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Shithole Countries: An Analysis of News Coverage in the U.S.

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Shithole Countries: An Analysis of News Coverage in the U.S.

by

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of the requirements for the degree of
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The Zimmerman School of Advertising and Mass Communications
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Abstract

This research paper studied the first two weeks after President Donald Trump allegedly called African countries “shithole countries” in a bi-partisan meeting on immigration. It explored the frames and emerging themes used by the media when covering the incident and the surrounding issues. Using the framing theory as a theoretical framework, the study examined the six identified news frames through qualitative content analysis. The six frames used in the coverage of the “shithole countries” incident are racial, conflict, consequences, morality, human interest, and policy. The study examined articles from four news sources that lean liberal, conservative, central-liberal, and central-conservative. The study indicated that the four news sources all used five of the six frames, as the *Wall Street Journal* did not use the morality frame at all. The most used frame was the human interest frame, followed by conflict and consequences. *The New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* used the conflict frame the most. And CNN and FOX used the consequences frame the most.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

On January 12, 2018, major news media outlets in the United States revealed that President Donald Trump, while conducting a bi-partisan meeting on immigration the day before, was frustrated with U.S. lawmakers wanting to protect immigrants from Haiti, El Salvador, and African countries during immigration negotiations. Trump asked that Haiti should be taken off the list of consideration. Afterward, when the talk got to certain African countries being included in the list of countries eligible for the diversity lottery, Trump's alleged words were "Why are we having all these people from shithole countries come here" (Blake, 2018). He suggested that the United States would do better to focus on allowing more immigrants from countries like Norway, credited to the fact that he had recently met with the Norwegian prime minister on January 10, 2018. Trump also said that immigrants from Asian countries are more economically beneficial to the United States; as such, the U.S. needs to accept more people from the Asian continent.

These statements and the sentiment behind them were not new occurrences for the Trump administration. In the past, Trump had singled out African countries and Haiti. Three weeks earlier, on December 23, *The New York Times* reported that Trump, in a meeting on immigration conducted in June, had allegedly stated that the 15,000 Haitians who had come into the country since January 2017 all have AIDS (Shear &

Davis, 2017). He also lamented on the 40,000 Nigerians who had come into the country since January 2017, saying that once Nigerians come into the country, they do not go back to their huts. The White House denied the report.

Trump's alleged statements were newsworthy because they were said by Trump, who is the President of the United States on a possible immigration policy for immigrants entering the United States from foreign countries. One of the seven responsibilities of the United States' President is to act as the chief diplomat of the country. As the chief diplomat, the President is responsible for cultivating relationships with foreign governments and making foreign policy (Scholastic Inc., n.d.). His words and actions go a long way in cultivating the image of the United States on a global stage, especially with America's position as the world's superpower. A common saying by Americans names the U.S. President the leader of the free world.

America became a world power in the 1880s and a Superpower in 1898 (Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, n.d.). Since then, America has concerned itself largely with helping, controlling, and maintaining the balance of power between nations. President William McKinley once said to the team of Americans who negotiated the Treaty of Paris: "We cannot be unmindful that without any desire or design on our part the war has brought us new duties and responsibilities which we must meet and discharge as becomes a great nation" (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 317). Extending McKinley's view, George L. Rives, the United States Assistant Secretary of State from 1887 to 1889, said "It is plain [that we] will be brought into far closer and more complex relations with all the other great Powers of the world.... We shall now and

henceforth be looked upon as having cast aside our traditional attitude of isolation” (Wheeler, Funk, Woods, Draper, & Funk, 1989, p. 278).

United States’ Presidents since then have embraced the above ideology in their foreign policies. They worked to maintain the image of America on the international stage and strengthen its reputation for steadiness and reliability. The rest of the world in return considered America a dependable ally committed to global order, advancement of universal values, and solving the world’s toughest problems (Brands, 2018). George Washington in his farewell speech in 1796 stated “Permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that, in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated” (Washington, 1796, para. 33).

Therefore, it became fodder for news when Trump, a sitting President, abandoned the practices of past presidents and out-rightly insulted two countries and an entire continent. Greater so that it was allegedly said by Trump, which fit into the media’s narrative about the President’s views and what they signify. There are five factors the media use when evaluating whether a story or an issue has news value. These five factors include timing, significance, proximity, prominence, and human interest. This story inevitably checks all five of those criteria. This news was relevant because it happened in the U.S., recently at the time, concerning an issue that had the ability to heighten emotions, involved the most prominent person in the U.S., and affected not only Americans but also a large number of people abroad.

It was not surprising that this particular situation dominated the news cycle for a week. Drawing on Trump’s previous statements, media pundits and talk-heads

opinioned or argued about the incident. The media appeared to be framing the incident a certain way as they argued about whether Trump and his alleged words were racist, racial, or racially charged. Anderson Cooper from CNN even gave a touching monologue on Haiti (Vales, 2018). Trump tweeted the next day that he didn't say anything bad about Haiti and he did not call Haiti a "shithole country". The media, in response, pointed out that this was not, in fact, a denunciation as they had reported that Trump said "shithole countries" in relation to Africa, but stated that Trump had disparaged Haitians too in the same meeting (Kenny, 2018).

