ country of origin (Lin & Song, 2006). On the other hand, English-language media tend to cover more domestic or U.S.-related issues (Abrajano & Singh, 2009).

Consequently, differentiations in news content lead English- and ethnic-language media to exert distinct influence. Consumption of English-language media has long been identified as a crucial predictor for acculturation (e.g., Kim, 1976; Moon & Park, 2007; Dalisay, 2012), which
is defined as “… the change in individuals whose primary learning has been in one culture and who take over traits from another culture” (Marden & Meyer, 1968, p. 36). As communication is closely related to cultural patterns (Kim, 1976), immigrants’ use of host nations’ media – e.g., English-language media in the United States – can help them “to understand better the norms and values, and to adopt salient preference groups of the host society” (Kim, 1976, p. 3). While exposure to English-language media predicts higher levels of acceptance of American cultural values (e.g., Lee & Tse, 1994; Moon & Park, 2007), it actually reduces immigrants’ affinity to cultural values of their country of origin (Lee & Tse, 1994; Moon & Park, 2007). In contrary, the effect of ethnic-language media consumption on immigrants’ perceptions of cultural values is relatively ambiguous. Although ethnic-language media are considered to strengthen ties with home nations (Zhou & Cai, 2002; Shi, 2005; Feng & Nzai, 2014), immigrants’ use of ethnic-language media is not necessarily related to their affinity for home cultures or their acceptance of cultural values in current host nations (Lee & Tse, 1994; Moon & Park, 2007). As such, different from the cultural borderland argument that immigrants “can neither fulfil a full return to the old ways of life nor melt into mainstream American culture” when exposed to distinct types of media (Shi, 2005, p. 69), whether media consumption in English would drive immigrants to become Americanized even though the effects of ethnic-language media are unclear (Lee & Tse, 1994; Moon & Park, 2007).

English- and ethnic-language media also differ in their effects on ethnic groups’ assimilation into the host society, which is measured in diverse ways. First, given that pre- and post-immigration use of English-language media are both positively related to English proficiency, ethnic audiences who rely more on English-language media for news often prefer to use English in their everyday conversation (Dalisay, 2012). By contrast, the more immigrants use
ethnic-language media after residing in the U.S., the less frequently they converse in English (Dalisay, 2012). English media use also facilitates ethnic groups’ incorporation into U.S. society by improving their participation in American politics (Sui & Paul, 2016). Exposure to political information contributes to intensified political participation (De Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2006). English-language media use increases immigrants’ propensity to participate in political activities by providing them with more information related to U.S. politics (Sui & Paul, 2016). Ethnic-language media helps sustain ethnic identification (Jeffres, 2000), and does not significantly mobilize ethnic populations to engage in activities related to American politics (Sui & Paul, 2016).

Transnational politics provides a more comprehensive presentation of immigrants’ political behavior (Collet & Lien, 2009). Given that immigrants’ cultural and political activities often occur in U.S. and abroad, transnational politics refers to their practice of maintaining political identities and connections with their homelands while residing in another regime (Collect & Lien, 2009). Many ethnic populations – e.g., Asian Americans who remain poorly represented in U.S. politics regardless of their growing populations – are often found to engage in transnational politics, performing relatively equally in the politics of both their homelands and of the United States (Sui & Paul, 2016). Changes in communication technology, lower transportation costs, and government policies allowing expat voting rights (Glickhouse & Keller, 2012), have largely removed hurdles along borderlines, making it easier for immigrants to retain political ties with their country of origin. Although the rate of immigrants’ participation in homeland politics is not higher than in American politics (e.g., Sui & Paul, 2016; Lien, Conway, & Wong, 2003; 2004), this phenomenon of transnational politics provides an alternative perspective regarding immigrants’ political, social, and cultural activism in the United States.
Positive effects of English-language media on ethnic populations’ behaviors in host nations (e.g. the United States) may even extend to their country of origin. Because political knowledge and political participation are core components of democratic citizenship (e.g., Prior & Lupia, 2008; Abrajano, 2014; Barabas, Jerit, Pollock, & Rainey, 2014), ethnic populations with higher levels of knowledge and participation may boost the transmission of democratic values back to their home nations once leaving the host nations. Examining language-based media choice among ethnic populations is important, and may inform broader questions about how different news avenues foster distinct behaviors in and out of their host nations.

Apart from the above distinctive effects of English- and ethnic-language media on ethnic audiences, it is notable that the availability of ethnic-language media to ethnic audiences may also distinguish them from the mainstream U.S. audiences in another way. This is because ethnic audiences have more media choices than most mainstream U.S. audiences, including both mainstream U.S. media and ethnic-language media. Mainstream English-language media as a whole often differ from the news media of the other nations’ in their coverage of global issues such as foreign policy (see Benson, 2013). Presumably, as ethnic-language media are comprised of ethnic media and trans-nationalized homeland media, they are more likely to provide mixed voices in and out of the United States relative to mainstream U.S. media. As a result, ethnic audiences, with exposure to a mix of English- and ethnic-language media, are more likely to have diversified viewpoints than mainstream U.S. audiences who primarily rely on the U.S. media for news.

Overall, English- and ethnic-language media not only vary in their influence on ethnic audiences, but also may result in attitudinal and behavioral differences between ethnic audiences and the mainstream English-speaking U.S. audiences. Moreover, such effects or differences are
likely magnified if we take into account the fact that some ethnic audiences prefer to use English-language media while the others may prefer English-language media. As a result, much in the same way that selective exposure reinforces political identities (Stroud, 2010, 2011), ethnic audiences’ selective use of ethnic media would reinforce their ethnic identities and in so doing, slows assimilation into U.S. society.

**Plan of This Study**

Before I draw implications regarding ethnic audiences’ media selectivity, two questions should be asked: (a) to what extent do English-language media differ from ethnic-language media (including but not constrained to ethnic media)?, and more importantly, (b) is ethnic audiences’ preference for English- versus ethnic-language media systematically biased such that they seek to use media congenial to their most salient ethnic identity?.

To answer these questions this study takes a multimethod approach, using data from diverse sources. My focus on two different research questions also lead to the use of distinctive methods. Content analysis is used to explore the differences between English- and ethnic-language media in their portrayals of the U.S. and ethnic audiences’ home nations. Secondary data from two national surveys on ethnic populations – the 2006 Latino National Survey (LNS) and 2008 Asian American National Survey (AANS) are used to explore the prevalence of ethnic audiences’ selective exposure, and to examine the relationship between media selectivity and its possible causes. For the second purpose, I also use online experiments to establish causal relationships. More details about data and method are available in the following chapters.

This multimethod approach is advantageous in many ways. First, data from multiple sources allow for a more comprehensive exploration of ethnic audiences’ selective exposure. With an analysis of data drawn from two large-scale, national surveys, the consistent results
would lend more robustness to the finding that ethnic audiences do prefer to use likeminded media. Second, two national surveys are comprised of news consumption questions about different media types and allow an in-depth investigation into whether ethnic audiences’ preference for likeminded media persist across newspaper, television, radio, and even the Internet. Survey data are appropriate to explore ethnic audiences’ selective exposure in an observational way, but they have problems with internal and external validity, as well as the capacity to establish causal relationships. To isolate the causal dynamics, this study also employs a web-based experiment on a Latino adult sample recruited from a Qualtrics panel. If the relationship between ethnic audiences’ ethnical/political antecedents and their preference for likeminded media is evident across a mix of methods, this would greatly contribute to what we know about ethnic audiences’ selective exposure.

The news media choices for ethnic audiences have greatly diversified. Taking ethnic media\(^3\) as an example, there are over 170 Spanish-language newspapers (Editor & Publisher, 2016) and six major Spanish-language television networks serving 55 million Latinos. Asian Americans have access to over 1200 Asian language media produced within the United States (Nielsen, 2012). On the other hand, ethnic audiences also have access to the news media from their home nations even while residing in U.S., thanks to the proliferation of online media (Yin, 2015). This rich array allows ethnic audiences to consume news content in either English or their ethnic language (Pew Research Center, 2013), and allows them the ability to choose between U.S. media and the news media from their country of origin, as displayed in Table 3.1 for Latino audiences (also see Table 3.2 for examples for Chinese audiences).

Table 3.1. Examples of Media Available for Latino Audiences Residing in the U.S., by Languages and Locations of Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>English Language</th>
<th>Native Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Expanding media choice for ethnic audiences points to the necessity of understanding differences in content across various media outlets printed in different languages and produced in

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\(^3\) As will be discussed later, in this study ethnic media only refer to ethnic-language media produced in host nation (e.g., the United States); and we use “mainstream ethnic-language media” to refer to ethnic-language news media produced in ethnic audiences’ country of origin.
different nations. If news media affect ethnic audiences’ attitudes or behaviors, such effects may be largely attributed to the variations in news content that we already know exist in some issue arenas (Abrajano & Singh, 2009). Extant studies have examined the differences of news coverage between English- and ethnic-language media within U.S. (e.g., Abrajano & Singh, 2009; Branton & Dunaway, 2008) as well as between U.S. media and the news media of other nations (e.g., Benson, 2013; Albæk, Van Dalen, Jebril, & de Vreese, 2014). This work suggests there are differences across outlets serving different countries and ethnicities, but as of yet there is little empirical evidence about the various kinds of differences in coverage that exist across subjects and issue arenas.

This present chapter examines whether ethnic audiences are exposed to different national images depending on their sources for news. Specifically, it examines portrayals of the U.S. and China images by four types of news media that are common to Chinese audiences residing in U.S, mainstream U.S. audiences, and mainstream Chinese audiences: 4 The New York Times, a mainstream English-language media published in the U.S.; Xinmin Evening News (U.S. edition), a Chinese-language media published in the U.S. (called ethnic Chinese media hereafter); Youth Daily, a mainstream Chinese-language media published in China (called mainstream Chinese media hereafter); and China Daily, an English-language media published in China (called English-language homeland media hereafter).

This chapter focuses its analyses on the news coverage provided by these outlets for two reasons. First, variations across these four newspapers can further our understanding of the distinctive roles of English- and ethnic-language media, especially in terms of their impact on

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4 Mainstream U.S. audience and mainstream Chinese audience refer to audiences residing in their home nations, who are different from ethnic audiences (e.g., Chinese) currently residing in a host nation i.e., the U.S.
ethnic populations’ assimilation into U.S. society. Second, it is important to understand whether Chinese and mainstream news audiences in the United States are likely to receive different perspectives about China and the U.S. based on their media choices, which may greatly affect their attitudes toward both nations and opinions on foreign policy issues. These implications also contribute to extant literature of media fragmentation and international communication.

**Mediated Messages across Languages and Nations**

Extant scholarly work suggests remarkable distinctions between ethnic- and English-language media (e.g., Abrajano & Singh, 2009; Branton & Dunaway, 2008). However, it is noteworthy that the language-based media should also be divided by the criterion of *locality* (Yin, 2015), which thus splits the ethnically fragmented media environment into four components: mainstream English-language media published in the U.S., ethnic-language media published in the U.S. (often called ethnic media), as well as mainstream ethnic-language media and English-language media published in home nations – see Table 3.2 for examples in each category for Chinese audiences (also see Table 3.1 for examples of each category for Latino audiences). This classification suggests distinctive roles of these four media, which can be reflected in their news content.

**Table 3.2. Examples of Media Available for Chinese Audiences Residing in the U.S., by Languages and Locations of Production**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>English Language</th>
<th>Native Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td><strong>American English Language Media:</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>The New York Times</em>, CNN, ABC, Washington Post, Fox, MSNBC</td>
<td><strong>American Native Language Media:</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>The Epoch Times</em>, Ming Pao, Seattle Chinese Post, Seattle Chinese Times, Sing Tao Daily, World Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeland</td>
<td><strong>Homeland English Language Media:</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>China Daily</em>, China Business Weekly, 21st Century Weekly, Shanghai Star, Beijing Today</td>
<td><strong>Homeland Native Language Media:</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>China Youth Daily</em>, Global Times, Guangming Daily, People’s Daily, China News Digest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
English- and ethnic-language media can affect their audiences differently, as a result of variations in their coverage of issues. Relative to English-language media, Spanish-language media often generate a larger volume of coverage on racial issues (e.g., immigration) and are more favorable toward immigration (Abrajano & Singh, 2009; Branton & Dunaway, 2008). For example, while Spanish-language media focus on immigrants’ contributions to U.S. economy, English-language media put more emphasis on the turmoil and threats associated with undocumented immigrants (Abrajano & Singh, 2009). One remarkable consequence is that audiences relying on Spanish-language media for news are more supportive of immigration than those using English-language media (Abrajano & Singh, 2009).

Ethnic media often aim to contribute to ethnic community building and immigrants’ adaption into U.S. (Lin & Song, 2006; Rodriguez, 1999), and tend to provide more international news than domestic U.S. news. Lin and Song (2006) analyzed 51 ethnic newspapers circulated in Los Angeles, which showed strong evidence that the ethnic press included more news stories related to ethnic audiences’ country of origin but fewer stories related to U.S. This homeland-oriented predisposition not only applied to both political and entertainment news coverage, but also held across a diversity of ethnic media such as Spanish, Korean, and Chinese. Notably, there are also differences in the news coverage across ethnic media: Latino ethnic media put equal effort in covering political issues about local immigrant community and about their home nations; by comparison, political news in Asian newspapers was primarily homebound (Lin & Song, 2006).

Comparatively, little is known about the content differences between ethnic media and homeland media. If using the criterion of *locality*, ethnic media are part of the host nations’ media, which are thus different from the news media of the other nations. This is strongly
supported by extensive research of international communication where media systems explain much of the variance between news media across countries (e.g., Albæk et al., 2014; Dimitrova, & Connolly-Ahern, 2007; Gao, 2010). In the case of ethnic audiences, Yin (2015) also observed that some major events in China’s mainstream media were only briefly covered by host-nation media. However, if using the criteria of languages or cultures, ethnic media are assumed to be more similar to homeland media than to host media. Especially as ethnic media are often owned by people with the same ethnicity, they may adopt similar news values and routines as homeland media. Presumably, both ethnic media and homeland media would produce more coverage of homeland issues and of favorability toward homeland nations. An empirical examination of ethnic media and homeland media is needed.

This study explores whether and how mainstream U.S. media, ethnic Chinese media, mainstream Chinese media, and English-language media by Chinese news incorporate differ in their portrayals of the U.S. and China. The U.S.-China relationship comprises an important part of the U.S. and Chinese press’s international news coverage. As two “Super Powers,” U.S. and China are often the focus of the news media. Despite close trade ties, the two nations have major differences on many substantive issues such as China’s island-building work in the South Sea, nuclear energy cooperation, human rights, and the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. Additionally, U.S. and Chinese coverage of U.S.-China relationship also serves a propaganda function, helping both nations to build a positive national image to domestic and international audiences. The mainstream Chinese media are expected to mitigate the tension between the government and Chinese citizens by shifting the public’s attention to Chinese government’s active role in international affairs. Hence it is of empirical importance to examine how the news media portray U.S. and China images when covering the U.S.-China relationship.
While this design may impair our ability to generalize this study’s empirical findings to the other ethnic-language media such as Spanish-language media, its systematic examination of domestic media, international media, and ethnic media still furthers our understanding of the disparity between different types of media the ethnic audiences can access.

**National Images in News Content**

Despite diverse explanations for the process of news production, *economic theories of news making* suggest that the news media are driven by profit, intending to offer differentiated news products to attract different audiences (Hamilton, 2004). News outlets are likely to frame issues in the ways their target audiences are most likely to be responsive to (Abrajano & Singh, 2009; Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2011), resulting in variation in news valence across media outlets. For instance, as Spanish-language media primarily target Latinos with an immigrant background, their tone toward the immigration issue is more positive than English-language media targeting English-speaking U.S. audiences (Abrajano & Singh, 2009; Branton & Dunaway, 2008).

*Economic theories of news making* also suggest variation in news valence across the news media available to Chinese audiences, which differ in target audiences. While ethnic Chinese media are primarily produced for Chinese immigrants residing in the United States, the mainstream U.S. and Chinese media often target broader category of domestic adults. Additionally, the English-language media produced in China often focus on foreigners from other nations – i.e., English speakers from the United States. As these news consumers greatly vary in predisposition, their distinct needs for news content can drive the news media to produce differentiated content (see Bovitz, Druckman, & Lupia, 2002).

As most U.S. audiences expect a strong U.S. nation, the mainstream media are likely to tailor news coverage to their audience’s taste, portraying a positive American image. On the
other hand, as a majority of U.S. citizens have a negative view toward China (Pew Research Center, 2014a), the mainstream U.S. media portray a relatively negative image of China. By the same logic, driven by most Chinese audiences’ expectation of a stronger China, mainstream Chinese media are also most likely to produce news portraying a positive image of China than the other media. Notably, as the Chinese people have been having more favorable views toward the United States (Pew Research Center, 2014b), this may drive the mainstream Chinese media to portray a positive U.S. image. However, as Chinese citizens with a more unfavorable view toward U.S. often equate a larger or equal proportion (Pew Research Center, 2014b), the mainstream Chinese media are also likely to portray a negative U.S. image. Due to these competing conjectures, it is largely an open question of whether mainstream Chinese media are more likely to portray a negative U.S. image.

Ethnic media often take on dual responsibilities when covering U.S. and homeland issues, aiming to help assimilate and retain cultural ties to homelands (Lin & Song, 2006). They may strive for a balance in both the volume and tone when portraying U.S. and China images. Regarding English-language homeland media who target foreign audiences, their roles are also two-fold: on one hand, they need to tailor news coverage to U.S. audiences’ expectation of a stronger U.S.; on the other hand, they are expected to build a positive image of China for foreign audiences, due to their role as “a window for foreigners to learn about China” (China Daily, n.d.). Ethnic Chinese media and English-language China media are positioned in the middle ground between mainstream Chinese media and mainstream U.S. media, portraying the U.S. less

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5 According to Pew report (2014), 50% of the Chinese interviewees held a favorable view toward U.S., compared to 40% in 2013.
negatively than mainstream Chinese media and also portraying a less negative China image than mainstream U.S. media.

Based on the above conjectures, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1a: Mainstream U.S. media are more likely to portray a positive U.S. image, relative to the other three news media.\(^6\)

H1b: Mainstream U.S. media are more likely to portray a negative China image, relative to the other three news media.

H2a: Mainstream Chinese media are more likely to portray a positive China image, relative to the other three news media.

H2b: Mainstream Chinese media would differ from the other three media in the portrayals of U.S. image.

Although both ethnic Chinese media and English-language homeland media are likely to produce less news coverage portraying a positive China image than the mainstream Chinese media, these two are also expected to be different. Relative to English-language homeland media that are produced in a highly controlled media environment in China, ethnic media – though often depending on homeland news incorporate – are produced in the United States with more press freedom and less government censorship. Hence the amount of negative coverage against

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\(^6\) For all hypotheses and research questions (except H3), I’m more interested in how the news media positively portray their home nations (e.g., U.S. for U.S. media) as well as how they negatively portray the opposite nations (e.g., U.S. for Chinese media). This is because an image building of home nation and critique toward the opponent nation are two basic functions when the news media play their propaganda role. Although scholars have been talking about the positive effects of negative frames (e.g., e.g., Soroka, 2014; Trussler & Soroka, 2014), a negative portrayal of home nations is not routine for most news media, especially given their purpose of building a positive national image in foreign relation issues. But see the Appendix for results of multinomial logistic regressions.
China would be *larger* in ethnic Chinese media than in English-language homeland media. Thus this study hypothesizes that when covering U.S.-China relationship:

**H3:** Ethnic Chinese media are more likely to portray a negative China image than English-language China media.

**National Images in News Quotes**

Apart from the overall news content, news quotes are another important component that may suggest the news media’s predispositions in their portrayals of nations. While the journalistic practice of indexing (e.g., “he said/she said” stories) is criticized as one strategic ritual to sustain newsmen’s notion of objectivity (Tuchman, 1972), it still suggests the news media’s slant, as they tend to quote from some sources rather than the others (e.g., Bennett, Lawrence, & Livingston, 2006).