The role of media in today's society cannot be overemphasized. Among its many functions, the media serve as a source of information for the public. It is the very foundation of democracy that shines a light on things it deems necessary for the public knows. As the fourth estate – a word attributed to Edmund Burke, the media are perceived to have a considerable, albeit indirect, amount of political power that it wields (Schultz, 1998). The media sway people by determining what they should concern themselves with – by what it covers, why they think about things, and how they think about the things reported through framing and agenda setting.

There has been significant research on framing, salience, and the media's role and effect on the society. There has also been previous research on perceived biases of news organizations, with results dispelling the general opinion that the partisan slant of the news organizations affects what news organizations decide to report on and how they frame the issues and incidents they cover. In the current age of fake news accusation levied against mainstream media, it becomes necessary to examine how news agencies frame certain incidents. And, what better issue or incident to cover that

one that involved President Donald Trump, a major proponent of the fake news accusation against mainstream media and a person that the media, whether mainstream or fringe, currently seems enamored with.

This research sought to examine the way the media framed Trump's alleged "shithole countries" statement within the first two weeks of the incident. It examined coverage by four media outlets, the Cable News Network (CNN), FOX News (FOX), the *Wall Street Journal*, and *The New York Times*, through a qualitative content analysis scope, using the framing theory. Coverage by these outlets was examined to figure out the frames the sources used, the language deployed, and the difference between the way they used the frames.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

A news outlet is any organization that gathers, writes, broadcasts, and distributes news reports obtained directly from the source or scene (Alejandro, 2010). In this paper, the word “news outlet” is interchanged with “media” or “news organizations”. There are three types of news outlets: print, broadcast, and new media. Print media consist of newspapers and magazines. Broadcast media consist of radio and television. And new media consist of online newspapers, news blogs, news apps, etc.

This study will be examining news outlets that combine print media with new media. With the advent of technology, print media organizations have had to evolve and embrace new media. They now offer online subscriptions to their papers, as well as paper subscription, in order to reach the increasing number of people who read news online. As of August 2017, 43% of Americans get their news online, 50% of Americans get their news from the television, while only 18% of Americans get their news from print newspapers (Gottfried & Shearer, 2017).

The media provide a communication channel between the government and the public. It is known as one of the four pillars of a modern democratic society. The media ensure that the public is made aware of what is happening around it and in the rest of the world. Even more, it provides the check and balances for the other three pillars of modern democratic society – namely, the executive, the legislative and the judiciary – serves as the public’s representative and acts as a watchdog (Francke, 1995). The media

are also known as the fourth estate or the fourth power, an unofficial power in the political system, drawing on the European concept of estates of the realm (Schultz, 1998).

In both systems, the press is seen as the bridge between those in power – democratically elected officials or noble men and women – and the public. And although the members of the media are neither elected nor selected, they hold a significant power over the political system and keep in check those in power. Through the media, the public learns and forms an opinion about actions its government takes, and the government also in turns figures out what the public thinks of its plans and actions.

People used to consider news media to be objective, as one of the tenants of journalism is to be accurate and fair (Society of Professional Journalists, 2014). A rather ambiguous term, there are many definitions of objectivity (Tumber & Prentoulis, 2003). Dennis and Merrill (1984) however links journalistic objectivity to “separating facts from opinion, presenting an emotionally detached views of the news, and striving for fairness and balance” (p. 111). A multi-faceted word, objectivity is used with words like accuracy, neutrality, impartiality, honesty, fairness, balance, depersonalization, and commitment to the truth (Maras, 2013).

The history of objectivity in journalism can be traced back to when journalists were professionalizing their careers. In particular, the objectivity approach “became the fetish of journalism in the period of rapid industrialization, grounded in a purely commercial motive: to serve politically heterogeneous audiences without alienating any

significant segment of the audience” (Carey, 1997 [1989], 137-8). Journalists rationalized this strategy as indicative of professional responsibility and competence.

For a long time, journalists adhered to the principle of objectivity. But objectivity in journalism has slowly lost its centrality in the profession. If objectivity was canonized because of its commercial value, as indicated by Carey (1997 [1989]), it makes sense that commerciality would be the major reason why it would be modified. First, we must examine the expectations of objectivity in journalism. Are journalists supposed to be absent of a political point of view or opinion? Are they magically supposed to never share their ideologies? How easy is it for a pundit or reporter to check particular views at the door when they get hired or asked for their opinions? Is the public really asking journalists to be objective or to pretend to be objective?

Obviously, this is a complex discussion that has been happening for years and has continued to the present day. In consideration of any viable answer, one must put into consideration the fact that the relations between journalists and the public have changed, and the distance between the two considerable shortened. It is now the norm for people to interact with journalists and the myriad of people involved in the media outside of their TV, radio, and newspaper. And with the advent of social media and other technological advancements, the public can cultivate a relationship with the media in an intimate and personal way. Which is why Ward (2004) points out the old way of looking at objectivity is not going to fly anymore. He argues for a reinvention of the word objective in journalism ethics, one that includes the way “journalism’s communicative relationship with the public has evolved” (p. 3).