Reporters often “index” the slant of their news coverage in accordance with the opinions of the government, particularly on foreign policy issues where official sources are highly rated (e.g., Bennett, Lawrence, & Livingston, 2006; Baum & Potter, 2008). This journalistic practice makes government officials part of the news (Bennett, 1990), which can greatly affect public opinion (Bennett, Lawrence, & Livingston, 2006). As this *indexing hypothesis* is largely attributed to press-government relations (Bennett, 1990), U.S. and Chinese media should index to different sources as a consequence of their affinity to either U.S. or Chinese government. Specifically, mainstream U.S. media are more likely to index to U.S. sources while mainstream Chinese media are more likely to index to Chinese sources when covering the two nations:

**H4a:** Mainstream U.S. media are more likely to index to U.S. sources, relative to the other three news media.
H4b: Mainstream Chinese media are more likely to index to Chinese sources, relative to the other three news media.

The valence of news quotes – whether a source talks about U.S. and China positively or negatively – is another added layer in examining the news media’s portrayals of national images. However, as news quotes often serve diversified functions in the news story – e.g., to support a news story’s overall tone, to imply an agreement with the other side, or simply to index to diversified sources without providing additional information (e.g., Tuchman, 1972) – how the valence of quotes differs across the news media is largely an open question. Thus this study puts forward the following research question instead of a directional hypothesis: 7

RQ1: How would U.S. quotes and Chinese quotes portray China and U.S. images differently across mainstream U.S. media, ethnic media, mainstream Chinese media, and English-language China media?

Method

This study explores whether and how mainstream U.S. media, ethnic Chinese media, mainstream Chinese media, and English-language media by Chinese news incorporate portray China and the U.S. images differently. As emphasized above, all these news outlets must be available on the Internet, allowing the Chinese immigrants to access them without concern for geographical barriers. Also, these news media are expected to be of similar size and considered relatively neutral when reporting international affairs. Additionally, their news articles must be available in any datasets so that we can draw their news samples. In accordance with these 7 This study focuses on how U.S. and Chinese sources talk about the opponent nations (e.g., U.S. source talking about China). As mentioned above, this is because I am more interested in whether news media differ in their portrayals of the opposite nations, which presumably would affect people’s attitude toward that opponent nation. Indeed, whether and how people’s attitude toward the opposite nation would change is of more importance to foreign relation issues.
criteria, four electronic newspapers are chosen – *The New York Times*, *Xinmin Evening News (U.S. Edition)*, 8 *Youth Daily*, and *China Daily*. 9 Table 3.3 shows a description of them.

Table 3.3. Description of Sampled Electronic Newspapers for Chinese Audiences Residing in the U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type Defined In This Study</th>
<th>The New York Times</th>
<th>Xinmin Evening News (U.S. edition)</th>
<th>Youth Daily</th>
<th>China Daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Locality of Production and Circulation 10</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Audiences</td>
<td>Domestic U.S. adults</td>
<td>Chinese migrants in U.S.</td>
<td>Domestic Chinese adults</td>
<td>Foreigners in China and other nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Circulation 11</td>
<td>1,379,806</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 *Xinmin Evening News* is a daily newspaper originated in China. Its U.S. edition was firstly launched in 1996, which is daily printed in Los Angeles, U.S. Although the U.S. edition also has a considerable amount of news provided by its homeland organization in China, it targets at Chinese migrants residing in U.S. and has its own bureau in Los Angeles, U.S. Thus, the *Xinmin Evening News* (U.S. edition) is a news outlets by the ethnics to serve ethnic groups in the host nation, which fits the definition of ethnic media. Admittedly there are other ethnic media – i.e., *Qiao Bao*, *World Journal*, and *Singtao Daily*, but these newspapers do not have a database that stores all their published news articles and often have more advertisement rather than news created by their own journalist team. As this study focuses on news media’s coverage of substantive politics issues, these ethnic media do not fit our research scheme either. As such, although *Xinmin Evening News* (U.S. edition) relies on its parent news organization in China, it is still an appropriate ethnic media with its electronic resource available.

9 Note that this study only examines electronic newspapers that are exactly the same as their print versions, hence news articles available on their websites are not counted. This is because most online articles are reprinted from other news sources, but the news articles in electronic newspapers are mostly chose and edited by news outlet’s own journalist team. Thus comparatively, electronic newspapers can well represent the news media’s propensity, but it is not the same case for online news articles.

10 While these media circulate in multiple nations, they vary in the primary target audiences.

11 For statistical analyses, daily circulation was not included as a control variable due to (a) missing statistics for ethnic Chinese media and (b) multicollinearity issue since all models are already clustered on newspaper outlets.
News Sampling

News articles of The New York Times were drawn from LexisNexis, news stories for China Daily were collected using NewsBank, while the rest were pulled from each newspaper’s official website.

To ensure an exhaustive search of news articles that portray U.S. and China images, this study employed two different search terms: “China and the United States” and “U.S.-China.” This full search resulted in a number of news articles for each newspaper: within a one-year cycle from September, 2014 to September, 2015, a total of 87 articles were collected for The New York Times, 3,889 for China Daily, 1,987 for Youth Daily, and 326 for Xinmin Evening News (U.S. Edition).

Variables and Measurements

One set of outcome variables are intended to capture how the news media portray an overall image of the U.S. and China. The other set of dependent variables capture (a) the sources of news quotes – whether a quote is indexed to an U.S. source or a Chinese source; and (b) the valence of news quotes – whether news quotes from both sources portray each nation’s image as positive or negative. See Table 3.4 for measurements of each variable.

Table 3.4 Variables and Measurements

12 Note that 87 does not represent the total amount of coverage by New York Times on China and U.S. issues, because the LexisNexis database may not include all articles from New York Times.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall China image in News Story</td>
<td>1 = Negative (e.g., China’s island-building work in the South Sea affects the security of other nations.)&lt;br&gt;2 = Positive (e.g., China has been working with other nations in solving climate change.)&lt;br&gt;3 = Neutral (e.g., background information for China, without specifying or implying a positive or negative national image)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall U.S. image in News Story</td>
<td>1 = Negative (e.g., The interference of U.S. in South Sea suggests its dominance or control over the other nations.)&lt;br&gt;2 = Positive (e.g., U.S. has been working with other nations in solving climate change.)&lt;br&gt;3 = Neutral (e.g., background information for U.S., without specifying or implying a positive or negative national image)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quotes from U.S. Sources</td>
<td>e.g., Ms. Rice said “…;”&lt;br&gt;“…,” Cmdr. William Urban, a spokesman for the Defense Department, said in a statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quotes from Chinese Sources</td>
<td>e.g., Colonel Yang said at a news conference in Beijing, “…;”&lt;br&gt;Zheng Shuna, deputy director of the legislative affairs commission of the National People’s Congress said “….”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China image in U.S. Quotes</td>
<td>1 = Negative (e.g., “The region is on edge,” Ms. Glaser said. “China is under a microscope, and I don’t think the Chinese really have an effective strategy for reassuring the region.”)&lt;br&gt;2 = Positive (e.g., “China for 35 years now has had a very consistent powerful trend in its economic growth, and we have never seen such a big economy develop so quickly for so long,” Rosen said.)&lt;br&gt;3 = Neutral (e.g., “Right now China’s investments in the US are increasing rapidly. Without a treaty I doubt that it could keep increasing at this pace,” Lundblad said.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. image in Chinese Quotes</td>
<td>1 = Negative (e.g., Colonel Yang said at a news conference in Beijing, “The behavior by the United States can only lead one to suspect whether the American side is driven by a desire to see the world in turmoil.”)&lt;br&gt;2 = Positive (e.g., “The increase is largely due to the visa process streamlining efforts by the US. If the efficiency continues to be enhanced, it will certainly encourage more Chinese travelers to visit the U.S.,” Chen said.)&lt;br&gt;3 = Neither positive nor negative (e.g., Jin Yinan said: “Similar to other nations, the United States makes some adjustments with a full consideration of the diverse interests.”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(China image) and (U.S. image) are coded according to coders’ answers to two separate questions: “Merely according to this news article, the primary image of China is?” and “…, the primary image of U.S. is?.” For each question, the answer choices are 1 = negative, 2 = positive, 3 = neutral, and 4 = don’t know/not sure.

(U.S. quotes) and (Chinese quotes) are coded according to coders’ answers to two questions: “What is the total number of quotes in this story?” and “What is the number of quotes from the following nationalities – Chinese, American, and other nations?.” These two dependent variables capture the proportion of U.S. and Chinese quotes, using this formula: “counts of Chinese [U.S.] quotes ÷ total counts of all quotes.”

(China image in U.S. quotes) and (U.S. image in Chinese quotes) are measured by asking coders the following two questions: “Regarding the quotes from Chinese sources [from U.S. sources], how many of them portray the U.S. image [China image] as positive, negative, or neutral?.” These two dependent variables capture the proportion of U.S. and Chinese quotes that portray the opponent nation as positive, negative or neutral, using these formulas: “counts of positive/negative/neutral Chinese [U.S.] quotes ÷ total counts of Chinese [U.S.] quotes.”

**Intercoder Reliability**

Two trained graduate students coded all news articles using the codebook in Appendix A. Intercoder reliability scores are computed using Krippendorff’s alpha, which range from 0.74 to 0.96 and indicate an acceptable reliability of the coding scheme (Krippendorff, 2004).\(^{13}\)

**Results**

As noted, this study examines differences in the portrayals of U.S. and China images across four news providers, in terms of overall news content and news quotes. For dependent

\(^{13}\) Agreement was calculated using 60 randomly drawn articles, about 25% of the sample.
variables that are measured by multiple categories, a series of dummy variables are created and binary logistic regressions are conducted.\textsuperscript{14} For the other dependent variables that are measured by percentages, ordinary least square (OLS) regressions are performed. The unit of analysis is news article, with all models being clustered on newspaper outlets.

**National Images by News Media**

As illustrated in Figure 3.1, *The New York Times* is significantly more likely to portray a negative China image than *Youth Daily* ($b = -1.93, p < 0.001$), *China Daily* ($b = -1.57, p < 0.001$), and *Xinmin Evening News (U.S. edition)* ($b = -2.25, p < 0.001$).

![Coefficient Plots for H1a and H1b](image)

**Figure 3.1 Coefficient Plots for H1a and H1b**

Note: X-axis indicates coefficient estimates; all coefficients are statistically significant, $p < 0.001$. Coefficient plots are created using two sets of binary logistic regression analysis, with “*The New York Times*” being the comparison category. Confidence intervals are invisible because of small robust standard errors.

\textsuperscript{14} Multinomial logistic regressions are also performed and yield same results. As the results of binary logistic regressions are easier to interpret, we report them in this section. See Appendix B and C for the results of multinomial logistic regressions.
Thus H1b is strongly supported. Opposite to my expectation, however, *The New York Times* is significantly less likely to portray a positive U.S. image than the other three, revealing partial support for H1a.

The results for H2 are mixed, as displayed in Figure 3.2. While *Youth Daily* is significantly more likely to portray a positive China image than *The News York Times* ($b = -1.57$, $p < 0.001$) and *China Daily* ($b = -0.98$, $p < 0.001$), it is significantly less likely to do so than *Xinmin Evening News* ($b = 0.30$, $p < 0.001$). Hence H2a is partially supported. Regarding portrayals of a negative U.S. image, *Youth Daily* is significantly more likely to do so than *Xinmin Evening News* ($b = -0.06$, $p < 0.001$), but it is less likely to do so than *The News York Times* ($b = 1.12$, $p < 0.001$) and *China Daily* ($b = 0.99$, $p < 0.001$), providing strong support for H2b.
H3 assumes ethnic Chinese media are more likely to portray a negative China image than English-language China media, but the result yields opposite finding. Relative to *Xinmin Evening News*, *China Daily* ($b = 0.68, p < 0.001$) is more likely to portray a negative China image, translating into a 13.06% difference in estimated probability. Hence H3 is partially supported.

**National Images by News Quotes**

As the dependent variables measured by the proportion of quotes – U.S. quotes, Chinese quotes, U.S. images in Chinese quotes, and Chinese images in U.S. quotes – were highly skewed, they were logged for OLS analysis. H4a and H4b examine news media’s practice of indexing. Consistent with H4a, *The New York Times* employs more quotes from U.S. sources than *Xinmin Evening News* ($b = -0.23, p < 0.001$), *China Daily* ($b = -0.12, p < 0.001$), and *Youth Daily* ($b = -0.15, p < 0.001$). However, opposite to our expectation, *Youth Daily* includes significantly fewer quotes from Chinese sources than the other news media, hence H4b is partially supported.

There is also some noteworthy evidence for RQ1, which concerns how U.S. quotes and Chinese quotes portraying the image of the other nation. As shown in Table 3.5, in terms of quotes from U.S. sources, *The New York Times* contains a significantly smaller portion that portrays a positive China image than the other news media; meanwhile, it also includes a significantly larger portion of U.S. quotes that portray a negative China image. Regarding the quotes from Chinese sources, *The New York Times* contains significantly more quotes portraying a negative U.S. image than all the others; by contrast, *Youth Daily* ($b = -0.004, p < 0.001$) contains a significantly smaller portion of Chinese quotes that portray a positive U.S. image than *The New York Times*, while the other two feature a larger portion than it.
Table 3.5. OLS Models Predicting Sources of Quotes and Distinct Portrayals of National Images in Quotes $^a$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Quotes from U.S. Source $^a$</th>
<th>Quotes from Chinese Source $^a$</th>
<th>U.S. Images in Chinese Quotes $^a$</th>
<th>China Images in U.S. Quotes $^a$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The New York Times</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>0.17***</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinmin Evening News</td>
<td>-0.23***</td>
<td>0.04***</td>
<td>0.02***</td>
<td>-0.15***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China Daily</td>
<td>-0.12***</td>
<td>0.20***</td>
<td>0.06***</td>
<td>-0.08***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Daily</td>
<td>-0.15***</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>-0.004***</td>
<td>-0.17***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.35***</td>
<td>0.10***</td>
<td>0.04***</td>
<td>0.17***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. All dependent variables were measured by percentages and were logged to curve skewness.
b. “—” indicates the omitted comparison group.
c. *** $p < 0.001$, * $p < 0.05$ (from two-tailed tests).
d. All models are clustered on newspaper outlets. Robust standard errors are omitted for brevity.
Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter explores differences in the portrayals of U.S. and China images across four news providers that are common to mainstream U.S. audiences, mainstream Chinese audiences, and Chinese audiences residing in U.S. While this analysis is limited to only two nations, it offers additional evidence for the scholarly conjecture that English- and ethnic-language news coverage differ in many issues that directly relate to immigrants (e.g., Abrajano & Singh, 2009; Branton & Dunaway, 2008).

![Bar chart](image)

Figure 3.3. Predicted Probabilities of Distinct Portrayals of U.S. Image, by News Media
Note: Predicted probabilities are calculated using multinomial logistic regression models.

This study has several contributions. First, it provides support for the existing theoretical literature that news content is explained by target audiences (see Hamilton, 2004). As shown in Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.4, *Youth Daily* intends to portray a positive image of both China and U.S., which can be explained by its domestic Chinese audiences’ expectation of a positive China
image and increasingly favorable attitude toward U.S. Regarding *Xinmin Evening News (U.S. edition)* that targets Chinese immigrants with a desire for both assimilation into U.S. and retained connections with China (e.g., Lin & Song, 2006; Yin, 2015), it is likely to portray a positive image of both nations. This is also true for *China Daily* that targets at foreigner audiences. Consistent with our conjecture that it is positioned in the middle ground between mainstream Chinese media and mainstream U.S. media, *China Daily* is likely to portray a neutral image of both nations, even though it is also more likely to portray a negative U.S. image rather than a negative China image.

![Figure 3.4](image)

Figure 3.4. Predicted Probabilities of Distinct Portrayals of China Image, by News Media

*Note: Predicted probabilities are calculated using multinomial logistic regression models.*

While *economic theories of news making* explain some news media, they may not explain all findings from this study. Instead, some findings suggest the news media’s roles as “watchdogs” and “propaganda tools.” As Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.4 illustrate, *The New York Times* is more likely to portray a neutral or negative U.S. image rather than a positive one.
Additionally, *The New York Times* also tends to employ a larger portion of quotes to portray a negative U.S. image than the other news media. These findings are consistent with many literatures’ description of the U.S. media as *watchdogs*, which are intended to surveil the performance of U.S. government (e.g., Donohue, Tichenor, & Olien, 1995). On the other hand, *China Daily* is more like a *propaganda tool* for the Chinese government. Relative to portray a positive U.S. image, it is more likely to portray a negative one.

Another important finding is the relatively consistent portrayals of national images between news quotes and the overall news content. For example, while the *New York Times* tends to portray negative U.S. and China images, it also contains a larger proportion of quotes portraying negative images but fewer quotes portraying positive images of both nations. One noteworthy exception is *Youth Daily* – although it is more likely to portray a positive U.S. image than *The New York Times*, the proportion of its Chinese quotes portraying a positive U.S. image is significantly smaller than *The New York Times*. This may be because the Chinese sources – which are mostly government officials – are reluctant to offer favorable voices toward U.S. when interviewed by mainstream Chinese media.

Despite a focus on the news content, findings in this study also have important implications for public opinion. In general, mainstream U.S. audiences, mainstream Chinese audiences, and ethnic Chinese audiences may form different attitudes toward U.S. and China as the news media they choose tend to portray two nations differently. While mainstream Chinese audiences and Chinese immigrants may think of U.S. and China positively regarding their roles in foreign relation affairs, mainstream U.S. audiences may think negatively of both. Especially given the intensified trend of selective exposure (e.g., Bennett & Iyengar, 2008; Sunstein, 2001),
people using distinct news media may thus become polarized in their perceived images of U.S. and China, when asked about foreign relation issues.

These implications are particularly important for immigrants, who are often engaged in the process of assimilating into U.S. Although the news media is not the singular or the most significant factor for assimilation, but it still exerts certain influence (e.g., Brettell, 2005; Dalisay, 2012; Moon & Park, 2007). Other conditions being equal, if immigrants consume more mainstream U.S. media for foreign relation news, they are likely to form an unfavorable attitude toward the U.S. and thus slow their assimilation process. On the other hand, if they consume more mainstream Chinese media or ethnic Chinese for foreign relation news, they may form a favorable attitude toward the U.S. and thus become more likely to assimilate. Moreover, for ethnic audiences who see distinct national images across multiple media, they may need additional information to decide whether they agree with a favorable or unfavorable national image. For these people, their attitudes toward the U.S. would be undecided and could be swung by other factors. Consequently, due to a need for more cognitive process and undecided attitude toward the U.S., they may also be slow in assimilating into the U.S. society.

Clearly, further research is needed since this approach only focuses on the variations in news content, without delving into the impact of such variation on public opinion. Other methods – e.g., lab experiments or survey experiments – would provide a better understanding of the influence the news media can have on people’s attitudes toward U.S. and China, and on other issues as well. Findings from this study contribute to these studies by demonstrating that U.S. and China images do vary across English- and ethnic-language media, with the mainstream Chinese media and ethnic Chinese media portraying a positive image and the mainstream U.S. media portraying a negative image of both nations. Additionally, these findings also suggest the
need to disentangle news valence from quote valence. As the portrayal of national image is relatively consistent with the portrayal by the overall news content, it may reinforce the effects of news content on people’s attitudes toward nations.