With the evolution of the media's relationship in conjunction with objectivity, it has become a haven for likeminded people, wielding a significant power over them. Because the public sees the role the media play in the political system, a significant number of people get their news from their trusted media sources versus other sources, even those who worry about fake news. While 66% of Americans do not believe today's news media do not separate opinion from fact – an increase from the 43% in 1984, over eight in 10 believe the media ensure Americans are informed about public affairs and hold leaders accountable, a critical and important role for the democracy (Knight Foundation, 2018). One in four Americans get their news from one perspective and 46% rarely change their views, taking solace in like-minded sources.

In a way, with the inclusion of opinion reporting and its perceived liberal or conservative identity, the media create a safe haven for like-minded people by reinforcing strongly held beliefs. The disadvantage, of course, is that it creates silos of inherently different people living in their bubbles. For example, 4 in 10 Republicans consider any news that cast a politician or political group in a negative light even though the report is accurate to always be “fake news” (Knight Foundation, 2018).

Framing

McQuail (1994) wrote, “the entire study of mass communication is based on the premise that the media have significant effects” (p. 327). The media impact social reality by “by framing images of reality . . . in a predictable and patterned way” (p. 331). The study of framing as a mass communication theory can be traced to Goffman (1974). Goffman argued that humans frame their experiences in order to organize such experiences and to better understand the world around them. Framing experiences are

similar to framing a picture. The frame excludes certain things and directs the eyes to focus on particular things. Human use frames to direct themselves to what to focus on, what to link with each other, and how to react based on current perception and previous experience.

In relation to the theory of agenda setting, framing theory refers to the media's ability to direct attention to certain things and influence how the public interprets these situations (Scheufele, 1999). The media deliver information in frames. Frames are heuristics way the public process information. Hansen and Nicolini (2017) defines frames as "a central focus placed on a specific aspect of a message that helps consumers make meaning and construct their social reality in relation to a particular topic of media coverage" (p. 2). The perspective or angle the media tells certain stories, the frames, influence the public. The framing theory is predicated on the assumption that media are gatekeepers who wields immense power – can influence the way the public interprets information, and that it occurs over a period of time – wherein the media grow its reach by reinforcing each frame continuously.

Types of Frames

The theory of framing has been extensively studied, with many researchers drawing different types of frame the media use. Drawing from established schemas, Iyengar (1991) identifies frames as episodic – focusing on singular events or issue, or thematic – focusing on a larger number of incidents to draw out contexts and trends. Although a singular event, the "shithole countries" incident is framed as a thematic issue, relating to immigration and Trump characterization. From preliminary reading, generic frames such as racial, conflict, consequences, morality and human interest

frames were identified and the policy frame emerged as the research was conducted. The six frames are a combination of frames that Neuman, Just, and Crigler (1992), Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000), and Boydston, Gross, Resnik and Smith (2013) identified as prevalent in the media.

Neuman, Just, and Crigler (1992) identified different types of media frames, including conflict, human impact, economic consequences, and morality. Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) research expanded on that and found out that commonly used frames by American news media were responsibility, conflict, consequences, human interest, and morality frames. When analyzing news contents from news organizations from different countries, the two most commonly used frames are often conflict and consequences (de Vreese et al., 2001; Gamson, 1992). And Boydston, Gross, Resnik and Smith (2013), in their research, put together a comprehensive codebook for frames that have to deal with framing policy agendas. The codebook consists of 14 recognized and identified frames, which includes economic, morality, policy prescription and evaluation, public opinion, political, external regulation and reputation. The frames can be applied in communication context, on social media or in news stories, about debates, etc. They can also be applied to policy issues like immigration, which this paper is situated around, albeit not directly. They also suggested researchers track text tones: positive, negative, or neutral tones.

A recent burgeoning frame of study is the racial frame. Drawn from the cultural frame, racial frame occurs when representing ethnicities and their resulting stereotype or bias (Andrus, 2012). News coverage that focus on African American, Latino political candidates, or person of interest in the United States will most likely focus on race than

coverage focused on white people (Caliendo & McIlwain, 2006). However, the attributes of race vary depending on the issue and incident, making for inconclusive findings (Chavez & Guido- DeBrito, 1999).

Framing Process

The framing process occurs in this manner: the media deliver information and direct people on how to perceive this information. The way the media frame the message influences how it is filtered through the public's already developed frame. The public uses these frames to create ideas about new information or to reinforce pre-conceived ideas. Any new information is perceived and manipulated within the frames of the public's already existing beliefs and the media's frame. Scheufele (1999) argued that the "mass media actively set the frames of reference that readers or viewers use to interpret and discuss public events" (p. 105). Therefore, the media use frames to reinforce ideas and shape public discussion, which in turn affects public opinions. Public discourse is part of the process by which individuals construct meaning, and public opinion is part of the process by which journalists develop and crystallize meaning in public discourse (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; McLeod, Kosicki, Pan, & Allen, 1987).

Scheufele (1999) goes further, pointing out that the framing process is not complete without both the media's framing of the message and the way each person in the public frames his or her understanding of the message. As such, the media also consider its target audiences' predisposed feelings and belief when deciding how to frame a message. The effectiveness of framing lies in its ability to sway people's opinions and attitudes towards a message over a long period of time (Tewksbury &

Scheufele, 2009). Fiske (2011), quoting Tewksbury and Scheufele (2009), points out that “framing is the process by which subjective descriptors are used by journalists to convey a media message, which ends up shifting the views of the recipients as a result of how the content of that message is construed” (p. 19).