Replications are also encouraged to examine whether English- and Spanish-language media portray national images differently, as well as whether variations in nation images hold to other issues relevant to immigrants, such as immigration, healthcare, job opportunity in U.S., and human rights. If the portrayals of U.S. and homeland images are consistent, the general immigrants’ favorability toward U.S. would be quite divided depending on their use of English- or ethnic-language media. If the portrayals of U.S. image differ by issues or languages, immigrants are likely to be primed by certain issues to form a more favorable opinion toward the U.S. But in either case, replications of this study would further our knowledge of the influence of an ethnically fragmented media environment on ethnic audiences’ attitudes toward the U.S., policy divisions, and consequentially their assimilation into the United States.
CHAPTER 4. SELECTIVE EXPOSURE AMONG ETHNIC AUDIENCES: AN ANALYSIS OF SECONDARY OBSERVATIONAL DATA

Given the distinctive roles English- and ethnic-language media play in their promotion of the national images of the U.S. and ethnic audiences’ country of origin (see Chapter 3), as well as the other well-documented differences in the way English- and ethnic-language media cover ethnic groups and race-related issues (i.e., news coverage of Latino groups and the issue of immigration; see Branton & Dunaway, 2008; Abrajano & Singh, 2009), it is rational to infer that English- and ethnic-language media offer differentiated meanings to ethnic audiences, which likely facilitate their preference of one media over the other.

This variable use of English- versus ethnic-language media raises questions about expanding media selectivity occurring across languages as well as when and why ethnic groups choose English- or native-language news outlets. The former is important because the different constellation of media choices for ethnic groups may mean that the implications of the fragmented media environment may be altogether different for these subgroups. The latter is important because an active selectivity between native- and English-language media may have significant implications for acculturation and assimilation, which are two key components in immigration and security related policy debates.

Seeking explanations for ethnic populations’ preference of English- versus ethnic-language media, extant scholarly work builds on active consumption of the news media. As Levy and Windahl (1985) elaborate, audiences are active consumers whose media use “is motivated by needs and goals that are defined by audience members themselves, and that active participation in the communication process may facilitate, limit, or otherwise influence the gratifications and effects associated with exposure” (p. 110). Informed by uses and gratification theory, for example, Huang (1993) found that ethnic groups primarily use ethnic-language media for
information while using English-language media “mostly for entertainment and language-learning purpose” (p. 43). Though the uses and gratifications approach can explain why ethnic populations use English- versus ethnic-language media and what they use them for, it is far from sufficient.

A fundamental question, however, is whether ethnic audiences’ use of English- versus ethnic-language media reflects a practice of selective exposure. In other words, do ethnic audiences – like partisan audiences – crave likeminded news congruent with their pre-existing beliefs? Conceptually, selective exposure refers to “any systematic bias in audience compositions” (Sears & Freedman, 1967, p.195), such that people tend to “expose themselves to mass communications in accord with their existing opinions and interests and to avoid unsympathetic material” (Klapper, 1960, p. 19). Within the field of political communication, scholars use partisan selective exposure to refer to audiences’ tendency of selecting partisan-labelled media (i.e., Fox vs. MSNBC) that are congruent with their political predispositions including partisanship (e.g., Stroud, 2010; Meraz, 2015; Ryan & Brader, 2013), political ideology (Iyengar & Hann, 2009), and political beliefs (Stroud, 2011). To the extent that partisan selective exposure occurs, a set of scholarly work has endeavored to explore how the U.S. citizens’ selective use of partisan media would affect polarized political attitudes (e.g., Levendusky, 2013; Stroud, 2010; Arceneaux & Johnson, 2013), which on the other hand are likely to facilitate partisan selective exposure as well (Stroud, 2010; also see Slater, 2007).15

15 Note that while Stroud (2010) made a thoughtful argument about the mutual influential effect between partisan selective exposure and political polarization, her study revealed little evidence that polarized political attitudes would lead to partisan selective exposure. Stroud (2010) attributed this “null” finding to the possibility of a spiral effect, such that the growth of both polarized opinions and partisan selective exposure has reached a maximum level to elicit additional changes.
Along similar lines, are ethnic audiences – when searching for news – biased in favor of media outlets that often provide information consistent with their predispositions, beliefs, or expectations?

This chapter is dedicated to answering this question. In doing so, I review theoretical reasons to anticipate that ethnic audiences will seek out likeminded media. I draw heavily on the theories of active audience, cognitive dissonance, social categorization, and social identity to present ethnic audiences’ preference of English- versus ethnic-language as a function of their most salient ethnic identity. Specifically, grounded on extant literature that suggests various self-characteristics (e.g., age, gender, partisan identity, ethnicity, and political ideology) as important predictors of selective media use (e.g., Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010; Stroud, 2008, 2010, 2011), this study proposes an ethnic selective exposure hypothesis – that is, ethnic audiences tend to use media that are congruent with their most salient ethnic identity. To examine this hypothesis, this chapter focuses an empirical analysis of contemporary data drawn from two national surveys.

**Why Ethnic Audiences’ Selective Exposure Occurs**

Extant scholarly work on selective exposure – e.g., partisan selective exposure – has built on a set of theories to postulate why people would select likeminded media for news. Here I describe three theoretical reasons that are most commonly used by previous research on selective exposure. I then argue why these theories support the assumption that identity-based selective exposure also occurs amongst ethnic audiences.

**Media Users as Active Audiences**

Tracing back to the 1970s when scholars debated the existence of selective exposure, one main critique attributed the lack of consistent empirical evidence to limited media choice (Sears
& Freedman, 1967), arguing that individuals are passive receivers of news information from a limited number of available media outlets (Biocca, 1988). However, with changes in the media environment – especially given the growth of television programs and the rise of the Internet – audiences have become active. A core concept to the theory of active audience is audience selectivity – that is, audiences’ media choice is an intentional, goal-directed, and motivated behavior (Biocca, 1988). Specifically, motivations for media selectivity may include “needs and goals that are defined by audience members themselves, and that active participation in the communication process may facilitate, limit, or otherwise influence the gratifications and effects associated with exposure” (Levy & Windahl, 1985, p. 110).

Based on this assumption of motivational media use, extant work on uses and gratifications (U&G) has focused on the social and psychological origins of needs that may result in differential patterns of media choice, such as needs for news versus needs for entertainment. Audience gratifications can be derived from distinct sources, including news content and exposure to news media per se (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973). Given that the mass media often differ in many attributes (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1973) – e.g., ownership, news routines, and journalists’ professional perceptions, the news content they produce differs accordingly. This divarication of the news media and their news products allows audiences to choose from a variety of media options depending on their varied motives.

Overall, the formulation of audience selectivity emphasizes people’s rationality and independence (e.g., Biocca, 1988). However, although the theory of active audience suggests that people are often active audiences who seldom use the media without selecting content, it does not delve into the mechanisms for such selectivity behavior. The uses and gratifications theory expands our understanding of audience selectivity by proposing need as the motivational drive,
however, it fails to provide explanations for the sources of these motivations, such as genes and social environment (Kirzinger, Weber, & Johnson, 2012).

Despite these limitations, the assumption that individuals are active audiences driven by diverse motivations to seek information still sets the basic theoretical ground for selective exposure. That is, only if media users are active audiences, they would choose media in a likely biased way – i.e., seeking news from certain outlets while eschewing others.

**Cognitive Dissonance and Confirmation Bias**

Festinger’s cognitive dissonance (1957; 1964) is one of the most influential theories explaining and predicting people’s selectivity of information and media. He contended that cognitive dissonance is as important a factor as the other antecedent conditions such as the relevance and utility of information (Festinger, 1957). It stems from the idea that people often strive for consonance among a range of cognitions such as their opinions, knowledge, or beliefs about themselves or the environment (Festinger, 1957). When a moderate amount of cognitive dissonance occurs, people intend to not only reduce dissonance but actively avoid situations where dissonance may occur (Festinger, 1957). Hence Festinger (1957) suggested an active exposure to consonant information and an active avoidance of dissonant information as two behavioral outcomes – people may use one or both to reduce their cognitive dissonance.

However, the use of dissonance theory to specify particular conditions under which selectivity would occur has not been a success (Sears & Freedman, 1967). According to Sears and Freedman (1967), studies of de facto selectivity failed to show that people do have a pre-existing attitude that explains their selectivity, although the general hypothesis of dissonance theory is that people would be biased in their seeking of information after they have made a decision or chosen a position (see Festinger, 1957). While this limitation is overcome by studies
in which respondents’ opinions or attitudes were captured before they were asked to choose between supportive and non-supportive information, these studies did not provide consistent evidence for selective approach to attitude-consistent information (Sears & Freedman, 1967). Nor did any studies reveal strong support for people’s selective avoidance of inconsistent information (Sears & Freedman, 1967). Hence if attitudinal bias is not a prime cause for selective exposure, scholars should turn to other factors that are less relevant to existing attitudes or beliefs, such as education, social class, the utility of information, and prior exposure to the same issues (Sears & Freedman, 1967).

Regarding Sears and Freedman’s (1967) pessimism concerning cognitive dissonance theory’s relevance to selective exposure – selective avoidance of uncongenial information in particular – Frey (1986) pointed out that the studies they used to show the failure of a tendency for people to avoid uncongenial information did not directly measure avoidance – these studies did not ask respondents which information they would actually avoid but only asked them to rate their preferences for all given articles. Thus, without a reliable and direct measure of avoidance, it is inappropriate to conclude no evidence for selective avoidance (Frey, 1986). Moreover, although Festinger (1957) suggested that people seek the reduction of dissonance by exposing themselves to congenial information and avoiding uncongenial information, these two are not inseparable (also see Garrett, 2009; Garrett, Carnahan, & Lynch, 2013; Garrett & Stroud, 2014). Instead, people can choose either or both to reduce their cognitive dissonance. This also suggests that selective avoidance is not necessary evidence to support the theory of cognitive dissonance.

Accordingly, Festinger (1964) clarified in his revised version of dissonance theory that selective exposure only occurs when an individual’s opinion or belief is a product of his/her free choice and if the individual is personally committed to this position. Under conditions where
individuals have already possessed the ability to refute dissonant information without requiring any additional information, selective exposure can also be absent (Frey, 1986). Moreover, dissonant information is not always avoided and consonant information is not always preferred (Festinger, 1964). As a supplement to his 1957 theory, Festinger (1964) also specified several conditions under which dissonant information can even be preferable – e.g., when dissonant information is perceived as easily refutable or useful for future decisions, or when under states of high dissonance such that a revision of position/decision is possible.

Festinger’s theory of cognitive dissonance clearly suggests that people’s striving for cognitive consonance can motivate them to seek for news congruent with their preexisting beliefs (Stroud, 2011). While aversion to opinion challenges is another reason that drives people to avoid conflicting information, confirmation bias is a stronger factor that motivates their appeal to likeminded news (Frey, 1986; also see Garrett & Stroud, 2014). Indeed, an avoidance of dissonant information merely hinders a further increase in the existing dissonance, but it doesn’t help reduce dissonance itself; also, people may expect some useful items in dissonant information for their future decision making (Frey, 1986). People may choose more opinion-consistent information without a comparable drop in their contact with uncongenial information (Garrett, Carnahan, & Lynch, 2013).

**Partisan Selective Exposure and Motivated Reasoning**

Building on cognitive dissonance, motivated reasoning furthers our understanding of selective exposure by contending that people may prefer attitudinally congruent information without the presence of dissonance (Stroud, 2011). This provides additional explanation for partisan audiences’ selective use of their in-group partisan media; moreover, it echoes
Festinger’s (1957) contention that cognitive dissonance is just one of a myriad of motives that may drive people to crave for likeminded information.

To the extent that humans are all motivated reasoners in processing political information, the motivated reasoning theory proposes two goals that would affect people’s exposure to information – accuracy motivation for reaching a correct conclusion, and directional motivation that encourages a specific, preferred conclusion (Kunda, 1990). According to Kunda (1990), these two motives determine what strategies we would apply in a particular situation: with directional goals, we rely on cognitions that will produce the most desired conclusion, thus biasing our selectivity of information in favor of our predispositions. With accuracy goals we would rely on cognitions deemed most appropriate, which leads to more careful and objective information seeking and processing. The directional motivation is also largely attributed to cognitive dissonance, as dissonance can be aroused when people are aware of the inconsistency between their desired positions and the beliefs of the other side (Kunda, 1990).

However, we cannot judge whether people would selectively choose congenial information or avoid uncongenial information simply based on their accuracy versus directional motivations. Even though the accuracy goals should not result in any biased selectivity, people’s use of congenial or uncongenial information also depends on their perceived utility in drawing an accurate conclusion. In particular, accuracy motivated people – though they tend to find the best pieces of information – may systematically choose attitude-consistent information, simply because it looks better than the inconsistent alternatives (Fisher, 2011) or because counter-attitudinal information requires more cognitive effort to process (Ziemke, 1980). On the other hand, while directional goals can generally engage people in a biased preference for congenial
information, they may not avoid uncongenial information if they are confident in refuting uncongenial information or if their desire to defend their standpoints is relatively low.

**Self-concept as a Predictor for Selective Exposure**

Altogether, given the consensus that audiences are active news seekers, both the cognitive dissonance and motivated reasoning theories suggest that pre-existing cognitive bias is an important predictor for media use, although other reasons or motivations also operate or may even override confirmation bias. Such cognitive bias – for example, pre-existing attitudes, opinions, knowledge, or beliefs – may stem from diversified avenues, but a most noteworthy and stable source would be individuals’ self-concept including their partisan identity, political ideology, and political beliefs (see Stroud, 2011).

According to the theory of cognitive dissonance, when people find conflicting information, they experience psychological discomfort known as cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). The extent to which people experience cognitive dissonance then affects whether they will engage in selective exposure. Though not explicitly specified, such cognitive discomfort occurs most often when one’s self-defined identity conflicts with their issue stances. As commonly known in the case of partisan selective exposure, dissonance arises when strong partisans find themselves agree with the political stances of the oppositional party (Stroud, 2011). This may be because political identity is a frequently used cue for individuals to form their opinions, especially on political issues where two oppositional parties do not converge.

Another route through which self-identity guides media selectivity is by arousing personally relevant beliefs. As Stroud (2011) elaborates, selective exposure “is contingent on whether the topic is personally relevant, whether there is an established routine for processing information on the topic, or whether the topic generates an affective response” (p. 27). The more
relevant an issue is to a person’s interests of self-concept, the more propensity they have to
engage in selective exposure. As partisanship is most connected to partisans’ self-concept, “those
with strong political leanings may be particularly likely to engage in selective exposure because
their political beliefs are accessible and personally relevant” (Stroud, 2011, p. 26). This is
strongly evidenced by empirical findings that Democrats and Republicans prefer to use intra-
party media when the two parties split on political issues – e.g., the nomination of a Republican
or Democrat candidate in presidential campaigns (Stroud, 2011).

In addition, one’s self-identity also serves as a short-cut for individuals to seek congenial
information. That is, self-identity is a heuristic used to sort the news media into different groups
– in-group media and out-group media. Such categorization constitutes a distinguishable
fragmented media environment for people to choose media consistent with their identities
(Stroud et al., 2014). Nowhere is this argument more tenable than the rise of partisan media in
the U.S. Commonly admitted, MSNBC is a more liberal news outlet and Fox news is more
conservative. Most Republicans prefer to watch Fox while Democrats would be more likely to
opt for MSNBC, when given a choice between the two. This media consumption pattern also
holds when examining partisans’ use of websites, where Republicans are more likely to use
conservative websites but Democrats prefer to use liberal websites (Meraz, 2015; Stroud, 2011).
Based on their self-identities, individuals can decide whether the news media are in-group
members (Stroud et al., 2014).

Individuals’ self-identity is closely related to their media selectivity, at least in the sense
to elicit the cognitive dissonance that drives their acquisition of consonance information. It
explains not only why people use different media, but also how they make selectivity decisions.
To reduce or even avoid this identity-related dissonance, individuals often prefer sources that are
predominantly consistent with their political predispositions across their use of print press, cable networks (e.g., Stroud, 2011; Iyengar & Hahn, 2009), and online news websites (e.g., An, Quercia, & Crowcroft, 2013). This is consistent with the assumption that individuals are active audience members who tend to use media congruent with their personal predispositions – such as age, gender (Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010), political beliefs (Stroud, 2011), political ideology (Iyengar & Hahn, 2009), and political interest (Arceneaux & Johnson, 2013). While such choices may also stem from other sources, one’s self-defined identity is a relatively stable available heuristic to be used.

**Ethnic Self and Exposure to Identity-Congruent Media**

While this relationship between self-concept and preference for likeminded media is well examined within the field of partisan selective exposure, another equally important field is ethnic audiences’ selectivity of English versus ethnic language media. According to extant literatures on selective exposure, two conditions are necessary to ensure that self-identity can predict selective exposure: for one thing, individuals are able to identify themselves, e.g. by partisanship. The other is that the news media can be categorized by individuals’ identities, e.g. by political leanings.

Ethnic populations often self-identify themselves as Americans, ethnic Americans, pan-ethnic, or residents of a specific nation of origin (Pew Research Center, 2012a, 2012b). These identities are not mutually exclusive. Instead, they may exist simultaneously, but the salience of these identities greatly differs, with the most salient one being individuals’ primary identity (see Brewer & Pierce, 2005; Brewer, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, Brown, & Tajfel, 1979; Tajfel, 1981; Turner, 1999). Scholars have documented social or cultural contexts as an important factor for social identity (Deaux & Major, 1987; Oakes, 1987; McCall & Simmons,
1978; Rosenberg, 1979; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994), such that ethnic populations almost certainly vary in their most salient identities, depending on the ethnic or American group with which they feel more closely affiliated. Moreover, one’s primary ethnic identity becomes increasingly stable, particularly as he/she has frequent interactions with the category endorsed by themselves (Ethier & Deaux, 1994). This also explains why ethnic populations tend to provide different answers when asked about their primary ethnic identity (see Pew Research Center, 2012a, 2012b). In this sense, the diverse identities ethnic populations use to define themselves – i.e., American, ethnic Americans, pan-ethnic, or residents of a specific nation of origin – can be thought of as a scale with “American” identity on one end and a “resident of specific nation of origin” identity on the other end. I refer to these identities as *ethnic self*, which refers to a primary self-defined identity rather than a legal status. While an individual is likely to possess all facets, the most salient identity often becomes their primary ethnic self label. This ethnic identity then serves as cognitive template most people use to organize information about themselves and others (Helms, 1990).

The second necessary condition for ethnic self to guide media selectivity is that the news media can be categorized by individuals’ ethnic identities. Extant studies have shown that English-speaking media and ethnic-language media greatly differ in their news coverage of issues related to ethnic community and ethnic audiences’ home nations (e.g., Abrajano & Singh, 2009; Branton & Dunaway, 2008). As ethnic-language media cover more issues about ethnic audiences’ home nations than about host nations (Lin & Song, 2006), they often feature a connection function by bringing immigrants to news and events happening in their home nations or their domestic ethnic community (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2010) as well as by facilitating their maintenance of homeland cultures (Rios & Gaines, 1998). On the other hand,
exposure to mainstream English-language media is often positively related to acculturation and incorporation into the U.S. society (e.g., Dalisay, 2012; Moon & Park, 2007). Such functions in arousing an affiliation either to their nation of origin or to the U.S. also help distinguish ethnic-language media from English-language media.

News media with congruent attitudes are often seen as in-group members (Levendusky, 2013; Stroud et al., 2014). As English-language media mostly target at mainstream U.S. audiences by tailing news content to their tastes (see Abrajano & Singh, 2009), they often serve as a platform for U.S. audiences to find others of the same group. This also holds for ethnic-language media, which often bring ethnic populations together by providing news content catering to their appeals (Lin & Song, 2006; Yin, 2015). As such, English-language media are more likely to be seen an in-group member by audiences self-identified as Americans, while ethnic-language media are more likely to be considered as an in-group member for those self-identified as pan-ethnic or residents of their nation of origin. Hence there is a possibility that individuals will choose the news media in accord with their self-defined ethnic identities. Ethnic audiences identifying themselves as American are presumably more likely to use English-language media given their expectations about the volume and tone of coverage about the United States. On the other hand, those identifying themselves as pan-ethnic or residents of country of origin may tend to use ethnic-language media based on expectations about the volume and tone of content related to their home nations.

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16 See Appendix D and E for figures of English- versus ethnic-language media use partitioned by English/ethnic-language speakers, as well as by U.S. born versus Foreign born audiences. These figures consolidate my argument here that despite available to all populations, English-language media serve more mainstream U.S. audiences – those who are born in U.S. and English-language speakers. By contrast, ethnic-language media serve ethnic audiences more – mostly, ethnic-language speakers who were born in other nations but now reside in the U.S.
Hypotheses

The ethnic selective exposure hypothesis predicts that:

H1(a): Relative to ethnic audiences identifying themselves as Americans, those identifying themselves as pan-ethnic (e.g., Latinos) are less likely to use English-language media for political information.

H1(b): Relative to ethnic audiences identifying themselves as Americans, those identifying themselves as residents of nation of origin (e.g. Mexicans) are less likely to use English-language media for political information.

H2(a): Relative to ethnic audiences identifying themselves as Americans, those identifying themselves as pan-ethnic (e.g., Latinos) are more likely to use ethnic-language media for political information.

H2(b): Relative to ethnic audiences identifying themselves as Americans, those identifying themselves as residents of nation of origin (e.g. Mexicans) are more likely to use ethnic-language media for political information.

An additional expectation is that the strength of self-identities also predicts ethnic audiences’ media selectivity. This assumption is consistent with extant scholarly work of partisan selective exposure, which reveals that stronger partisans are more likely to use in-party media than moderate partisans (Arceneaux & Johnson, 2013). Presumably, the stronger people consider their identities to be, the more likely they are to use in-group media that are congruent with their identities:

H3(a): The stronger ethnic audiences identify themselves as American, the more likely they are to use English-language media.
H3(b): The stronger ethnic audiences identify themselves as American, the less likely to use ethnic-language media.

H4(a): The stronger ethnic audiences identify themselves as pan-ethnic (e.g., Latinos), the more likely they are to use ethnic-language media.

H4(b): The stronger ethnic audiences identify themselves as pan-ethnic (e.g., Latinos), the less likely they are to use English-language media.

H4(c): The stronger ethnic audiences identify themselves as residents of nation of origin (e.g., Mexicans), the more likely they are to use ethnic-language media.

H4(d): The stronger ethnic audiences identify themselves as residents of nation of origin (e.g., Mexicans), the less likely to use English-language media.

**Method and Data**

This chapter examines the ethnic selective exposure hypothesis among Latino and Asian audiences residing in the United States. The U.S. Latino population is 55 million and comprises 17.4% of the total U.S. population (Colby & Ortman, 2015). One hundred and seventy-eight Spanish-language newspapers (Editor & Publisher, 2016) are providing news content targeting Hispanics in America every day, with about forty-six newspapers circulated in the state of California, thirty-five in Texas and fourteen in Florida (see Appendix L for more details). On the other hand, Asian Americans comprise 5.4% of the U.S. population (Colby & Ortman, 2015). From 1999 to 2010, the total number of Asian-language media outlets increased by 1115%, with over 1200 Asian language media serving Asian Americans (Nielsen, 2012). Such rich media resources allow these two groups to selectively use media that are congruent with their self-defined identities.
In this chapter I use observational data from the 2006 Latino National Survey (LNS) and the 2008 National Asian American Survey (NAAS).\textsuperscript{17} The 2006 LNS was conducted from November 2005 to August 2006, which was supervised by scholars from diverse universities and funded by multiple agencies. The 2008 NAAS was conducted from August to October, 2008, collaborated by scholars from the University of California (Riverside and Berkeley) and University of Southern California.

Both surveys interviewed nationally representative samples, with 8,634 Latinos (LNS) and 5,159 Asian Americans (NAAS) from over 20 nations including those born in mainland U.S. and Puerto Rico. Both surveys are advantageous for focusing on ethnic groups’ news consumption, in terms of language (ethnic vs. English) and news sources (e.g., newspaper, radio, television, and Internet in NAAS).\textsuperscript{18} They both include questions pertaining to respondents’ self-identities, with the LNS also probing into the strength of such identities. The 2006 LNS employed computer-assisted telephone interviews and the 2008 NAAS employed telephone interviews – in both respondents were interviewed in English (LNS: 38.1%, NAAS: 59.9%) and ethnic languages, depending on their own preferences of languages. See Appendix F and G for more details about both datasets.

The primary objective is to determine whether ethnic audiences’ self-declared identities help to explain their habitual use of English- and ethnic-language media. Analysis in this study needs to control for other influential factors such as English proficiency, educational attainment

\textsuperscript{17} The 2006 LNS and 2008 NAAS are old dated. However, an exhaustive search showed a lack of observational data that fit the scope of this study. Comparatively, the 2006 LNS and 2008 NAAS are two open-source datasets that provide a fair amount of information regarding the media selectivity of two largest ethnic groups, which also allowed scholars to explore other behavior of ethnic populations (see Duggal, 2011; Lee, 2011).

\textsuperscript{18} Note that the 2006 LNS only surveyed the Latinos’ general news consumption in either English or ethnic languages, without specifying differentiated news sources.
level, experience of U.S. education, legal status of U.S. citizenship, length of residence in U.S., and habitual media use. Although I cannot draw strong causal inferences regarding the impact of ethnic self on ethnic audiences’ media selectivity without conducting experiments or using panel data, these cross-sectional data from both surveys still provide the best available information for a preliminary study to investigate this impact (see Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010).

Variables and Measurements

(Ethnic Media Use) is the dependent variable in this study. It captures whether ethnic audiences consume political news media more frequently in English- or native-language. In the 2006 LNS, all respondents were asked: “For information about public affairs and politics, would you say you rely more heavily on Spanish-language television, radio, and newspapers, or on English-language TV, radio, and newspapers?”19 In the 2008 NAAS, all respondents were first asked about their habitual use of newspapers, radio, television, and the Internet. Afterward, they were asked to specify the language of the media they used most often: for example, if respondents said they read newspapers for information about politics, they were then asked “Is that in Asian-language, English-language, or both?” This variation in the ways LNS and NAAS capture selective media use allows us to investigate whether ethnic self predicts general media selectivity as well as the selectivity of a specific type of media. For both surveys, responses to these questions are recoded into 1 = use both English- and ethnic equally, 2 = use English-language media more, and 3 = use ethnic-language media more, with the others coded missing.

19 The 2006 LNS didn’t specify respondents’ media selectivity by television, radio, or newspapers, but instead inquired into their media preference in this very general way. It is possible that someone may rely heavily on Spanish-language TV but English-language newspaper, etc. While the LNS survey question failed to provide more specification for more nuanced testing, this study compensates it with the 2008 NAAS data that explored respondents’ media selectivity in a more specific way (see Appendix F and G).
Ethnic Identity is the primary independent variable that captures how respondents describe their own ethnic identity. In the 2006 LNS, respondents were asked: “Of the three previous terms, Latino or Hispanic, national origin descriptor, or American, which best describes you?” Responses to this question are recoded into 1 = Latino/Hispanic, 2 = National Origin Descriptor, and 3 = Americans, with the other options recoded into missing. For the 2008 NAAS, respondents were asked: “People of Asian descent in the U.S. use different terms to describe themselves. In general do you think of yourself as…?” Their responses are recoded into 1 = American, 2 = Asian American, 3 = National Origin American (e.g., Chinese American), 4 = Asian, and 5 = National Origin descriptor, with the other options recoded into missing.

Strength of Ethnic Identity is the other predictor that measures the strength of ethnic audiences’ self-identities. This variable is only captured in the 2006 LNS, where respondents were asked: “In general, how strongly or not do you think of yourself as American/Hispanic or Latino/national origin descriptor?,” with 0 representing “not at all,” 1 as “not very strongly,” 2 as “somewhat strongly,” and 3 as “very strongly.” Note that all respondents were asked to rate the strength of their self-identities as Americans, Latinos, and national descriptors, respectively. Moreover, these questions were asked before the other question regarding ethnic self. As these three questions were asked in random orders, there is little priming effect of these questions on whether respondents would choose which identity as best describing themselves. See Appendix F and G for descriptions of the other variables.

Results and Findings

Multinomial logit models are employed to test all hypotheses, in which the baseline (comparison) group for the non-orderable discrete outcome variable is “using both English- and
ethnic-language media equally.” All models control for other factors including English proficiency, educational attainment, U.S. education background, English dominant, and so on.

**Ethnic Identity Predicts Media Selectivity**

H1a and H1b predict a lower probability for ethnic audiences self-identified as pan-ethnic or nation of origin residents to use English-language media, relative to those self-identified as Americans. This proposition is strongly and consistently supported by the analyses of the Latino and Asian American public opinion data. As expected, the estimated coefficients for the pan-ethnic and national origin identities are negative and statistically significant (see Table 4.1 and Table 4.2), after controlling for the effects of confounding factors.

As Figure 4.1 illustrates, relative to ethnic audiences self-identified as Latinos or respondents self-defined as national origin descriptors, those who identify themselves as Americans are more likely to rely more on English-language media for political information.

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20 Note that both surveys included a large number of missing values, which result in a great loss of observations for analysis especially for the 2008 NAAS.

21 I also test for and remove influential outliers. For the 2006 LNS, as the inclusion of potentially influential cases does not affect estimates, the results reported here are from models using all observations. For the 2006 LNS, about 3000 observations should be removed using residuals and leverage as the criterion. However, as large residuals or leverages are not sufficient to indicate whether some cases can influence estimated coefficients (Long & Freese, 2006), I ran models with and without these potentially influential cases. As their results showed little difference in the estimated coefficients, I assume that these 3000 cases are not real influential cases. Thus, the reported results for the 2006 LNS are from models with all cases. Given that, the only reason for the loss of observations in the 2006 LNS models is missing values on included variables. For the 2008 NAAS, however, I purposively dropped one influential case for models predicting newspaper selectivity and two cases for models predicting radio selectivity.

22 All hypotheses are also supported by the results of baseline models without controlling for confounding factors, as shown in online Appendix H & I.
Figure 4.1. Average Marginal Effects of Ethnic Self on Predicting More Use of English-language Media (Dataset: 2006 LNS)
Note: Average marginal effects are calculated using Model 1 (see Table 1).

There are mixed findings regarding whether ethnic self predicts ethnic audiences’ selective use of ethnic-language media (H2a and H2b). As shown in Table 4.1, the analyses of 2006 LNS data reveal no evidence that the Latino identity predicts Latinos’ use of Spanish-language media. The analyses of 2008 NAAS data, however, provide remarkable evidence that people self-identified as Asians and national origin descriptors are significantly more likely to use ethnic-language media, in relative to those self-identified as Americans. This pattern holds for predicting Asian audiences’ selective use of newspaper and the Internet.\(^{23}\) Thus, H2a and H2b are supported by the 2008 NAAS but not the 2006 LNS.

\(^{23}\) Note that the multinomial logit model predicting radio selectivity (last column in Table 4.2) is unstable, as 28 cases were determined and the standard errors are questionable. Thus results of this model is only provided for reference, without being discussed in result section.
Table 4.1. Multinomial Logit Regression Analyses Predicting Latino Audiences’ Media Use
(Dataset: 2006 LNS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1 $^c$</th>
<th>Model 2 $^c$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More Use of English-language Media</td>
<td>More Use of Spanish-language Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnic Self</strong></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/Hispanic $^a$</td>
<td>-0.45**</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin $^a$</td>
<td>-0.34**</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strength of Ethnic Self</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of American Identity $^b$</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.38***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of Latino Identity $^b$</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of National Origin Identity $^b$</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.31*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Controls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age $^b$</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>0.31*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-0.34**</td>
<td>0.41***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment</td>
<td>0.20***</td>
<td>-0.20***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Education</td>
<td>0.68***</td>
<td>-0.66***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Interest $^b$</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>-0.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of U.S. Residence $^b$</td>
<td>0.41***</td>
<td>-0.39***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalized U.S. Citizen</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Born</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Dominants</td>
<td>-0.70***</td>
<td>0.97***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of Spanish $^b$</td>
<td>-1.64***</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of English $^b$</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>4627</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRχ²</td>
<td>1912.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob(χ²)</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo-R²</td>
<td>0.2173</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For both models, the baseline category is comprised of respondents reporting that they use English- and Spanish-language media equally. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, and *** $p < 0.001$.

Standard errors and z scores are omitted for brevity.

a. Comparison group for ethnic self is the “American” identity.
b. These variables are logged to curve skewness.
c. For both models, similar estimates hold after dropping over 100 potentially influential cases.

As the inclusion of influential cases does not affect estimates, I report the results using all respondents. Also, for both full models controlling for other factors, they revealed no interaction effect between ethnic self and the strength of self-identities.
Table 4.2. Multinomial Logit Regression Analyses Predicting Asian Audiences’ Media Use (Dataset: 2008 NAAS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Self a</th>
<th>Newspaper Selectivity</th>
<th>TV Selectivity</th>
<th>Internet Selectivity</th>
<th>Radio Selectivity c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Ethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>-0.79*</td>
<td>1.21*</td>
<td>-0.86*</td>
<td>-0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin American</td>
<td>-1.10*</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>-1.06**</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>-1.03*</td>
<td>1.33*</td>
<td>-1.04*</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin Descriptor</td>
<td>-1.37**</td>
<td>1.24*</td>
<td>-1.45***</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age b</td>
<td>-0.72**</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.59**</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.46**</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.33*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment b</td>
<td>0.95**</td>
<td>-1.16***</td>
<td>0.68***</td>
<td>-0.90***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Education</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>-0.67***</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>-0.44*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Interest b</td>
<td>0.61***</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>0.48***</td>
<td>0.32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Income b</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>-0.66***</td>
<td>0.40***</td>
<td>-0.34**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Dominants</td>
<td>1.47***</td>
<td>-0.69***</td>
<td>0.90***</td>
<td>-0.35*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalized Citizens</td>
<td>-2.02***</td>
<td>1.02#</td>
<td>-1.75***</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncitizens But Apply</td>
<td>-2.19***</td>
<td>1.62#</td>
<td>-1.67***</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noncitizens and Not Apply</td>
<td>-2.52***</td>
<td>1.63#</td>
<td>-1.67***</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitual Newspaper Use</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>-0.31*</td>
<td>0.26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Habitual Radio Use</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>0.44**</td>
<td>-0.33**</td>
<td>0.38**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitual TV Use</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-0.41#</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitual Internet Use</td>
<td>-0.50**</td>
<td>-0.72***</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>-0.61***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.65*</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>3.46**</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N 1921 2368 1520 1395
LRχ² 556.50 536.72 1319.06 —
Prob(χ²) 0.0000 0.0000 0.0000 —
Pseudo-R² 0.2830 0.1923 0.2250 0.2969

Note: For all four models, the baseline category is comprised of respondents who report that they use both English- and ethnic-language media. # p < 0.10, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, and *** p < 0.001. a. Comparison group for ethnic self is the “American” identity. b. These variables are logged to curve skewness. c. Note that this mlogit model predicting radio selectivity is not stable; 28 observations are completely determined, and standard errors are questionable.
Put together, there is clear support for the *ethnic self hypothesis*. Such effect translates into a variation in the predicted probabilities of using English- versus ethnic-language media. As Figure 4.2 shows, the predicted probabilities for people with a relatively high level of assimilation into U.S. society – male Latinos born in other nations that speak English and completed their highest levels of education in U.S., it is not surprising to see a bigger probability of using English-language media across different identities.\(^{24}\) However, even for this group, an American identity versus pan-ethnic or national origin identities still makes a difference in their probabilities of using different media: those identifying themselves as Americans are about 10% more likely to use English-language media but 5% less likely to use Spanish-language media, relative to those identifying themselves as pan-ethnic Latinos or national origin descriptors.

![Figure 4.2](image_url)

**Figure 4.2.** Predicted Probability of Media Selectivity among Latino Audiences (Dataset: 2006 LNS)

Note: Predicted probabilities are calculated using Model 1 (see Table 4.1) for male Latinos born in other nations that speak English and completed their highest level of education in the United States, with all the other variables held constant at their means.

\(^{24}\) Predicted probabilities are created for ideal cases using Model 1 (in Table 4.1), and note that this doesn’t show any interactions between ethnic self and assimilation.
**Strength of Ethnic Self Predicts Media Selectivity**

As ethnic audiences identify themselves differently, the strength of their self-identities may also serve as a powerful predictor for media selectivity (H3 and H4). As shown in Table 4.1, there is evidence that strength of ethnic self affects ethnic audiences’ use of ethnic-language media. Consistent with H3 (b), the stronger ethnic audiences identify themselves as Americans (Model 1: $b = -0.38, p < 0.001$; Model 2: $b = -0.35, p < 0.001$), the less likely they are to use ethnic-language media, as illustrated in Figure 4.3.25

Figure 4.3. Predictive Marginal Effects of American Strength on Ethnic Audiences’ Likelihood to Use Spanish-language Media More (Dataset: 2006 LNS)

Note: Average marginal effects are calculated using Model 1 (see Table 4.1).

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25 Note that this figure shows the effect of American strength among the Latino group in general, because all Latino respondents (2006 LNS) were asked about their perceptions of the strength of being an American, pan-ethnic Latinos, and national origin descriptors, regardless of the primary identity they chose for themselves.
On the other hand, those with stronger nation of origin identities (Model 1: $b = 0.31, p < 0.05$; Model 2: $b = 0.34, p < 0.05$) are more likely to use ethnic-language media more often, as shown in Figure 4.4. Hypothesis 4 (c) is also supported.26

Figure 4.4. Predictive Marginal Effects of National Origin Descriptor Strength on Ethnic Audiences’ Likelihood to Use Spanish-language Media More (Dataset: 2006 LNS)

Note: Average marginal effects are calculated using Model 1 (see Table 4.1).

26 For the analyses of 2006 LNS data, I also ran the same models with the addition of interaction terms between ethnic self and the strength of these self-identities. However, no interaction terms are statistically significant, revealing no evidence that the effect of ethnic self is conditional on the strength of their self-identities, after controlling for the other factors. As shown in Appendix H, however, there are noteworthy interaction effects between ethnic self and its strength. As no consistent patterns hold after controlling for confounding variables, these interaction effects are not discussed in this paper. Additionally, I ran models with interaction terms between ethnic self and a series of assimilation indicators – i.e., foreign born, English dominants, U.S. education, and length of residence in U.S., but none of these interaction effects are statistically significant ($p < .05$). These inconsistent and insignificant interaction effects exclude the possibility that the ethnic self impact is conditional on other confounding variables such as English proficiency, suggesting solid and strong effect of ethnic self on ethnic media selectivity. As this study is a preliminary examination of the ethnic self impact, these interaction effects are not reported.
Discussion and Conclusion

The news media are an important component of democratic citizenry. Among many explanations for mixed media effects, audience members’ selective exposure stands out as an increasingly predominant one given the fragmentation of media environment (Prior, 2013). With greater media choice, individuals can engage in more insular news consumption if they choose by selecting media with attitudinally consistent information (Bennett & Iyengar, 2008).