Messages can be framed in three ways, according to Hallahan (1999). They are valence framing, semantic framing, and story framing. Simply put, the media can either frame a story in a positive or negative light, change the phrase of certain terms, or select key ideas and fashion the story to fit the selected theme. This can be done through the four framing structures: syntactical, script, thematic, and rhetorical (Hallahan, 1999). Syntactical involves the way words and phrases in a story are arranged. Script explains how the way the story’s events are sequenced can affect how the story is received. Thematic refers to the explanation of the relationships between elements of the story, through the use of prepositions and hypotheses. The rhetorical nudges you on how to interpret the story, using provocative language, imagery, metaphors, illustrations and catchphrases (Calabrese, 2016; Hallahan, 1999).

Framing Africa and African Issues

Africans and the African continent have had to contend with framing from western media and the stereotypes that come with them for several years. The average American is ignorant of Africa (Ibelema, 2014; Nothias, 2016). It is commonplace for African to experience situations wherein Americans utter ignorant or stereotypical opinions about Africa. For example, a student in a “Mass Media and the Global Village” class, taught in a major American university, was puzzled by an SUV ad in Ghanaian Mirror. She subsequently asked her African professor “Who can afford to buy that car

over there” (Ibelema, 2014). The average American’s opinion of Africa and the way they speak about the continent stems from the media’s framing of Africa as a Third World place, ridden with poverty, starvation, lack of urbanization, amongst various other stereotypes.

When Alfred Sauvy created the First, Second and Third World designation in his article in *L'Observateur* in 1952, he used them to categorize the different political systems of countries after World War II (Karpilo, 2017). Sauvy designated countries that were democratic as First World, countries that were communist as Second World, and countries that were not aligned with the democratic or communist countries as Third World. Fiske (2011) points out that while Third World concept was not intended to be applied to a specific idea or continent, it is “more frequently to evoke the Black race and the African continent” (p. 7). The framing of Third World has since evolved from being indicative of political system to economic development. And, so, the media presently frame Third World countries as places of backward advancement or places without economic or technological advancement.

Coupled with its imagery from the famine that Ethiopia and Somalia – two countries out of the 54 countries and two territories in the continent – underwent in the 1980s, the Western media focus its frames on denigrating Africa as “a homogeneous expression [in] its lack of many things: jobs, shelter, food, healthcare, and drinkable water” (Fuchs & Horak, 2008, p. 99). Golan (2008) in his study of ABC, CBS, NBC, and CNN coverage on Africa found that the “majority of stories about African nations focused on negative and highly deviant issues such as conflicts and disasters both natural and human caused” (p. 53). Not surprising, the study reported that the most

covered African country by these four news outlets was Liberia, which had a civil war from 1989 until 1997. The coverage of Liberia was consistent with other news stories about Africa in American networks. The media coverage of Africa usually focuses “more on armed conflicts, followed by the role of Africa in America’s war on terror, and less on elections and the emergence of strong democracies and free market all across the continent” (Fiske, 2011, p. 23).

Ibelema (2014) categorizes the framing of Africa by Western media into two frames: otherness and tribal fixation. She defines otherness as the “tendency in overall coverage to portray African realities as inconsistent with modernity or at variance with standard contemporary practice” and tribal fixation as “tendency to focus on ethnic differences and rivalries in press coverage and interpretation of Africa’s contemporary conflicts” (p. 164). And although tribal fixation is, in fact, a sub-category of otherness, its prevalence in the media’s coverage of African political scene elevates its position into a distinct and separate frame. The frames are a result of differences in belief systems, social distance, and social cognition (p. 164). However, the frames are also used to facilitate and justify the colonial enterprise and the West’s big brother stance with the African continent (Davidson, 1970; Mudimbe, 1992; Said, 1993; Spurr, 1993).

If we accept the premise that framing has a significant effect on the public’s perception, then we might be interested in learning how the public reacts to the message. But, more, we might be interested in learning how the media react to the end-result, at its audience end, of its framing. As stated earlier, the process of framing is never-ending. During some point, journalists become audiences and receive framing from the public – who had previously gotten the framing from the media, which

invariably starts the cycle of framing again. While it would be a fascinating study, this research is not interested in finding out the correlation between the media's framing of Africa and President Trump's views, opinions, and alleged words about Haiti and the African continent. It is also not interested in scapegoating the media or pointing fingers at the media.

Political Framing and Partisan Bias

It is common for Republican candidates to allege partisan bias from the media even though research shows that "the treatment of Democrats and Republicans in similar situations is nearly indistinguishable"(Niven, 1999, p. 847). Despite the lack of evidence to support the allegation of bias in the media, a significant amount of Americans – politicians, media pundits, and the public – perceive that news organizations are biased politically.

Researchers such as D'Alessio & Allen (2000), Graber (1980), Hofstetter (1976), Just (1997), among others carried out research into media bias. They examined coverage in major American newspapers and found the coverage is neutral, both positive and negative for each candidate, irrespective of party. Yet, 62% of Americans believe that media favor a specific political party, more Democrats over Republicans (Swift, 2017). On the part of politicians, Gunther (1992) finds that their ability to perceive bias is due to their closeness to the issues talked about. Involved politicians always view coverage that affects them as biased. In fact, a Republican and a Democrat electorate can view the same exact news coverage from the same source and consider it biased to the other side's party.