This chapter indicates that ethnic audiences’ self-identity is a strong predictor for their media selectivity. The results add an interesting layer to work on selective exposure by investigating the linkage between ethnic audiences’ self-identities and use of English- and ethnic-language media. Here I apply the logic of selective exposure to the self-identification among ethnic groups, thus expanding self-identity’s relevance to media selectivity beyond the political (also see Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Stroud, 2011).

These findings make an important contribution in light of implicit aspects of the debate on immigration in the U.S. Critics charge that some immigrants choose to assimilate more than others. A result is that various incentives for acculturation are often proposed and hotly debated. Recent changes to the contemporary media environment add another interesting layer of possible influences on acculturation. The exponential growth and fragmentation of the media mean that predispositions of any kind – including cultural – are catered to by the dizzying array of media choice. High media choice environments make it easier for individuals to access content congruent with their predispositions (Iyengar & Hahn, 2009; Stroud, 2011), and here I show that identity-based media selections are not limited to political. Ethnic media are experiencing similar rates of rapid proliferation and fragmentation (Pew Research Center, 2011) and are known to
cover political events and issues distinctly from mainstream English-language media outlets (Branton & Dunaway, 2008).

Ethnic media are already thought to reinforce ties between immigrants and their nations of origin (Matsaganis, Katz, & Ball-Rokeach, 2010). This study shows that ethnic identity is a significant predictor of choosing non-English media sources across a host of media platforms and two distinct ethnic groups. It seems quite likely that selective exposure to ethnic or home nation media can reinforce ethnic identities and curb assimilation. These findings do not suggest that immigrants are choosing to assimilate or to avoid assimilation. Rather, they suggest that ethnic identity influences media choice and that future research should investigate whether the choices made among the many available media options have important reinforcing or attenuating effects on ethnic identity.

With consistent findings revealed by the analyses of two datasets related to two ethnic groups, this chapter provides robust evidence that ethnic audiences’ media selectivity is a function of their self-identification, which is also consistent with implications of previous observational studies (e.g., Knobloch-Westerwick & Hastall, 2010). However, selective exposure also reinforces identities (Stroud 2010, 2011). It is less likely to arouse or form a new identity. While I contend that one’s perception of identification precedes his/her media selectivity, media selectivity may affect the strength of their identities as well. As such, the temporal precedence issue might exist for the strength of ethnic self but not for ethnic self. Despite that, more research is needed for improving causality and generalization. Replication is encouraged to investigate whether the same pattern holds among other groups, and absent the known biases of self-
reported media use. Experimental studies would provide better understanding of the specific mechanisms underlying this relationship, apart from their advantages in causality. While it is rational to assume cognitive dissonance as the theoretical basis, lab experiments with varied manipulations can examine whether it is a viable explanation. Additionally, as individuals’ self reports often overstate the phenomenon of media selectivity (Prior, 2013), natural experiments or quasi experiments are also encouraged to see whether ethnic self can predict ethnic audiences’ realistic selectivity of English- versus native-language media. The next chapter thus employs a survey experiment to improve causal inferences regarding the impact of ethnic self on ethnic audiences’ media selectivity.

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27 As most surveys, the 2006 LNS and 2008 NAAS seem to have certain problems with the construction and wording of survey questions. However, an exhaustive search showed a lack of observational data that fit the scope of this study. Comparatively, the 2006 LNS and 2008 NAAS are two open-source datasets that provide a fair amount of information regarding the media selectivity of two largest ethnic groups, which also allowed scholars to explore other behavior of ethnic populations (see Duggal, 2011; Lee, 2011).
CHAPTER 5. EXPERIMENTAL EXAMINATION OF ETHNIC SELECTIVE EXPOSURE

Chapter 4 reveals preliminary evidence for the assumption that ethnic audiences tend to choose media congruent with their most salient ethnic identity. In terms of both Latino and Asian American audiences, their media preference is related to their ethnic identity: relative to those who identify themselves as Americans, those who claim pan-ethnic or national origin descriptors are less likely to use English-language media despite of the mixed evidence regarding their tendency to crave ethnic-language media.

Yet, as discussed earlier, these findings are insufficient to draw causal inference. To that end, an empirical test needs to meet another two conditions: first, ethnic audiences’ ethnic identity occurs before their media preference; and second, the identity-media selectivity relationship is not attributed to other factors.

Selective exposure behaviors do not predate the presence of ethnic identity. Social identity categorizes an individual with others who share common attributes like sex, race, ethnicity, and nationality (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). According to Tajfel (1981), social identity is a result of people’s need for positive distinctiveness between in-group and out-group members. It thus derives from category salience (Huddy, 2001), with categories being developed by prototypical characteristics abstracted from their members (Turner, 1985). As the nature of group prototype is hardly altered (Huddy, 1997), scholars have contended that “social identity such as partisan and ethnic identity demonstrate remarkable stability over time when accessed in surveys on social and political topics, and they are much more stable than a range of other social and political attitudes” (Huddy, 2001, p. 147). Consistent with this argument, Stroud (2011) also concludes that within the field of political communication, “decades of research on media effects have not provided strong evidence that
the media are capable of dramatically changing citizens’ partisan and ideological attachments” (p. 64). This stable nature of ethnic identity and the other social identities (Huddy, 1997; 2001) as well as the lack of evidence for the influence of media selection on social identity (Stroud, 2011) help to address concerns that the temporal order between ethnic identity and ethnic selective exposure is reversed.

Regarding the spuriousness of the relationship between ethnic identity and media selection, Chapter 4 has made an effort to control for the impact of respondents’ demographics, their habitual media use, and other motivations that may contribute to a preference for English-versus ethnic-language media. Especially given that the analyses of the 2006 LNS and 2008 NAAS data controlled for distinctive confounding variables but still revealed relative consistent results, this lends more credibility to the robustness of the empirical findings. Yet as with other analyses of cross-sectional data, Chapter 4 still fails to rule out the influence of the other unmeasured or unobserved factors. For example, in terms of the respondents in these two national surveys, did they have access to the same media options? According to Sears and Freedman (1967), an access to the same information is a prerequisite to draw any conclusions that people are selectively exposed to likeminded information. While the 2006 LNS and 2008 NAAS surveys asked respondents whether they mostly relied on English- or ethnic-language media for news, neither took into account whether the respondents had access to both types of media in the localities of residence.

This chapter seeks to examine the ethnic selective exposure hypothesis with survey experiments. The use of experiments is advantageous in multiple ways: First, by eliciting a more salient American identity versus a more salient ethnic identity, the experimental study helps to resolve the temporal order puzzle, such that people’s ethnic identity occurs before their media
selectivity. Second, as all participants are asked to choose their most preferable media from the same set of options, it helps exclude the possibility that unequal media resources are a potential confounder. Third, with random assignment, the experimental studies also help to rule out the influence of other unobserved factors that may result in spuriousness. Last but not least, while extant scholarly work suggests the “American” feature of the mainstream English-language media as well the “ethnic” feature of ethnic-language media, we do not know to what extent ethnic audiences perceive English- and ethnic-language media as their in-group members. Thus, the survey experiment also delves into ethnic audiences’ attitudes toward both media, which would not only provide further support for the in-group member assumption, but also allow an empirical examination of whether ethnic audiences’ selective exposure to English- versus ethnic-language media is conditional on their perception of English- and ethnic-language media’s affinity to the American or ethnic groups.

**Experimental Design**

This experimental study employs a traditional design commonly used in political communication research, as displayed in Figure 5.1.

![Experimental Design Diagram](image)

Figure 5.1. Experimental Design for Exploring Ethnic Audience’s Media Preference
Participants first completed a pretest questionnaire about demographics, U.S. citizenship and residence, habitual media use, and attitudes toward U.S. and ethnic media. Next, they were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions: one treatment condition where participants were asked about good experience and another treatment condition where they were asked about bad experience living in the United States, as well as a control condition that employs no experimental stimulus. Afterward, participants were asked to complete a posttest survey that measures the outcome under investigation – media preference, and manipulation check variables such as emotion and salience of ethnic identity.

**Participants and Recruitment Criteria**

This study focuses on ethnic audiences’ media preference, for which non-student participants are recruited from Qualtrics Panel. One attractive aspect of using Qualtrics Panel is that Qualtrics employs a speeding check to ensure the quality of survey response. It first conducted a soft launch to estimate the median time for completion; with that, surveys completed within one-third the median soft launch – less than 4 minutes – are then automatically terminated as they may not be responding thoughtfully.

Qualtrics distributed an initial recruitment to its temporary workers in the Latino Panel, inviting them to take part in a study about “the experiences and opinions of Latinos/Hispanics.” After providing an online consent, they were first asked three screening questions inquiring into their “self-identified Latino/Hispanic identity,” “current residents of the United States,” and “bilingual speakers of both English and Spanish.” These three criteria are used to maximize sample representativeness, as the population of interest in this study is ethnic audiences who are bilingual speakers residing in host nations i.e., the United States. Only those who meet all three
requirements were allowed to continue the survey; otherwise they were informed “they do not qualify to take this study” with their participation terminated.

Two recruitments were conducted: first, a total of 82 Latino adults were recruited on October 18th and 19th for the purpose of a pilot test; from December 4th to 8th, another 225 participants were recruited for a full examination of proposed hypotheses. In both rounds, the recruitment procedure followed the above criteria, except that the second recruitment also purposively excluded those who had participated in the pilot study.

For the pilot test, a total of 174 participants were invited to take this study. After answering three screening questions, however, only 82 were eligible to participate. The recruitment rate was 47.13%. Out of 82 participants, males (55%) slightly outnumbered females (45%). Recruits’ ages ranged from 23 to 81, with an average of 45 (SD = 13.10). For education level, 72.50% had some college or four year college and above degree. Sixty-three percent (63.5%) of participants were born in the United States, the other 37.5% were born in other nations. Of the non-U.S. born participants, all were either already U.S. citizens, or currently applying for or planning to apply for U.S. citizenship; in addition, the average years living in the United States was 27.12 (SD = 14.55) for all participants combined.

A total of 454 participants were invited to take this study in December. After the screening questions, only 225 were eligible to participate. The recruitment rate was 49.56%. Out of the 225 eligible Latino participants, 66.07% were female. Ages ranged from 15 to 78, with an average of 42 (SD = 13.68). Seventy-three percent (72.89%) of participants had some college or four year college and above degree. Sixty-six percent (65.78%) were born in the United States. Among the 34.22% who were born in other nations, the average number of years of living in the United States was 21 (Range: 1-56; SD = 14.90). Eighty eight percent (87.95%) were already
U.S. citizens, 12.05% were currently applying, 10.71% were planning to apply for U.S. citizenship, and 1.79% had no plan for U.S. citizenship. Also see Appendix J for a full review of demographic variables, measurement, and descriptive statistics.

**Treatment and Stimulus**

The predictors of interest in this study are ethnic identity – ethnic audiences’ identification of their most salient identity as American versus a member of minority ethnic group (e.g., Latino), as well as the strength of each identity descriptor. The design of stimulus is intended to elicit variation in the strength of ethnic identity, focusing on American and pan-ethnic identities.

Ethnic identity is remarkably stable over time (e.g., Huddy, 1997, 2001; Stroud, 2011). Ethier and Deaux (1994) conducted a longitudinal study of Hispanic students, who were asked about their ethnic identity at three different time points over a one-year cycle. Their results revealed support for the stability of ethnic identity. Latino students consistently claimed Hispanic as their most salient identity (87%, 83%, and 86% at three time points, respectively). Some nuances are worthy of attention; for example, Latinos students are found to maintain their ethnic identity through two distinctive approaches: for people with an initially strong Hispanic identity, the strength of their ethnic identity got stronger through their frequent participation in cultural activities; in contrast, students with an initially weak Hispanic identity perceived more threat in the environment and thus decreased the degree of attachment to Hispanic identity. These findings lead to their conclusion that ethnic identity is relatively stable in the general sense or aggregate level, but the salience or strength of a given identity can still be affected by situational cues (Ethier & Deaux, 1994).
Indeed, “there is continued disagreement among researchers on the relative stability and fluidity of social and political identities…. Social identity researchers tend to emphasize the fluidity of identity, highlighting how identities change with social context” (Huddy, 2001, P. 147). The fact that identities vary in salience at different points in time is strongly supported by much of the work in the fields of social psychology and political communication (e.g., Deaux & Major, 1987; Oakes, 1987; Huddy, 1997; Junn & Masuoka, 2008; Benjamin, Choi, & Strickland, 2007). Experimental manipulations have successfully yielded differences in the strength of ethnic identity. For example, Huddy (1997) found the salience of women participants’ feminist identity greatly varied when “feminist” was included in the experimental news stimulus about the women’s movement—the salience of their feminist identity was enhanced among women who liked feminists, and it was dampened among those who opposed feminists.

In another study, Benjamin, Choi, and Strickland (2007) sought to prime ethnic identity by Asian American participants to a “background questionnaire” inquiring into their ethnicity, language preference, generations of family residing in the United States, and opinions in living with people of the same or different races. By contrast, another half participants were assigned to a control condition where they were asked placebo questions about school meal plan and cable TV subscription. Their results showed Asian identity was more salient among participants responding to “background questionnaire” than those in the control group (also see Shih, Pittinsky, & Ambady, 1999 for the same original manipulation).

The primary purpose of my experimental treatment is to elicit differences in participants’ most salient ethnic identity in the moment. To that end, this experiment employs an open-ended question as stimulus. Open-ended response question is advantageous in many ways. First, it allows for a thorough recall and reasoning process, such that participants can be more engaged
with treatment manipulation. Second, relative to text/news stimulus that often simulates one or several scenarios, open-ended response is more inclusive to incorporate as many different scenarios the participants may encounter. In the case of eliciting differences in the salience/strength of ethnic identity, this two merits are especially beneficial, given the fact that ethnic populations may encounter various situations that would affect the degree to which they feel attached to American versus ethnic identity.

The exact same open-ended question was used for both treatment conditions, with the manipulation varying only by asking about participants’ either good experience or bad experience living in the United States. Specifically, participants in “good experience” condition were told “Now please share some of your good experiences living in the United States. Were there any moments when you felt a part of American society or included by other Americans? Please tell us something about those good moments. There is no space or time limit. Also, please don't worry about grammar or spelling. Please write down anything that comes to your mind.” On the other hand, those in “bad experience” condition were told “Now please share some of your bad experiences living in the United States. Were there any moments when you felt excluded by American society or other Americans because you are Latino/Hispanic? Please tell us something about those bad moments. There is no space or time limit. Also, please don't worry about grammar or spelling. Please write down anything that comes to your mind.” Participants in control condition were not exposed to any treatment/stimulus.

By asking participants about their bad versus good experience, the expectation is that they would differ in their emotions toward the U.S. and thus vary in terms of the salience of their American identity. Specifically, participants who were asked about their good experience living in the United States would recall the moments they felt being included in the U.S. and proud of
the nation, thus they are more likely to perceive American as their most salient identity. By contrast, when asked about their bad experience in which they were excluded, participants may feel angry at the U.S. and thus more distant from the American identity.

**Variables and Measurement**

**Outcome Variables**

The primary dependent variable is ethnic audiences’ media preference. This study includes two sets of dummy variables capturing ethnic audiences’ preference for U.S./English-language media versus ethnic/ethnic-language media (where 1 = U.S. media and 0 = ethnic media), one by media platforms and the other by needs.

The first set of outcome variables looks at ethnic audiences’ media preference, by different platforms. In posttest survey, participants were asked “which of the following [Media] (specific media type inserted here, including TV, newspapers, and news websites) do you feel like reading right now? Please choose one that you most prefer to read at this moment. If you do not recognize the [Media], try to make a decision based on its name.”

The first, (U.S. Newspaper), captures participants’ immediate preference for U.S. newspapers over ethnic newspapers. Participants were provided several options, such that those who chose “The New York Times” or “Washington Post” were coded as “preference for U.S. newspapers;” by contrast, those who chose “El Nuevo Día” or “El Nuevo Herald” were coded as “preference for ethnic newspapers.”

The second, (U.S. TV), captures participants’ immediate preference for U.S. TV news programs over ethnic TV programs. Again, a set of options were provided, such that participants who chose “CBS News” or “NBC News” were coded as “preference for U.S. TV news;” on the
other hand, those who chose “Univision” or “Telemundo” were coded as “preference for ethnic TV news.”

And the third, (U.S. News Sites), captures participants’ immediate preference for U.S. news websites over ethnic news websites. Similarly, participants were asked to choose one from a given set of options, with those who chose “Washingtonpost.com” or “CNN.com” coded as “preference for U.S. news sites;” otherwise they were coded as “preference for ethnic news sites” if participants chose “ElNuevoHerald.com” or “Univision.com.”

The other set of outcome variables capture ethnic audiences’ immediate media preference, by different types of need. In posttest survey, participants were told “Suppose you are asked to use one of the following outlets for [Need] (specific media type inserted here, including political news and entertainment), which one do you feel like using right now? Please choose an outlet that you most prefer to use at this moment. If you do not recognize the outlet, try to make a decision based on its name.”

The first, (U.S. Media for Political News), captures participants’ media preference for political news. Participants were provided several options, such that those who chose “CBS News,” “CNN News,” or “The New York Times” were coded as “prefer using U.S. media for political news;” by contrast, participants who chose “Telemundo,” “El Nuevo Herald,” or “Univision.com” were coded as “prefer using ethnic media for political news.”

The other variable, (U.S. Media for Entertainment), captures participants’ media preference for entertainment. Again, participants were asked to choose from a set of options, with those who chose “HGTV network,” “Animal Planet network,” or “GOLF” coded as “prefer using U.S. media for entertainment;” otherwise participants were coded as “prefer using ethnic media for entertainment” if they chose “ESPN Spanish,” “Telemundo” or Univision.com.”
Manipulation Check Variables

To examine the effectiveness of manipulation/treatment, this study employs two sets of variables, with one capturing ethnic audiences’ emotions\(^{28}\) and the other capturing their most salient identity. All manipulation check variables were measured in the posttest survey.

The first variable, (Emotion toward U.S./Americans) captures feelings about U.S. society. Participants were asked to rate on a 0-4 scale (where 0 = not at all and 4 = very much) regarding their different emotions toward American society or Americans, including “Angry,” “Enthusiastic,” “Proud,” “Outraged,” “Anxious,” and “Worried.”\(^{29}\) For analysis, three emotion indicators were created: (a) “Anger at Americans” is an average of “Angry” and “Outraged” at Americans \((r = 0.76; \text{Range: } 0-4, \text{M} = 1.20, \text{SD} = 1.20)\); (b) “Anxiety at Americans” is an average of “Anxious” and “Worried” at Americans \((r = 0.76; \text{Range: } 0-4, \text{M} = 1.67, \text{SD} = 1.33)\); and (c) “Enthusiasm at Americans” is an average of “Enthusiastic” and “Proud” at Americans \((r = 0.73; \text{Range: } 0-4, \text{M} = 1.61, \text{SD} = 1.26)\).

The second, (Emotion toward Latinos) captures ethnic audiences’ various feelings about the Latinos/Hispanics as a group. Again, participants were asked to rate on a 0-4 scale (where 0 = not at all and 4 = very much) about “how do you feel, right now, about Latinos/Hispanics living in the U.S.” including “Angry,” “Enthusiastic,” “Proud,” “Outraged,” “Anxious,” and “Worried.”\(^{30}\) Following the same rule as discussed above, (a) “Anger at Latinos” is an average of “Angry” and “Outraged” at Latinos \((r = 0.70; \text{Range: } 0-4, \text{M} = 0.76, \text{SD} = 1.08)\); (b) “Anxiety

\(^{28}\) Note that emotion battery was not included in pilot study.