Tsfati and Cappella (2003) argue that the public's mistrust of the media and its general skepticism fuels its belief of media bias. The public sees the media as being subjective – reflecting their audience's belief in order to build their reputation, sacrificing accuracy for gains both commercial and personal (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008; Kohring & Matthes, 2007). The mistrust of the media by the public is termed media dissociation, a divergence between the public's opinion and the media's position (Hwang et al., 2006). As such, people will consume news from sources they trust and ignore news sources that differ from their opinions.

Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

Research Question 1: What is the proportion of the racial, conflict, consequences, morality, human interest, and policy frames used CNN, FOX, *The New York Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal*?

Research Question 2: Are there significant differences in the way CNN, FOX, *The New York Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal* used the racial, conflict, consequences, morality, human interest, and policy frames?

Research Question 3: Is there any significant difference between FOX's original content and its syndicated content?

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

The researcher conducted a qualitative content analysis to explore how the media framed its coverage of the “shithole countries” comment made by President Trump. By definition, a qualitative research examines and analyzes words to elicit empirical knowledge of how humans produce, experience, interpret and understand the social world around them (Bryman, 2008; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Sandelowski, 2004).

Hammersley and Campbell (2012) define qualitative research as:

A form of social inquiry that tends to adopt a flexible and data-driven research design, to use relatively unstructured data, to emphasize the essential role of subjectivity in the research process, to study a small number of naturally occurring cases in detail, and to use verbal rather than statistical form of analysis. (p. 15)

Rather than focusing on testing hypothesis, qualitative researchers spend more time developing explanations for social ideas and generating descriptions. To do so, researchers observe incidents in ‘natural’ settings, with a small sample size, and the knowledge that the researcher’s characteristics shape the data collected and inference gotten from such data. A type of qualitative research is content analysis, which involves systematically looking at a body of text to make valid and replicable inferences

(Krippendorff, 2013). Content analysis, although traditionally seen as a quantitative approach, can be used for both qualitative and quantitative research.

A text is defined as anything that acts as a unit of communication and that we can gain meaning from, either written or not (Mckee, 2003; Nelson & Grote-Garcia, 2009). For this study, a text was any article that covered President Trump's alleged use of the phrase "shithole countries." The sample unit of measurement for this study was divided into the headline, lead, and body of articles covering the incident. While collecting data in the preliminary stage, the researcher identified five frames (racial, conflict, consequences, morality, and human opinion/policy). However, during analysis, a sixth frame emerged (human interest). Thus, the researcher coded the articles by inductively identifying the existence of the six frames in the texts.

Sample

Two center-partisan newspapers and two partisan new sources were used. The *Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times* are perceived to be central in their news reporting but right and left-leaning respectively in their editorials (All Sides, 2018; Blake, 2014; Media Bias Fact Check, 2017; Pew Research Center, 2016). FOX and CNN are believed to be right and left-leaning overall. CNN and FOX publish mostly online and have cable channels. They do not have print editions; so databases LexisNexis and ProQuest do not carry them. ProQuest carries both the *Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*, as well as other sources, and LexisNexis only offers news articles from *The New York Times*, along with other sources.

The databases, ProQuest and LexisNexis, offered both print and online editions of the chosen newspapers. All articles, both print and online, covering the "shithole

countries” incident in the *Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times* were selected and downloaded for analysis. The keyword the researcher used was “shithole countries”. The researcher then selected articles with the keyword “shithole countries” on CNN’s website, and the keyword “s---hole countries” was used on FOX’s website because it gave a higher news article return than “shithole countries,” which resulted in 15 articles. This research focused on the first two weeks after the incident, January 11 to January 25, 2018.

Procedure

In all, 224 articles were downloaded: 75 articles from *The New York Times*, 39 articles from the *Wall Street Journal*, 46 articles from FOX, and 73 articles from CNN. LexisNexis and ProQuest combined selected articles into a single PDF file. Article sourced from CNN and FOX’s website were downloaded in multiple files, which were later combined to a single file. The 224 downloaded articles reduced to 118 by excluding duplicates, editorials, letters to the editor, briefings, transcripts, and opinion-editorial pieces.

Since CNN and FOX were online sources, they did not have duplicates. However, they contained a significant amount of editorials and opinion pieces. *The New York Times*, which was extracted from LexisNexis, and the *Wall Street Journal*, downloaded from ProQuest, each having online and print publications, had some amount of duplicates, which had to be removed. The second article found was removed irrespective of whether it was print or online. The viable articles were then 22 articles from *The New York Times*, 23 articles from the *Wall Street Journal*, 32 articles from FOX, and 35 articles from CNN.

The New York Times and the *Wall Street Journal* articles were then read to eliminate articles that did not focus on the incident but rather referred to it in passing in the last paragraph. Articles that focused on Trump's Davos trip, meeting of world leaders' at Davos and the promotion of America First agenda were removed from the sample. The researcher focused only on coverage that focused on the "shithole incident" and not coverage that references the incident in passing, only in the last paragraph. Twenty news articles remained from both sources. To ensure equality and balance of the sample, the sample size for each source was reduced to 20.