\(^{29}\) The order of all these emotions were randomized to minimize question order effect and increase internal validity.

\(^{30}\) The order of all these emotions were randomized to minimize question order effect and increase internal validity.
at Latinos” is an average of “Anxious” and “Worried” at Latinos ($r = 0.75$; Range: 0-4, M = 1.52, SD = 1.36); and (c) “Enthusiasm at Latinos” is an average of “Enthusiastic” and “Proud” at Latinos ($r = 0.61$; Range: 0-4, M = 2.05, SD = 1.25).

In addition, (Post-treatment Most Salient Identity) captures ethnic audiences’ most salient identity after treatment. One question was borrowed from the 2006 Latino National Survey to measure this variable. Participants were asked “in the U.S., we use a number of items to describe ourselves ethnically. The first is ‘American,’ the second one is ‘Latino/Hispanic American,’ the third one is ‘pan ethnic (i.e., Latino, Hispanic), and the fourth is ‘national origin descriptor (i.e., Mexican or Cuban).’ Of these items, which best describes you?” For analysis, a dummy variable was created, with 1 representing “American as best descriptor in posttest” and 0 representing “the other non-American identities as best descriptor in posttest” (i.e., Latino/Hispanic American, Latino/Hispanic, and national origin descriptor).

Control Variable

To allow a further examination of the changes in ethnic audiences’ most salient identity, this study also takes into account participants’ most salient identity before exposure to treatment. This control variable, (Pre-treatment Most Salient American Identity) was measured using the same identity question as shown above. Again, a dummy variable was created, with 1 representing “American as best descriptor in pretest” and 0 representing “the other non-American identities as best descriptor in pretest” (i.e., Latino/Hispanic American, Latino/Hispanic, and national origin descriptor).

Other Variables of Interest

Despite the argument that American media primarily target mainstream U.S. audiences while ethnic media often tailor to the tastes and interests of ethnic groups (e.g., Abrajano &
Singh, 2009), there is little empirical examination of whether and how the public agree with this argument. This study also includes two variables that inquire into ethnic audiences’ perception of U.S. versus ethnic media in pre-test survey.

Specifically, (U.S. Media Membership) captures the degree to which ethnic audiences consider English-language media as media for mainstream U.S. audiences. Participants were asked to rate on a seven-point scale (where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree) regarding their agreement with four statements: “Most English-language media are owned by Americans,” “In general, English-language media targets Americans,” “In general, the news content of English-language media is about Americans and U.S. politics,” and “When reporting news, English-language media often favor Americans over Latinos/Hispanics” (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.80). As a result, (U.S. Media Membership) is measured as an average of these four items (Range: 1-7, M = 5.11, SD = 1.17).

Following this rule, the other variable (Ethnic Media Membership) captures the degree to which ethnic audiences consider Spanish-language media as media for Latino/Hispanic audiences, which is also measured as an average of their agreement with four items: “Most Spanish-language media are owned by Latinos/Hispanics (i.e., Mexicans),” “In general, Spanish-language media's target audience is Latino/Hispanic audiences (i.e., Mexicans),” “In general, the news content of Spanish-language media is about Latinos/Hispanics (i.e., Mexicans) and politics related to their country of origin,” and “When reporting news, Spanish-language media often favor Latinos/Hispanics over Americans” (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.76; Range: 1-7, M = 4.85, SD = 1.17).
Randomization and Manipulation Check

Experimental studies attain causal inference by randomly assigning participants to different treatments, such that all experimental conditions are equivalent by all means except the manipulated treatment. As a result, any observed difference in outcomes is attributed to treatments only. Thus random assignment and the manipulation of treatments are two crucial procedures for experiments.

Randomization Check

Random assignment is used to ensure the treatment and control conditions have equivalent characteristics except for the manipulated treatments, so that the experimental study is more likely to yield causal inference (Gerber et al., 2014). Thus I first examine if the random assignment works as expected. The results are presented in Table 5.1, which reveal evidence for a successful randomization procedure.

Table 5.1. Randomization Check

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Good Experience</th>
<th>Bad Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.01(0.01)</td>
<td>0.01(0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0.18(0.37)</td>
<td>0.41(0.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Born</td>
<td>0.28(0.35)</td>
<td>0.29(0.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Attainment</td>
<td>-0.01(0.14)</td>
<td>-0.14(0.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.43(0.82)</td>
<td>-0.02(0.81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>224</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LR $\chi^2$</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob &gt; $\chi^2$</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: This randomization check is for the full launch in December, 2016. The left-out comparison group for “Good Experience” and “Bad Experience” conditions is control condition. Male and “Foreign-born” are dichotomous, while age and education are continuous variables. As demographic variables showed no significant influence on the probability of assigning participants to any conditions, the assignment was random.

Manipulation Check

Next I examine whether the treatment/manipulation does result in difference in ethnic identity, which is the primary independent variable. Two approaches were employed: one uses a
human-coding to ensure participants’ recall of bad/good experience was valid, and the other
examines the intent-to-treat effect by looking at two indicators. Both procedures are discussed
below.

First, participants’ responses to the open-ended stimulus question were manually coded to
ensure their responses were valid, such that participants in “bad experience” condition recalled
bad moments of feeling excluded and those in “good experience” condition recalled good
moments of feeling included in U.S. society. This human-coding task was completed by the
author, which purposively excluded cases that failed to recall bad/good experience. Examples of
invalid responses to “bad experience” condition include: “not sure/don’t know” or “I’ve never
had any bad experience of being excluded or isolated.” As a result, 25 out of 81 cases (30.86%)
in pilot study and 51 out of 225 (22.67%) in the Latino study were coded as “invalid treatment
response.” These cases were not included for analysis.

Second, this study examines intent-to-treat effect using two indicators: (a) participants’
anger emotion at Americans/the U.S., and (b) their most salient cultural identity. Recall that we
expect good experience to arouse ethnic populations’ favorable feeling of the U.S., while bad
experience may elicit their anger at the nation. A set of analysis of variance (ANOVA) models
were conducted to examine whether the three experimental conditions differed in terms of their
emotions, especially their anger emotion at the U.S.

As shown in Table 5.2, there was not difference in most emotions such as anxiety or
enthusiasm, except the anger emotion at Americans ($F[2, 160] = 5.27, p < 0.01$). Specifically, as
Figure 5.2 demonstrates, relative to participants who were asked about their good experience of
feeling included in the U.S. (M = 1.01), those who shared their bad experience of feeling
excluded (M = 1.39) were significantly angrier at Americans, though these two conditions did

85
not differ from the control condition. This yields evidence that asking ethnic populations to recall their good versus bad experience living in the U.S. results in a difference in their anger emotion at the nation or Americans.

Table 5.2. ANOVA Models Predicting Participants’ Emotions about the U.S. and Latino Group, by Experimental Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anger at Latinos</td>
<td>$F(2, 160) = 0.84$</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety at Latinos</td>
<td>$F(2, 160) = 0.87$</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm at Latinos</td>
<td>$F(2, 160) = 0.93$</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger at Americans</td>
<td>$F(2, 160) = 5.27^{**}$</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety at Americans</td>
<td>$F(2, 160) = 0.77$</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm at Americans</td>
<td>$F(2, 160) = 0.93$</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All dependent variables are measured as an average of two items. $^{**}p < 0.01$ are drawn from two-tailed tests.

Figure 5.2. Anger at U.S. and Americans, by Experimental Conditions
Note: “Anger at Americans” is measured as an average of two items ($r = 0.76$; Range: 0-4, $M = 1.20$, SD = 1.20).

Next I investigate whether three experimental conditions vary in terms of their most salient cultural identity. In both pre- and post-test surveys, participants were asked to choose their best identity descriptor and their responses were recoded into two dummies, with 1 representing “American as best descriptor” and 0 representing “the other non-American
identities as best descriptor” (i.e., Latino/Hispanic American, Latino/Hispanic, and national origin descriptor). Thus two sets of binary logistic regression models were conducted to examine the variance in most salient cultural identity across three experimental conditions, with one using the October pilot data and the other using the December Latino data. Both models included “pre-treatment most salient identity” as a control variable, given the fact that most people’s identity can be quite stable (Huddy, 1997) such that their pre-treatment identity may influence post-treatment response. Results are displayed in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3. Binary Logistic Regression Models Predicting Participants’ Most Salient Cultural Identity, by Experimental Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pilot Study (October, 2016)</th>
<th>Latino Study (December, 2016)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control Condition</td>
<td>0.43(0.84)</td>
<td>0.86(0.69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Experience Condition</td>
<td>0.47(0.98)</td>
<td>0.92(0.69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-treatment Most Salient American Identity</td>
<td>2.84(1.06)**</td>
<td>3.31(0.69)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2.44(0.57)***</td>
<td>-2.73(0.60)***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald $\chi^2$</td>
<td>7.22#</td>
<td>23.28***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo $R^2$</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Entries are coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. The reference group for “control” and “good experience” conditions is “bad experience condition.” Both pre- and post-treatment most salient identity variables are dummies, with 1 representing “American as best descriptor in posttest” and 0 representing “the other non-American identities as best descriptor in posttest” (i.e., Latino/Hispanic American, Latino/Hispanic, and national origin descriptor).

$# p < 0.10$, $* p < 0.05$, $** p < 0.01$, and $*** p < 0.001$.

As expected, relative to participants in “bad experience” condition, those in the control (Pilot Study: $b = 0.43$; Latino Study: $b = 0.86$) and “good experience” (Pilot Study: $b = 0.47$; Latino Study: $b = 0.92$) conditions tend more likely to choose “American” as their most salient identity. These differences are not statistically significant, because the $p$-values were not smaller.
than 0.05. This may be largely attributed to insufficient analysis power, as both studies had a small sample size (n = 56 for pilot test and n = 174 for Latino study).

However, there was a remarkable difference in terms of the predicted probability in choosing American as a most salient identity. Figure 5.3 displays the predicted probability regarding participants who did not choose “American” as their best descriptor in pretest only. As shown on the left, in pilot study, the predicted probability in choosing American as a most salient identity after the treatment was 13% for people in good experience condition, which is 4% larger than that of the bad experience condition. The difference is much larger in the Latino Study, which is shown on the right side – as it displays, the predicted probability for the good experience condition (ȳ = 16%) doubles that for the bad experience condition (ȳ = 7%).

Thus these findings still reveal evidence that it is reasonable to assume good experience would increase ethnic audiences’ attachment to American identity, while bad experience may reduce their likelihood to choose American as a best descriptor. This also suggests that the
“good/bad experience” treatment did work to arouse difference in ethnic audiences’ most salient cultural identity – the primary independent variable in this study.

**Results and Findings**

Now that we know participants’ most salient identity is what we would expect it to be following the personal experience prime, we can proceed to see if participants in the various priming conditions were more likely to choose English-language/U.S. media or Spanish-language/ethnic media. Recall the “ethnic selective exposure” hypothesis (H1): relative to ethnic audiences who identify themselves as Americans, those identifying themselves as pan-ethnic or national origin residents are less likely to use English-language media.

**Ethnic Audiences’ Perception of U.S. versus Ethnic Media**

A conventional argument is that ethnic audiences or the general public would perceive U.S. media and ethnic media with different viewership, such that U.S. or English-language media primarily target the mainstream English-speaking American audiences while ethnic or ethnic-language media focus on ethnic groups (e.g., Shi, 2009; Abrajano & Singh, 2009). This study examines this argument empirically, to investigate whether it holds among the public.

As shown above, two variables – Ethnic Media Membership and U.S. Media Membership – were measured by asking participants a set of questions. Descriptive statistics reveal ethnic audiences’ strong agreement with these two media’s distinctive target audiences and functions: on a seven-point scale (where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree), the average was 5.11 for U.S. media membership and 4.85 for ethnic media membership. This reveals empirical evidence for the differentiated membership of U.S. and ethnic media.
Ethnic Audiences’ Preference for U.S. versus Ethnic Media

Now we look at ethnic audiences’ media preference by three conditions. As Table 5.4 displays, there was not a very consistent pattern: in both the pilot and Latino studies, while participants in the “good experience” condition were more likely to choose certain U.S. media than the other two conditions, they were also less likely to choose some U.S. media i.e., TV news programs.

Table 5.4. Descriptive Patterns of Latino Audiences’ Preference for U.S. over Ethnic Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Latino Study (N=163)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>83.82%</td>
<td>67.65%</td>
<td>76.47%</td>
<td>82.35%</td>
<td>60.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Experience</td>
<td>88.23%</td>
<td>62.75%</td>
<td>88.24%</td>
<td>94.12%</td>
<td>78.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad Experience</td>
<td>79.55%</td>
<td>63.64%</td>
<td>70.45%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>63.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pilot Study (N=55)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>96.15%</td>
<td>65.38%</td>
<td>80.80%</td>
<td>73.08%</td>
<td>68.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Experience</td>
<td>88.24%</td>
<td>76.47%</td>
<td>58.82%</td>
<td>88.24%</td>
<td>35.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad Experience</td>
<td>83.33%</td>
<td>91.67%</td>
<td>83.33%</td>
<td>83.33%</td>
<td>58.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Cases for analysis excluded those who failed to offer valid response to stimulus question.

However, these descriptive patterns are insufficient to test the “ethnic selective exposure” hypothesis. Thus I conducted five sets of binary logistic regression analyses to examine it, given that all dependent variables are dummies with 1 representing “preference for U.S. media” and 0 representing “preference for ethnic media.” As shown in Table 5.5 and Table 5.6, the results revealed mixed findings regarding the “ethnic selective exposure” hypothesis. Provided that participants in “good experience” and control conditions were more likely to choose American as most salient identity, in general they also demonstrated a stronger intention to choose U.S. media over ethnic/Spanish-language media, though most of these comparisons were not statistically significant.
Table 5.5. Latino Audiences’ Preference for U.S. over Ethnic Media, by Media Platform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>TV News Programs</th>
<th>News Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good Experience</td>
<td>0.66(0.57)</td>
<td>-0.04(0.43)</td>
<td>1.15(0.55)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>0.29(0.50)</td>
<td>0.18(0.41)</td>
<td>0.31(0.44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.36(0.37)**</td>
<td>0.56(0.31) #</td>
<td>0.87(0.33)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald χ²</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>5.01#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R²</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data for analysis are drawn from the December Latino Study only, and cases that failed to offer valid response to stimulus question were excluded for analysis. Entries are coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. The reference group for “control” and “good experience” conditions is “bad experience condition.” All dependent variables are dummies, with 1 representing “preference for U.S. media” and 0 representing “preference for ethnic media.” # p < 0.10, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, and *** p < 0.001.

Table 5.6. Latino Audiences’ Preference for U.S. over Ethnic Media, by Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Media for Political Information</th>
<th>Media for Entertainment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good Experience</td>
<td>1.67(0.69)*</td>
<td>0.73(0.46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>0.44(0.47)</td>
<td>-0.14(0.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.10(0.35)**</td>
<td>0.56(0.31)#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald χ²</td>
<td>7.39*</td>
<td>4.81#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R²</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Data for analysis are drawn from the December Latino Study only, and cases that failed to offer valid response to stimulus question were excluded for analysis. Entries are coefficients with robust standard errors in parentheses. The reference group for “control” and “good experience” conditions is “bad experience condition.” All dependent variables are dummies, with 1 representing “preference for U.S. media” and 0 representing “preference for ethnic media.” # p < 0.10, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, and *** p < 0.001.

One of the most remarkable findings was related to Latino audiences’ preference for news sites: relative to the “bad experience” condition where people were less likely to choose American as their most salient identity, Latino audiences in the “good experience” condition were significantly more likely to choose U.S. news sites over ethnic news sites (b = 1.15, p < 0.05). When translated into predicted probability – as Figure 5.4 demonstrates – there was an
88% chance that Latino audiences who had good experience and a stronger attachment to American identity would choose U.S. news sites over ethnic news sites, while the predicted probability was 76% for those who had bad experience and were less likely to choose American as a best descriptor. Thus the difference in predicted probability between two conditions was 12%, which was substantive.

Figure 5.4. Predicted Probability of Choosing U.S. News Sites over Ethnic News Sites, by Experimental Conditions

Note: Predicted probability was generated using the December Latino Study data only (N = 163), with cases that failed to offer valid response to stimulus question excluded for analysis.

A similar pattern was also found in terms of Latino audiences’ media preference for political information: relative to those in “bad experience” condition, Latino audiences in “good experience” were more likely to choose American as their best identity descriptor, such that they were also significantly more likely to choose U.S. media when looking for political news ($b = 1.67, p < 0.05$). This translates into about 12% difference in their predicted probability, as Figure 5.5 illustrates: while there was an 94% chance that Latino audiences who had good experience and a stronger attachment to American identity would choose U.S. media over ethnic media for
news about politics and public affairs, that dropped to 82% for those who had bad experience and were less likely to choose American as a best descriptor.

Figure 5.5. Predicted Probability of Choosing U.S. Media over Ethnic Media for Political Information, by Experimental Conditions
Note: Predicted probability was generated using the December Latino Study data only (N = 163), with cases that failed to offer valid response to stimulus question excluded for analysis.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Overall, consistent with findings from the observational analysis (Chapter 4), this Latino experiment also yields support for the “ethnic selective exposure” hypothesis (H1), such that relative to ethnic audiences who identify themselves as Americans, those identifying themselves as pan-ethnic or national origin residents are less likely to use U.S./English-language media. In particular, there was strong evidence in terms of their news sites preference and media preference for political news, despite the inconsistency regarding Latino audiences’ preference for other media platforms or media preference for entertainment. This suggests a consistent story: that is, ethnic audiences’ preference for U.S. media is a function of their strong attachment to the American identity.

This Latino experimental study also shows that we can prime American as a most salient identity by arousing people’s good experiences living in the U.S. While Latino participants all
belong to the broadly defined “Latino” group, they do differ in terms of their most salient identity descriptor (e.g., Latino National Survey, 2006; Asian American National Survey, 2008). By asking them to recall some personal experience, we can change the salience of their different identities. This suggest one’s most salient ethnic identity is stable, but not rigid. Contexts and/or contact influence it. This finding also yields evidence for extant scholarly contention that while an individual may have multiple identity descriptors simultaneously, the salience of these identities differ and only one is his/her most salient identity (see Brewer & Pierce, 2005; Brewer, 2001; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Tajfel, 1981; Turner, 1999). Personal experience is related to ethnic populations and immigrants’ assimilation into the host nation, because good experiences arouse stronger attachments to both American society and the American identity.

Ethnic audiences’ personal experience also affects their affective tag, with bad experiences arousing anger toward Americans and U.S. society. This aligns with Kuo, Malhotra & Mo’s (2017) study, which found that racial rudeness in interpersonal contact can arouse Asian Americans’ anger at U.S. society. Such an influence can be stronger than shown in this experiment, as most people may experience repeated treatment of different types of unfairness in their everyday life. For example, when asked about bad experience of being excluded in this study, one participant said most of the time he/she felt being treated unfairly at workplace. Some ethnic populations may have a much stronger anger emotion or even hatred toward the U.S.

These findings also have important implications for multiculturalism. In our everyday life, good and bad experiences often alternate, which means that we may feel a strong attachment to one identity now but to a different one later. When ethnic populations feel included, they tend to use U.S. media to learn more about U.S. society; when they feel excluded, they may turn to
ethnic media that connects them to their homeland of heritage. Ethnic audiences are often in the dual processes of assimilating into U.S. society while also retaining other cultural values.