For FOX and CNN, the researcher used systematic sampling. The researcher copied the headlines into a Microsoft Word document and eliminated every third headline for FOX and CNN, decreasing the sample size to 20 each. The total number of article was then 80 (20 articles by 4 sources). And each article was coded by the headline, lead (the first three paragraphs), and consequent paragraphs, bringing the entire sample to 240 (80 x 3) and each news source texts to 60 (20 x 3). Therefore, N = 240.

Measures

While downloading and preliminary reading the articles, the researcher identified five frames, which were racial (1), conflict (2), economic and reputation consequences (3), morality (4), and human interest (5). While coding, policy emerged as a viable frame for this study and was added to the list of frames as the sixth frame. The researcher then started again and recoded the text, identifying the existence of the six frames in the headline, lead and body of the 80 articles selected.

The preselected and emergent frames identified in the study are defined in the following way:

1. *Racial frame*: paints Trump as someone who disregards the existence, validity, and humanity of non-white people, who may be racist, white supremacist, or a combination of both. Also, includes arguments that Trump is not racist, a white supremacist, or a combination of both. The keywords include racist, racial, and race.
2. *Conflict frame*: addresses the rift between two entities, which includes disagreement, falling out, or strong opposing emotional words. The frames only mention the existence of a divide between two entities, like Trump and Democrats or Democrats and Republicans, etc. Also, internal squabbles between U.S. entities and actions by people without power were coded as conflicts. For example, Haitians-American protesting Trump's alleged words were coded as conflict as they had no significant economic or image repercussions for the U.S.
3. *Consequences frame*: similar to the conflict frame, this frame merged the Boydston, Gross, Resnik and Smith's (2013)'s economic frame, and external regulation and reputation frame into a single frame. The frame focuses on repercussions to the United States as an entity and Trump as a person on a somewhat larger, significant scale. So, actions by African leaders, like writing a joint letter was coded as a consequence. Also, Democrats refusing to attend Trump's first State of the Union because of this incident, in addition to previous ones, was coded as consequences

4. *Morality*: focuses on religious morals and societal values and expectations of morals. Mention of God, and phrases like “our nation's values,” “American values” or “American fairness,” and the prescriptions of how public officials should behave, in the case often how Trump should behave, was coded as morality frame.
5. *Human interest*: focuses on the emotional and personal angle of the story. Any part of the articles that offer a human face to the story, evokes sentimental emotions such as outrage, compassion, sympathy or such other, emphasizes how non-white people are affected by this incident, or tries to humanize the actors involved in the incident was coded as human interest
6. *Policy*: coded as discussions about immigration policies such as the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the U.S. diversity lottery system, explanation of how these policies work and how they affect those who benefit from them were coded as policy. Also, mention of the Congress sittings, debates, and ruling on immigration or similar issues were coded as policies.

Data Analysis

Checking for the presence and absence of identified frames, news articles were analyzed for the presence of themes. Each article analyzed had three units of analysis. The headline, lead (coded as the first three paragraphs), and the body (coded as the following paragraphs) were used as the primary units of analysis. Therefore, each article may have different frames in them. They were then coded by:

1. **Source**: FOX (1), CNN (2), the *Wall Street Journal* (3), and *The New York Times* (4).

2. **Syntax:** Headline, Lead, and Body
3. **Types of Organization:** Online (1) and Print (2)
4. **News Author:** Syndication from independent news source like AP News (1), or articles from the organizations' journalists (2).
5. **Frames of the incidents:** Racial, Conflict, Economic and Reputation Consequences, Morality, Human Interest, and Policy, coded Yes (1) and No (2).

Intercoder Reliability

Validity and reliability are two measures researchers generally consider when evaluating their data. Research results, especially content analysis results, must have to some degree elements of replicability, stability, or accuracy to be considered dependable or reliable. Kaplan and Goldsen (1965) define reliable data as “data that remain constant throughout variations in the measuring process (p. 84). By principle, research done through content analysis must be replicable. One way to measure replicability of content analysis is by conducting an intercoder reliability test.

Intercoder reliability simple refers to the degree of agreement between independent coders using the same coding scheme to code selected texts from the studied sample.

To access the intercoder reliability of this study, a recent Strategic Communications graduate of the Zimmerman School of Advertising and Mass Communication at the University of South Florida (coder 2) coded 20% (16 articles and 48 texts) of the sample pool, chosen randomly, using the selected frames and their definitions. The tested intercoder reliability measures are percentages of coding agreement, Cohen's Kappa and Krippendorff's Alpha, seen in Table 3.

Percentage of coding, also known as the simple agreement, is considered to be the weakest measure of reliability and generally cannot be used as the only measure of reliability. Cohen Kappa measures reliability for two coders but is considered to be inappropriate for content analysis (Krippendorff, 2013). Krippendorff's Alpha is considered to be the strongest measure of reliability. For, Krippendorff (2013), alpha must be greater than .80 or 80% ($\alpha \geq .800$) for a researcher to be able to draw conclusions. The lowest conceivable limit for Krippendorff (2004) is a value where $\alpha \geq .667$. Neuendorf (2002) says "percentage agreements "of .90 or greater are nearly always acceptable, .80 or greater is acceptable in most situations, and .70 may be appropriate in some exploratory studies for some indices" (p. 145).

In this study, three of the six frames, racial, consequences, and morality, showed 80-90% agreement and Krippendorff's Alpha while three, conflict, human interest, and policy, had 70-75% agreement and Krippendorff's Alpha. The results obtained are within acceptable range for reliability.