The existence of multiple cultural traditions is beneficial in several ways. First, multiculturalism serves as an engine for many immigrants to come to the United States. They appreciate and believe in America’s tolerance for a wide range of religious beliefs and cultures. Also, the existence of multiculturalism helps us learn about and deal with different cultures outside the U.S. Through interactions with other cultures, values, and languages, people not only obtain news perspectives but are more likely to appreciate the U.S. tradition of multiculturalism.

A few caveats need to be addressed. First, this Latino experiment didn’t examine ethnic audiences’ social media preferences. Rapid changes in technology, especially the rise of mobile-based communication (e.g., smartphones and tablets), have given rise to a robust network of ethnic-language social media platforms. For example, WeChat – a globally flourishing Chinese social media platform – is being widely used by members of the Chinese diaspora in the U.S. to maintain ties with their friends and families in China (Makinen, 2016), as well as for developing connections to U.S. politics. According to the 2016 Asian American Voter Survey, 19% of surveyed Chinese Americans posted about politics on various social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) including WeChat. In February, thousands of Chinese Americans from over 40 cities organized a rally against the conviction of NYPD officer Peter Liang, who was convicted in the shooting death of an unarmed black man Akai Gurley in 2014. These protesters were primarily mobilized through WeChat, which is a more efficient and low-cost platform to mobilize protesters than TV and newspapers (Makinen, 2016). Given ethnic audiences’ increasing reliance on both English- and ethnic-language social media, future studies are encouraged to examine
whether “ethnic selective exposure” phenomenon also holds in term of their social media preference.

Another limitation is the external validity. Though survey experiments allow a better control of treatment to maximize causal evidence, the trade-off is its relatively low external validity. In particular, outcome variables in this study were indeed ethnic audiences’ “expressed intention” rather than their actual behavior. Thus it is less certain if ethnic audiences will choose media aligning with their most salient identity in realistic settings. In addition, another aspect points to the generalizability of these findings to some other ethnic group such as Asian Americans. While observational data reveal consistent patterns among both Latino and Asian American groups (see Chapter 4), it is not yet clear whether the same experimental findings can be applied to Asian American audiences. To improve the external validity of experimental findings, two approaches can be incorporated in future research: One is to conduct field experiments, where ethnic audiences can indeed choose between U.S. and ethnic media after treatment. Instead of asking their intention to choose a media outlet, researchers can actually provide them with different media options and observe which one they choose in a more realistic context (e.g., Stroud, 2011). The other is to replicate the Latino experiment on Asian American audiences, so that we can explore whether the same causal inference exists among another ethnic group.
CHAPTER 6. MORE THAN A NICHE: 
ETHNIC AUDIENCES AND SELECTIVE EXPOSURE

As a nation of immigrants, the U.S. encourages the existence of multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism, e.g., an equal representation of discrete and heterogeneous cultures, values, and traditions (Hartmann & Gerteis, 2005). However, this does not mean there is no racial discrimination or exclusion. Immigration remains one of the most important problems facing the nation (Gallup, 2016), with political campaigns and politicians bringing in an increased scrutiny and debate on this issue (Brader, Valentino & Suhay, 2008). Louisiana’s former governor, Bobby Jindal, made a sensational argument that “immigration without assimilation is an invasion.” Colorado’s former Republican congressman Tom Tancredo, criticized immigrants for maintaining connection with country of heritage after migrating to the U.S. On the individual level, although the majority Americans agree that immigrants help strengthen the nation, about 34% believe the newcomers represent a threat to American customs and values (Cooper, Cox, Lienesch, & Jones, 2016). Such contentions often point to the question of whether ethnic populations and immigrants in particular have fully assimilated to the U.S. society.

Even among ethnic populations, the level of assimilation greatly varies. For example, relative to European Americans who are often considered as more prototypical of the American superordinate category, ethnic minority groups (i.e., Asian American or Latinos) not only self-claimed to be less aligned with the definition of American identity, but also were more supportive of pro-minority policies (Huynh, Devos, & Altman, 2015). There is accumulating empirical evidence: according to the 2006 Latino National Survey, while over 80% respondents chose Latino/Hispanic or national origin descriptor (i.e., Mexicans) as a best identity descriptor, only 18.29% self-selected to the American identity. The 2008 Asian American National Survey revealed an even polarized trend – only 3.24% of the surveyed Asian American respondents
chose “American” as their best identity descriptor, with the majority self-identified as Asian, national origin American (i.e., Chinese or Korean American) and national origin resident (i.e., Koreans or Chineses). Similar pattern still persist despite dramatic social changes during the past decade: according to my Latino study (December, 2016), out of 286 Latino participants who responded, only 24 self-chose American as their best identity descriptor (8.39%); by contrast, 140 self-claimed as Latino American (48.95%), 98 as Latino or Hispanic (34.27%), and the other 24 as national origin descriptor (8.39%).

Assimilation thus remains a hot-button issue in U.S. politics. In order to understand the complexity of ethnic populations’ distinct procedures of integrating to American society, my dissertation looks at their differentiated choices of U.S. versus ethnic media. In particular, it concentrates on an “ethnic selective exposure” phenomenon, exploring to what extent is ethnic audiences’ preference for English- versus ethnic-language media systematically biased such that they seek to use media congenial to their most salient ethnic identity. With a focus on both Latino and Asian groups, empirical examinations reveal strong support that ethnic audiences are intended to choose media aligning with their most salient identity.

But what does this “ethnic selective exposure” phenomenon imply for research on political communication, especially for work with a focus on race and ethnicity? For example, while much of the previous work has suggested English-language media can influentially facilitate ethnic populations’ assimilation to the U.S. (e.g., Moon & Park, 2007; Sui & Paul, 2016), does this effect apply to everyone or it only works on people who choose to use English-language media? In addition, how do these findings square with temporal trends? And more importantly, how would this affect democratic consequences including political knowledge and political participation? This chapter answers these questions in turn.
Ethnic Selective Exposure in Political Communication

Mainstream English-language media contributes to social integration by exposing ethnic audiences to American cultures and values (Moon & Park, 2007; Lee & Tse, 1994), by improving English proficiency (Dalisay, 2012), or by encouraging their participation in U.S. politics (Sui & Paul, 2016). However, a not well examined question is the extent to which the mainstream U.S. media can have an influence; for example, is everyone with an access to English-language media engaged in the assimilation procedure, or this media effect is largely constrained to ethnic audiences who actively choose to use mainstream U.S. media? The “ethnic selective exposure” propensity found in this project provides more nuanced insights into this question.

Indeed, these impacts are built upon one important necessary condition – ethnic audiences’ intention to use U.S. media. We are now in a fragmented media environment where inadvertent news consumption rarely happens. We need to take into account individuals’ free choice of media when estimating media effects (see Arceneaux & Johnson, 2013). As this study shows, ethnic audiences who are likely to choose U.S. media over ethnic media are those who tend to identify themselves as Americans. But as discussed above, such populations constitute a small portion, which is often less than 10% (see Latino National Survey, 2008; National Asian American Survey, 2008). This also suggests that the U.S. media are facilitating the assimilation procedure of people who may not really need it, given that American identity can be treated as an indicator for assimilation (see Shi, 2005).

The availability of U.S. media does not serve a major assimilating function, not because of a lack of potential, but because of media choice. The majority of ethnic audiences – who tend to identify themselves as pan-ethnic or national origin descriptors – do not choose U.S. media if
they access to both. Especially in cities where ethnic media quickly flourish and are easily accessible – such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York – most ethnic audiences are more likely to choose ethnic media over U.S. media. Ethnic populations in these cities often live in ethnic neighborhoods (e.g., China towns and Korean towns), and these social or neighborhood contexts can have an effect on socialization (Cho, Gimpel, & Dyck, 2006) such that they are more likely to retain a pan-ethnic or national origin identities by repeatedly exposing themselves to homeland cultures and values. Ethnicity based media selectivity can supplement these in-person behaviors. In addition, these immigration cities are especially attractive to new immigrants who still preserve their national origin identity. As a result, ethnic populations in top immigrant destination cities (e.g., Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Houston) may be least likely to be affected by U.S. media, given that they are motivated by their ethnic cultural identity to easily tune into ethnic media.

**Ethnic Selective Exposure in the Online Environment**

This study reveals many nuances in terms of ethnic audiences’ media selectivity, depending on both the time frames and media platforms. The 2006 and 2008 observational studies reveal a strong correlation between ethnic identity and media preference across a set of media platforms including newspaper, TV, and the Internet (see Chapter 4). The patterns are slightly different when we look at the experimental study: first, there is little relationship between ethnic identity and TV program preference, as the coefficient ($b = -0.04$) was not quite different from zero. When turning to newspaper preference, there was a likelihood that ethnic audiences tended to choose newspapers that were congruent with their most salient cultural identity ($b = 0.66$), even though it was not statistically significant. Again, as discussed in chapter 5, the strongest ethnic selective exposure phenomenon was found regarding ethnic audiences’
news site preference, which translates into about 10% difference in predicted probability of choosing U.S. news sites over ethnic news sites (see Table 5.5 in Chapter 5).

In 2016 the ethnic selective exposure effect seems to be stronger in the online environment than in the traditional media context, though such difference do not exist in the 2006 and 2008 studies. This is actually reflective of contemporary media use patterns; for example, most Americans under 49 years old get news from digital and social media (Mitchell, Gottfried, Barthel, & Shearer, 2016). Latinos and Asians are found to have a much higher smartphone penetration than the other ethnic groups (Kellogg, 2011; Vann, 2011), and they are more likely to use online media for news and information. In terms of the 2016 Latino experiment, as the Latino participants were averagely 42, most of them can be active Internet users who are familiar with online news sites. Hence the growing Internet-only population may explain why I find a stronger ethnic selective exposure effect in the online environment in the 2016 study.

Ethnic selective exposure may also exist in areas where ethnic media do not flourish. In other words, the physical availability of ethnic media – i.e., ethnic-language newspapers or TV programs that are circulated and accessible in ethnic communities – are not any more a necessary condition for ethnic selective exposure. This is because online homeland ethnic-language media are increasingly available to ethnic audiences across the nation, as a result of the emergence of the Internet (Shi, 2009). Online homeland ethnic-language media not only serve as an alternative to mainstream U.S. media and ethnic community media; in fact, they are more influential in

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31 Note that ethnic media may not equal to ethnic-language media. Ethnic media are often regarded as “media by and for ethnics in a host country with content in ethnic languages” (Shi, 2009, p. 599). While homeland ethnic-language media also partially fit this definition, they are established and produce news content in nations other than the U.S. Thus homeland ethnic-language media and ethnic media are not equivalent.
maintaining ethnic audiences’ connection with homeland countries, by providing more news content related to immigrants’ nation of heritage (Shi, 2009). Ethnic populations can still perform selective exposure in the online environment, though not necessarily with traditional media such as TV programs or newspapers.

**Ethnic Audiences’ Selective Exposure versus Avoidance**

Yet ethnic audiences’ selective exposure to U.S. media does not indicate their selective avoidance of ethnic media, and vice versa. Thus even though ethnic audiences can be motivated by their salient American identity to selectively choose mainstream U.S. media for information, they are still likely to use ethnic media.

Selective exposure to likeminded information and selective avoidance of attitudinally-uncongenial information are two distinct techniques for individuals to minimize cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Their functions are different: while exposure to congenial information helps to reduce one’s cognitive dissonance, an avoidance of uncongenial information simply prevents the increase of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Hence a person may not necessarily engage in both procedures when encountering cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). In fact, under certain circumstances – for example, when individuals are highly uncertain about their pre-existing opinions and have a high need for accuracy – they may purposively seek for uncongenial information to justify their rational considerations (Fischer, 2011).

People may not avoid opinion-challenging information despite their preference for attitude-congenial information (Frey, 1986; Garrett, 2009, 2013), and there is accumulative evidence for this argument (e.g., Garrett, Carnahan, & Lynch, 2013; An, Quercia, & Crowcroft, 2013). For example, using secondary survey data, Garrett, Carnahan, and Lynch (2013) found American audiences’ use of attitude-congenial political sources is positively associated with their
use of attitude-discrepant news. This finding holds over time and across various types of online outlets: their analyses of both 2004 and 2008 survey data consistently revealed that the more people use ideologically congruent news sites, the more they are likely to use ideologically discrepant sites. While the strength of partisan ideology moderates the relationship between use of attitude-consistent sources and attitude-discrepant sources, it is still a positive relationship even among those who are strongly committed to their political ideology.

Regarding the ethnic selective exposure phenomenon, there is also a possibility that their selective approach of U.S. media and a selective avoidance of ethnic media – or vice versa – are not intrinsically linked. Indeed, this dissertation primarily focuses on ethnic audiences’ relative preference between U.S. media or ethnic media, such that their preference for one media does not imply their purposive avoidance of the other. This conclusion calls for future research to specify more nuances, i.e., under what conditions does ethnic audiences’ selective avoidance occur?, and what is the role of ethnic identity in shaping ethnic audiences’ propensity to engage in selective avoidance?

Distinguishing between ethnic audiences’ selective approach and avoidance suggests political ramifications. If ethnic audiences consistently use identity-congruent media but avoid identity-incongruent news outlets, they would gravitate toward likeminded news and as a result, merely retaining their connection with either the U.S. or country of heritage, as well as only participating in politics related to one nation. Furthermore, the advantages of acquiring uncongenial information would diminish, i.e., ethnic audiences who purposively avoid U.S. media may lose opportunities to learn better about American cultures and values, and those who systematically avoid ethnic or ethnic-language media would sacrifice the merits of multi-
traditions or multi-cultures. Ultimately, this could either hinder the procedure of assimilation, or harm the existence of multiculturalism.

**Changing Ethnic Identity in Political Dynamics**

Empirical findings from this study suggest that the *outcome* of ethnic selective exposure is variable at the individual level, given the fact that one’s most salient cultural identity, related to choice, can be altered by external political surroundings or interpersonal contact (also see Kuo, Malhotra & Mo, 2017).

Ethnic audiences’ most salient cultural identity is variable (see Chapter 5), with even a mere one-shot treatment that inquired into their experiences living in the nation. The manipulation caused some individuals to choose American as their best descriptor while others switched to pan-ethnic descriptors i.e., Latino/Hispanic. This indicates a powerful influence of personal experience or social surroundings on ethnic populations’ affiliation to the U.S., which has important implications for today’s political dynamics.

In Donald Trump’s first month of presidency, his rapid-fire executive actions against immigrants have elicited different ethnic groups’ outrage. On January 28th, 2017 – just one day after President Trump signed an executive order that suspends admission of all refugees entering the United States for 120 days and an indefinite block for Syrian refugees (Executive Order 13769) – more than 2,000 protestors gathered in New York City’s John F. Kennedy International Airport to show support for refugees and immigrants. Later, protests were held nationwide including California, Massachusetts, Texas and Washington, D.C., in an effort to oppose the “Muslim ban” and other travel bans. While many polls have shown the majority Americans oppose Trump’s immigration actions (e.g., Quinnipiac University Poll, 2017), not much is known about ethnic population and immigrants’ feelings or opinions about these immigrant
orders in particular. However, as reflected in the Latino experiment, several Latino participants said they felt as though they were excluded when Donald Trump was elected as President. If this argument persists, the immigration bans may make some ethnic populations – and in particular immigrants – feel isolated as well. As such, both political rhetoric and policy changes may affect ethnic populations’ emotions toward the U.S. society and their affiliation to the American identity.

Social identification leads to activities that are congruent with the identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Whether “American” is ethnic populations’ most salient identity affects the way they engage in U.S. politics and other social activities, which include, but are not limited to, their media selections. For example, there is a scholarly consensus that identity is one important dimension of social incorporation, which is a “manner in which persons locate themselves psychologically in relation to one or more social systems, and the way they perceive others as locating them in relation to those systems” (Isajiw, 1997, p.90). In other words, ethnic populations choosing American as their most salient identity would perceive themselves part of the U.S. society, such that they would behave more similarly to native-born citizens (Branton, 2007). This also explains why scholarly research often finds remarkable difference in political incorporation between first-generation immigrants and their native-born offspring (e.g., Zhou & Xiong, 2005). Other than media selectivity, future research can look at some other democratic

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32 On the other hand, Trump’s calls for more stringent travel bans have also boosted the number of naturalized immigrants. As reported by *The Washington Times* (Taxin, 2017), nearly 1 million people applied to naturalize during the 2016 fiscal year, which hit the largest number of the past nine years. This is partially attributed to Trump’s anti-immigrant campaign rhetoric during the election cycle, and it was mostly a reflection of immigrants’ effort to ensure their safety and privilege of living in the U.S. Thus it may not indicate a stronger intention to assimilate.

33 Branton (2007)’s study showed that as Latinos acculturate, they tend to behave more like the mainstream whites politically.
consequences of ethnic populations’ ethnic identity, such as political knowledge and civic participation. Altogether, these would further our understanding of nuanced differences within each ethnic group.

**Ethnic Selective Exposure: More than a Niche**

This dissertation is, to my knowledge, the first study to analyze and document the existence of the *ethnic selective exposure* phenomenon. It starts with building a strong theoretical framework to draw the linkage between ethnic audiences’ cultural identity and their media choices, and employs both observational survey data and novel experimental tests to demonstrate ethnic audiences’ media selectivity is a function of their most salient cultural identity.

While previous studies have relied on English proficiency or “uses and gratification” approaches to examine ethnic audiences’ media preference (e.g., Hwang & He, 1999), this study embraces a classic view of selective exposure by treating ethnic audiences’ media preference as a systematically biased procedure where their most salient cultural identity plays a role. It thus also extends earlier scholarship on partisan selective exposure (e.g., Stroud, 2008, 2010; Iyengar & Hahn, 2009) by adding an additional layer to the extant selective exposure literature.

*Ethnic selective exposure* has implications for over 74 million people – which is about 24% of the total population – in the U.S. It contributes to our understanding of how the growing Latino and Asian populations approach news, which also helps us envision why different media outlets, ethnic media in particular, are thriving. Like most studies, this study raises as many questions as it answers. Does the ethnic selective exposure phenomenon exists in all groups by country of origin such as Vietnamese, Mexicans, Japanese, Filipinos and Chinese? If so, is it stronger among certain groups than in the others? These are important questions that future research can address.
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APPENDIX

A. Text of Codebook\textsuperscript{34} (Chapter 3)

[All questions are single-option unless specified.]