CHAPTER 4

Results

In this research, the incident where Donald Trump is said to have allegedly referred to African countries is used as a case study to compare and analyze American news coverage. By using two mainstream newspapers and two well-known news channels, sectioned also into two partisan and two center-partisan news sources, the researcher was able to examine and draw differing approaches to the frame used and the different perspectives the four sources offered in their coverage of the “shithole countries” coverage. This study adds to previous studies that focused on how the use of frames by news organizations intersects with journalistic practices.

The study explored what frames each of the four sources used, the syntax where the frames occurred, the type of publication, and the sources the news organizations used – whether the sources syndicated their content from other credible news organizations or only used contents from their own staff members or people paid to write solely for them. The researcher had two questions, which guided the type of data collected. The researcher analyzed the data by using Excel and running the data through the SPSS software. The results were similar, with SPSS providing detailed results, allowing the researcher to be able to draw inferences and references from the results.

Research Question 1

The first research question sought to assess what proportion of frames each source used. The total sample size (N) is 240 – 20 articles x 4 sources x 3 units of analysis. However, the frames were coded in a multiple response format, granting most headlines had one frame but the lead and body often had multiple frames. Therefore, it brought the total number of frames recorded, cases, (n) to 374. The most commonly used frame overall was human interest, while the least used overall was morality. The distribution of frames used overall is broken down into human interest at 35%, followed by conflict – with 19.7%, then consequences at 13.9%, policy and racial at both 13.4%, and finally morality at 4.6%.

The actual count of the five frames varied among the four sources. For CNN, its distribution of frames was 31.9% human interest frame, 25.3% consequences frame, 15.4% racial frame, 11% morality frame, 9.9% conflict frame, and 6.5% policy frame. FOX's frames use was similar to CNN, 32.3% human interest frame, 21.5% consequences frame, 19.3% conflict frame, 12.9% racial frame, 9.7% policy frame, and 4.3% morality frame. *The New York Times'* frames use spread was 30.3% human interest, 23.2% conflict, 21.2% racial, 15.2% policy, 6.1% consequences, and 4% morality. Finally, the *Wall Street Journal's* distribution of frames was 45.1% human interest, 26.3% conflict, 3.3% racial, 23.1% policy, 2.2% consequences, and no use of the morality frame at all.

Analysis by Frames

The New York Times was the news source that used the racial frame the most at 42% of the total racial frame count, followed by CNN's 28%, FOX with 24% and, the

Wall Street Journal with 6%. Also, of the total, syntax wise, the frame occurred 22% of the time in the headline, 36% of the time in the lead and 42% of the time in the body of all the articles examined from the four sources. The racial frame was used mostly in the body of the articles, although it was also used significantly in both the headline and lead.

Broken down syntax and source wise, the proportion of how the new sources used the racial frame in the headline was 36.4% CNN, 36.4% FOX, and 27.3% *The New York Times*. The *Wall Street Journal* did not use the racial frame in its headline nor did it use it in its lead. The proportion of use of the racial frame in the lead was 22.2% CNN, 22.2% FOX, and 55.6% *The New York Times*. And the proportion of the use of the racial frame in the body was 28.6% CNN, 19% FOX, 38.1% *The New York Times*, and 14.3% the *Wall Street Journal*.

For the conflict frame, the *Wall Street Journal* used the frame the most at 32.4%; followed closely by *The New York Times* at 31.1%, FOX at 24.3% and CNN at 9%. Syntax-wise, the frame occurred 36.5% overall in the headlines, 29.7% in the lead and 33.8% in the body of the articles. The frame was used the most in the headline and the body. When broken down into the syntax representation of frames, the break down of the appearance of the conflict frame in the headline was 11.1% CNN, 14.8% FOX, 37% *The New York Times*, and the 37% *Wall Street Journal*.

The break down of the proportion of the conflict frame depiction in the lead was 18.2% CNN, 27.3% FOX, 27.3% *The New York Times*, and 27.3% the *Wall Street Journal*. And the proportion of the use of conflict frame in the body was 8% CNN, 32% FOX, 28% *The New York Times*, and 32% the *Wall Street Journal*. CNN used the conflict frame the

least across board. Both *The New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* used the conflict frame equally in their headline and lead while both the *Wall Street Journal* and FOX used the conflict frame the most in the body of their articles.

CNN used the consequence frame the most out of the four sources, as 44.2%. FOX followed at 38.5%, *The New York Times* at 13.4% and the *Wall Street Journal* at 3.8%. Syntax-wise, the frame occurred 26.9% of the time in the headline, 36.5% of the time in the lead and 36.5% of the time in the body of all the articles. The frame was used the most in the lead and the body. When broken down into syntax use of frame by news sources, the break down of the appearance of the frame in the headline was 50% CNN, 42.9% FOX, and 7.1% by *The New York Times*. The *Wall Street Journal* did not use the consequences frame in its headline or in its lead.