1. Does this news article primarily talk about both China and U.S.?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Not Sure

[SKIP the following questions if Q1 is NOT 1]

2. Basic Information:
   - ID number
   - Date of news articles
   - The Name of Newspaper for this news article (NYT=1, Youth Daily=2, China Daily=3, Xinmin=4)
   - News titles

3. What is the total number of quotes in this story? ______________

4. What is the number of quotes from each of the following nationalities? \([A+B+C=\text{total number of QUOTES}; \text{see Q3}]\)
   A. Chinese ______
   B. American ______
   C. Other Nations (please specify and list \textit{all}) ______________

5. Regarding \textbf{the quotes from Chinese sources}, how many of them portray the \textit{U.S. image} as positive, negative, or neutral?
   U.S. image is positive: ______________
   U.S. image is negative: ______________
   U.S. image is neutral: ______________

6. Regarding \textbf{the quotes from U.S. sources}, how many of them portray the \textit{China image} as positive, negative, or neutral?
   China image is positive: ______________
   China image is negative: ______________
   China image is neutral: ______________

\textsuperscript{34} This codebook shown here is only about the variables used in this paper. Additional variables are also captured for other studies.
7. Merely according to this news article, the image of China is:
   1. Negative
   2. Positive
   3. Neither negative nor positive
   4. Don’t know/Not sure

8. Merely according to this news article, the image of U.S. is:
   1. Negative
   2. Positive
   3. Neither negative nor positive
   4. Don’t know/Not sure
## B. Multinomial Logit Models Predicting Portrayals of National Image by Overall News Content (H1a and H1b; Chapter 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News Sources</th>
<th>U.S Images</th>
<th>China Images</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Image</td>
<td>Image</td>
<td>Image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The New York Times</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinmin Evening News</td>
<td>-0.42***</td>
<td>1.72***</td>
<td>-1.70***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China Daily</td>
<td>0.09***</td>
<td>0.68***</td>
<td>-1.79***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Daily</td>
<td>-0.59***</td>
<td>1.33***</td>
<td>-1.56***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.14***</td>
<td>-1.10***</td>
<td>1.25***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Cases</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>263</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo $R^2$</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Dependent variables are measured with three categories where 1 = Negative image, 2 = Positive image, and 3 = Neither positive nor negative (omitted baseline category). Entries are unstandardized coefficients. Robust standard errors are omitted as they are quite small. Both models are clustered on newspaper outlets. *** $p < 0.001$ is drawn from two-tailed tests.
C. Multinomial Logit Models Predicting Portrayals of National Image by Overall News Content (H2a and H2b; Chapter 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News Sources</th>
<th>U.S Images</th>
<th></th>
<th>China Images</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative Image</td>
<td>Positive Image</td>
<td>Negative Image</td>
<td>Positive Image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The New York Times</td>
<td>0.59***</td>
<td>-1.33***</td>
<td>1.56***</td>
<td>-0.61***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xinmin Evening News</td>
<td>0.17***</td>
<td>0.39***</td>
<td>-0.15***</td>
<td>0.23***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China Daily</td>
<td>0.68***</td>
<td>-0.65***</td>
<td>-0.23***</td>
<td>-1.07***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Daily</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.73***</td>
<td>0.23***</td>
<td>-0.31***</td>
<td>0.77***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Cases</td>
<td>262</td>
<td></td>
<td>263</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo $R^2$</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Dependent variables are measured with three categories where 1 = Negative image, 2 = Positive image, and 3 = Neither positive nor negative (omitted baseline category). Entries are unstandardized coefficients. Robust standard errors are omitted as they are quite small. Both models are clustered on newspaper outlets. *** $p < 0.001$ is drawn from two-tailed tests.
D. Media Use, by Spanish-language Speakers (Source: 2006 LNS; Chapter 4)

Note: N=8,554. All respondents are Hispanics, including immigrants and those born in the U.S. English (Spanish) dominants refer to people who primarily speak English (Spanish), which was captured by the 2006 LNS.
E. Media Use, by U.S. and Foreign Born (Source: 2006 LNS; Chapter 4)

Note: N=8,554. All respondents are Hispanics, including immigrants and those born in the U.S.
### F. Variables, Measurements, and Descriptive Statistics (Dataset: 2006 LNS; Chapter 4)\(^{35}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Survey Instruments and Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Ethnic Media Selectivity         | “For information about public affairs and politics, would you say you rely more heavily on Spanish-language television, radio, and newspapers, or on English-language TV, radio, and newspapers?;”  \[1=Use both equally (24.02%)\] \[2=Use English language media more (30.51%)\] \[3=Use Spanish language media more (45.46%)\]
| Strength of American Identity    | “How strongly or not do you think of yourself as American?;” Range: 0(Not at all)-3(Very strongly)  \[M = 1.94, SD = 1.09\]
| Strength of Latino/Hispanic Identity | “How strongly or not do you think of yourself as Hispanic or Latino?;” Range: 0(Not at all)-3(Very strongly)  \[M = 2.51, SD = 0.77\]
| Strength of National Origin Identity | “How strongly or not do you think of yourself as (national origin descriptor)?” Range: 0(Not at all)-3(Very strongly)  \[M = 2.46, SD = 0.85\]
| Ethnic Self Identity\(^{36}\)    | “Of the three previous terms, Latino or Hispanic, national origin descriptor, or American, which best describes you?;”  \[1=Latino/Hispanic (40.50%)\] \[2=National origin descriptor (41.22%)\] \[3=American (18.29%)\]
| Educational Attainment           | “What is your highest level of formal education completed?” Range: 0(None)-7(Graduate or professional degree)  \[M = 3.56, SD = 1.95\]
| U.S. Education                   | “Where did you complete your highest level of education? U.S. (and Puerto Rico) or elsewhere?;” \[0=Elsewhere (70.15%)\] \[1=The U.S. (and Puerto Rico) (29.85%)\]

\(^{35}\) For all variables in Appendix F and G, choice option Other, DK/NA” was recoded into missing. Reported descriptive statistics are based on full data rather than models.

\(^{36}\) Note that this survey question we use to capture ethnic self was asked after the three questions regarding how respondents think themselves as Latino or Hispanic, national origin descriptor, or American. Moreover, as these three questions were asked in random orders, there is little priming effect of these questions on whether respondents would choose which identity best described themselves.
| **Political Interest** | “How interested are you in politics and public affairs?;”  
Range: 0(Not interested)-2(Very interested)  
M = 0.91, SD = 0.72 |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Length of U.S. Residence** | “When did you first arrive to live in the US [mainland]?;”  
Length of U.S. residence is measured with “2006 - responses to this question.” [Note that for native-born respondents, answer to this questions was entered as missing.]  
Range: 1-85  
M = 19.28, SD = 13.81 |
| **Naturalized U.S. Citizen** | “Are you a naturalized American citizen?;”  
0=No (66.83%) and 1=Yes (33.17%) |
| **Foreign Born** | “Were you born in the mainland United States and Puerto Rico, or some other country?;”  
0=Native born (33.79%) and 1=Foreign born (66.21%) |
| **Spanish Dominants** | “Would you prefer that I speak in English or Spanish?;”  
0=English dominants (38.12%) and 1=Spanish dominants (61.88%) |
| **Importance of Spanish** | “How important do you think it is for you or your family to maintain the ability to speak Spanish?;”  
Range: 0(Not at all important)-3(Very Important)  
M = 2.81, SD = 0.51 |
| **Importance of English** | “How important do you think it is that everyone in the United States learn English?;”  
Range: 0(Not at all important)-3(Very Important)  
M = 2.91, SD = 0.35 |
### G. Variables, Measurements, and Descriptive Statistics (Dataset: 2008 NAAS; Chapter 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Survey Instruments and Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Newspaper Selectivity** | [If respondents read newspapers for information about politics:] “Is that in Asian-language, English-language, or both?”  
1=Both (28.16%)  
2=English language (41.37%)  
3=Asian language (30.47%) |
| **Radio Selectivity** | [If respondents listen to the radio for information about politics:] “Is that in Asian-language, English-language, or both?”  
1=Both (21.18%)  
2=English language (51.01%)  
3=Asian language (27.81%) |
| **TV Selectivity** | [If respondents watch television for political information:] “Is that in Asian-language, English-language, or both?”  
1=Both (29.82%)  
2=English language (53.19%)  
3=Asian language (16.98%) |
| **Internet Selectivity** | [If respondents use the Internet for political information:] “Is that in Asian-language, English-language, or both?”  
1=Both (29.99%)  
2=English language (55.62%)  
3=Asian language (14.39%) |
| **Ethnic Self** | “People of Asian descent in the U.S. use different terms to describe themselves. In general do you think of yourself as…?”  
1=American (3.24%)  
2=Asian American (16.98%)  
3=National Origin American (e.g., Chinese American) (42.78%)  
4=Asian (11.47%)  
5=National Origin Descriptor (25.52%) |
| **Educational Attainment** | “What is the highest level of formal education you completed?”  
Range: 1(Primary or grammar school)-7(Doctorate)  
M = 4.58, SD = 1.49 |
| **U.S. Education** | “Did you complete all of your formal education in the United States?”  
0=No (65.85%) and 1=Yes (34.15%) |

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37 This question randomized the order of four choice categories (Asian American, National Origin American, Asian, and National Origin descriptor) and allowed respondents to check all that apply. However, descriptive statistics showed that no respondent chose more than one identity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Interest</td>
<td>“How interested are you in politics?” Range: 0(Not at all interested)-3(Very interested) M = 1.42, SD = 0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Citizen</td>
<td>“Were you born in the United States or some other country?” “[ASK IF FOREIGN-BORN; FILL IN “CITIZEN” IF HIDDEN NATIVITY VARIABLE =U.S. BORN] Many people in the U.S. are not citizens. Some are on student or travel visas, or they have green cards because they are permanent residents. Are you currently on a visa, have a green card, or are you a U.S. citizen?” “[ASK IF NOT U.S. CITIZENS] Are you currently applying for U.S. citizenship, planning to apply, or not planning to become a citizen?” Responses to these three questions are recoded into: 1=Native born citizens (10.65%) 2=Naturalized citizens (71.86%) 3=Noncitizens but will apply for U.S. citizenship (10.87%) 4=Noncitizens and will not apply for U.S. citizenship (6.62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Dominants</td>
<td>“Are you comfortable continuing this conversation in English?” 0=Asian-language dominants (40.09%) and 1=English dominants (59.91%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Income</td>
<td>“Which of the following best describes the total pre-tax income earned by everyone in your household last year?” Range: 1(Up to $20,000)-8($150,000 and over) M = 4.39, SD = 2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitual Use of Newspaper</td>
<td>“People rely on different sources for political information. Do you read newspapers for information about politics?” 0=No (32.41%) and 1=Yes (67.59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitual Use of Radio</td>
<td>“Do you listen to the radio for political information?” 0=No (50.63%) and 1=Yes (49.37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitual Use of TV</td>
<td>“Do you watch television for political information?” 0=No (13.91%) and 1=Yes (86.09%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitual Use of Internet</td>
<td>“Do you use the Internet for political information?” 0=No (46.65%) and 1=Yes (53.35%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### H. Baseline Models Predicting Ethnic Audiences’ Media Use (Dataset: 2006 LNS; Chapter 4)

**Model 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Self</th>
<th>More Use of English-language Media</th>
<th>More Use of Spanish-language Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latino/Hispanic (^a)</td>
<td>(b = -1.07) (z = -11.64^{***})</td>
<td>(b = 0.49) (z = 4.46^{***})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin (^a)</td>
<td>(b = -0.93) (z = -9.67^{***})</td>
<td>(b = 0.63) (z = 5.61^{***})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strength of Ethnic Self**

| Strength of American Identity \(^b\) | \(b = 1.40\) \(z = 11.92^{***}\) | \(b = -0.90\) \(z = -13.43^{***}\) |
| Strength of Latino Identity \(^b\) | \(b = -0.34\) \(z = -2.68^{**}\) | \(b = 0.14\) \(z = 1.22\) |
| Strength of National Origin Identity \(^b\) | \(b = -0.65\) \(z = -5.78^{***}\) | \(b = 0.20\) \(z = 1.81^{*}\) |

**Interaction Terms**

| Latino X Latino Strength      | — | — | — | — | 0.78 | 2.65** | — | — | — | — | 0.90 | 3.05** |
| National Origin X National Origin Strength | — | — | — | — | 0.90 | 3.05** | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Constant                     | 0.61 | 2.85** | 0.52 | 2.70** | 1.07 | 4.02*** | 0.07 | 0.27 |

| N                           | 7609 | 7609 |
| LRT\(^2\)                   | 1275.22 | 1247.63 |
| Prob(\(\chi^2\))            | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |
| Pseudo-R\(^2\)              | 0.1289 | 0.1317 |

**Model 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>每</th>
<th>More Use of English-language Media</th>
<th>More Use of Spanish-language Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latino/Hispanic (^a)</td>
<td>(b = -2.04) (z = -5.36^{***})</td>
<td>(b = 0.95) (z = 2.93^{**})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin (^a)</td>
<td>(b = -2.06) (z = -5.33^{***})</td>
<td>(b = 1.33) (z = 3.87^{***})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strength of Ethnic Self**

| Strength of American Identity \(^b\) | \(b = 1.37\) \(z = 11.77^{***}\) | \(b = -0.90\) \(z = -13.45^{***}\) |
| Strength of Latino Identity \(^b\) | \(b = -0.56\) \(z = -3.74^{***}\) | \(b = 0.31\) \(z = 2.10^{*}\) |
| Strength of National Origin Identity \(^b\) | \(b = -0.78\) \(z = -6.15^{***}\) | \(b = 0.42\) \(z = 3.05^{**}\) |

**Interaction Terms**

| Latino X Latino Strength      | — | — | — | — | 0.78 | 2.65** | — | — | — | — | 0.90 | 3.05** |
| National Origin X National Origin Strength | — | — | — | — | 0.90 | 3.05** | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Constant                     | 1.07 | 4.02*** | 0.07 | 0.27 |

| N                           | 7609 | 7609 |
| LRT\(^2\)                   | 1247.63 | 1247.63 |
| Prob(\(\chi^2\))            | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |
| Pseudo-R\(^2\)              | 0.1317 | 0.1317 |

Note: For both models, the baseline category is comprised of respondents who report that they use English- and Spanish-language media equally. * \(p < 0.05\), ** \(p < 0.01\), and *** \(p < 0.001\).

a. Comparison group for ethnic self is the “American” identity.
b. These variables are logged.
c. For both models, similar estimates still hold after dropping about 3000 potentially influential cases. As the inclusion of influential cases does not affect estimates, we report the results using all respondents.
### I. Baseline Models Predicting Ethnic Audiences’ Media Selectivity (Dataset: 2008 NAAS; Chapter 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Self</th>
<th>Newspaper Selectivity</th>
<th>TV Selectivity</th>
<th>Internet Selectivity</th>
<th>Radio Selectivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Ethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>-1.38***</td>
<td>0.84#</td>
<td>-1.16***</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin American</td>
<td>-1.67***</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>-1.36***</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>-2.02***</td>
<td>1.24*</td>
<td>-1.52***</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Origin Descriptor</td>
<td>-2.07***</td>
<td>1.04*</td>
<td>-1.77***</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.02***</td>
<td>-0.79</td>
<td>1.94***</td>
<td>-0.75#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| N | 3333 | 4235 | 2617 | 2423 |
| LRχ² | 152.36 | 145.98 | 139.98 | 69.60 |
| Prob(χ²) | 0.0000 | 0.0000 | 0.0000 | 0.0000 |
| Pseudo-R² | 0.0254 | 0.0172 | 0.0330 | 0.0167 |

Note: Entries are unstandardized coefficients. For all four models, the baseline category is comprised of respondents who report that they use both English- and Spanish-language media. # p < 0.10, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, and *** p < 0.001.

a. Comparison group for ethnic self is the “American” identity.
### J. Latino Participants Demographics and Screening Questions (Chapter 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Survey Instrument</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Pilot Study (N=82)</th>
<th>Latino Study (N=225)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>What is your gender?</td>
<td>0=Female (45%)</td>
<td>0=Female (66.07%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1=Male (55%)</td>
<td>1=Male (33.93%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>In what year were you born? Please type in a 4 digit answer i.e., “1980.”</td>
<td>Age is computed as “2016 – year of birth”</td>
<td>Range: 23-81</td>
<td>Range: 15-78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M= 45.52, SD= 13.10</td>
<td>M=42.27, SD=13.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>What is your highest level of formal education completed? Choose one that best</td>
<td>0=None</td>
<td>High school graduate and below=27.5%</td>
<td>High school graduate and below=27.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>describes your education level.</td>
<td>1=Eighth grade or below</td>
<td>Some college and above=72.5%</td>
<td>Some college and above=72.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2=Some high school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3=General Educational Development (GED)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4=High school graduate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5=Some college</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6=year college degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7=Graduate or professional degree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Born</td>
<td>Were you born in the mainland United States, Puerto Rico, or some other country?</td>
<td>Categories were recoded where</td>
<td>0=U.S. born (62.50%)</td>
<td>0=U.S. born (65.78%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0= U.S. born and 1=foreign born (including both</td>
<td>1=foreign born (37.5%)</td>
<td>1=foreign born (34.22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Puerto Rico and some other nations)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Citizenship</td>
<td>Now we would like to ask you about U.S. Citizenship. Are you a U.S. citizen,</td>
<td>1=Already a U.S. citizen</td>
<td>1= already a U.S. citizen = 93.75%</td>
<td>1= already a U.S. citizen = 87.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>currently applying for citizenship, planning to apply for citizenship, or not</td>
<td>2=Currently applying for citizenship</td>
<td>2= currently applying for citizenship = 1.25%</td>
<td>2= currently applying for citizenship = 1.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>planning on becoming a citizen?</td>
<td>3=Planning to apply for citizenship</td>
<td>3=Planning to apply for citizenship = 3.75%</td>
<td>3=Planning to apply for citizenship = 8.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4=Not planning on becoming a citizen</td>
<td>4=Not planning on becoming a citizen = 1.25%</td>
<td>4=Not planning on becoming a citizen = 1.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5=Don't Know</td>
<td>5=Don't Know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Residence</td>
<td>How long have you been living in the United States? Please enter the year you first came to the United States, i.e., ”1990.” [Only asked participants who were not born in the U.S.]</td>
<td>U.S. residence is computed as “2016 – year of arriving at the U.S.”</td>
<td>Range: 7-55 M= 27.12, SD= 14.55</td>
<td>Range: 1-56 M= 21.00, SD= 14.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening Questions for Recruiting Eligible Participants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>Do you consider yourself to be Hispanic, Latino, and/or people from another country in Latin America such as Mexico, Brazil, Guatemala, Chile, etc.? 1=Yes 2=No 3=Don't know/Refused</td>
<td>1=Continue (80.46%) 2&amp;3=Terminated (19.54%)</td>
<td>1=Continue (89.43%) 2&amp;3=Terminated (10.57%)</td>
<td>[# Participants reached out reached out: 174] [# Participants reached out reached out: 454]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual Speakers</td>
<td>Are you a bilingual speaker who uses both English and Spanish? 1=Yes 2=No 3=Don't know/Refused</td>
<td>1=Continue (54.60%) 2&amp;3=Terminated (45.40%)</td>
<td>1=Continue (70.48%) 2&amp;3=Terminated (29.52%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current U.S. Residents</td>
<td>Where do you currently live? 1=The United States 2=Other Nation 3=Puerto Rico</td>
<td>1=Continue (96.55%) 2&amp;3=Terminated (3.45%)</td>
<td>1=Continue (96.70%) 2&amp;3=Terminated (3.30%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Rate</td>
<td># of eligible participants/# of participants who were reached out</td>
<td>82/174 = 47.13%</td>
<td>225/454 = 49.56%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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K. IRB Approval for Experimental Studies

IRB# E9770
TITLE: Understanding Ethnic Audiences' Media Selectivity: The Effect of Self-defined Ethnic Identification on Media Choice

Review Date: 2/11/2016
Approval Date: 2/11/2016
Approval Expiration Date: 2/10/2019
Exemption Category/Paragraph: 2a
Signed Consent Waived?: Yes
L. Hispanic Newspapers in the United States, by State (Source: Editor & Publisher, 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th># of Hispanic Newspapers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The other omitted states had none Hispanic newspapers, according to the 2016 Editor & Publisher data book.
VITA

Mingxiao Sui is from Longkou, China. She received a bachelor’s degree in Journalism and Mass Communication from Hunan University (Changsha, China) in 2008, followed by a master’s degree in Science Communication from Hunan University (Changsha, China) in 2011. She worked as a copywriter at a national website INewIdea.com for a few years, where she copy wrote industrial designs and conceptual products, as well as coordinated website operation and management. She will complete her Ph.D. in Mass Communication and Public Affairs from Louisiana State University’s Manship School of Mass Communication in May 2017.