For the consequences frame in the lead, the proportion was 42.1% CNN, 42.1% FOX, and 15.8% *The New York Times*. FOX and CNN used the consequences frame significantly in their leads, a lot more than *The New York Times*. The proportion of how the frames appear in the body of the articles was 42.1% in CNN, 31.6% in FOX, 15.8% in *The New York Times*, and 10.5% in the *Wall Street Journal*. The *Wall Street Journal* used the consequences frame the least across board. Both CNN and FOX used the consequences frame more in their headline, lead, and body. *Wall Street Journal* only used it in the body and *The New York Times* used it sparingly in its coverage.

The morality frame was the least used frame, with the proportions being 58.8% by CNN, 23.5% by FOX, and 17.6% by *The New York Times*. The *Wall Street Journal* did not use the morality at all in its coverage. On the syntax level, the occurrence of the morality frame was recorded as 17.6% for the headline, 29.4% of the time in the lead

and 52.9% of the time in the body of all the articles. The morality frame occurred the most in the body, about half more than its occurrence in the headline and the lead together.

Source-specific, the morality frame appeared the 66.7% of the total morality headline count in CNN's coverage, and 33.3% in FOX. *The New York Times* did not use the morality frame in its headline nor did it use it in its leads. For the lead, the proportion breaks down was 80% CNN and 20% FOX. We can say that overall CNN used the morality frame more than the other source, about close to half of the total occurrences. The morality frame was recorded in the body of the news coverage at 44.4% for CNN, 22.2% for FOX, and 33.3% for *The New York Times*.

The human interest frame was the most used frame and somewhat evenly distributed among the four sources. The *Wall Street Journal* used it the most with 31.3%; followed by *The New York Times* at 23.7%, FOX at 22.9% and CNN at 22.1%. The syntax breakdown was 24.4% for the headline, 33.6% for the lead and 42% count of the total number of frame occurrence in the coverage by the four sources. The human interest frame appeared in the headlines of the articles that covered the incident in the following proportion: 21.9% in CNN, 21.9% in FOX, 21.9% in *The New York Times*, and 34.4% in the *Wall Street Journal*. The lead proportion is broken down into 15.9% CNN, 25% FOX, 22.7% *The New York Times*, and 36.4% the *Wall Street Journal*. And, for the body, the breakdown of the proportion of use among the four sources was 27.3% CNN, 21.8% FOX, 25.5% *The New York Times*, and 25.5% the *Wall Street Journal*. The *Wall Street Journal* used the morality frame the most in its headline and lead while CNN used

the morality frame the most in its body. Overall though, the *Wall Street Journal* used the morality the frame significantly much more than the other three sources.

Finally, for the policy frame, the *Wall Street Journal* referenced policy the most and tied the bipartisan discussion and the alleged ensuring outburst to immigration policy and DACA. Proportion wise, its use of the policy frame contributed 42% to the total count of the frame. *The New York Times* came in second with 28%, FOX followed at 18% and then CNN at 12% of the total policy frame count. Syntax-wise, the distribution of frames in the headline, lead, and body was 8%, 14% and 78% respectively. When you break the syntax distribution into each specific source, you get 25% FOX, 25% *The New York Times*, and 50% the *Wall Street Journal* for the headline; 14.3% FOX, 28.6% *The New York Times*, and 57.1% the *Wall Street Journal* for the lead; and 15.4% CNN, 17.9% FOX, 28.2% *The New York Times*, and 38.5% the *Wall Street Journal* for the body. CNN did not use the policy frame in its headline or lead, and the *Wall Street Journal* used the policy frame the most out of the four sources in the headline, lead, and body.

Research Question 2

The second question sought to assess if there were significant differences in the frames used among the four sources. The coded data was run through Pearson's Chi-square (χ^2) tests to assess whether the distribution of frames was significant against the null hypothesis that the distribution was similar between each source. The frames had to be run differently as the frames were coded in a multi-response format and done by count, which did eliminate the relationships between the counted units, as stated in Krippendorff (2013) as one of the disadvantages of using the count method. But, since the researcher intended to find the frequency of the frames used by the four sources in

order to relate the frames within the “shithole countries” coverage, the results gotten from the independent testing of the frames proved useful and valid for the type of research conducted.

In light of this, the chi-square results showed that the p-value of the racial, conflict, consequences, morality and policy frames were below .05 while the p-value of the human interest frame was above .05 ($p = .101$). This means that there were significant differences between the sources’ use of majority of the frames, except in the human-interest frame. The Chi-square test for the racial frame (Table 5) showed statistical significant differences among the four sources ($\chi^2 = 16.67$, $df = 3$, $p < .001$). The variance in the frame can be seen in the 42% shown by *The New York Times* and low 6% the *Wall Street Journal* showed. The conflict frame’s Chi-square result output was ($\chi^2 = 11.02$, $df = 3$, $p < .012$) as seen in Table 6, with the variance shown in the 32.4% by the *Wall Street Journal* and 12.2% by CNN.

For the consequence frame, the Chi-square test output was ($\chi^2 = 30.05$, $df = 3$, $p < .000$) as seen in Table 7, with CNN and the *Wall Street Journal* showing variance at 44.2% and 3.8% respectively. CNN and the *Wall Street Journal* accounted for the variance between the morality frame with 58.8% and 0% respectively and a Chi-square test output of ($\chi^2 = 13.36$, $df = 3$, $p < .004$), seen in Table 8. The result shown in Table 10 offered evidence that there are differences between the policy frame among the four sources ($\chi^2 = 13.04$, $df = 3$, $p < .005$), and the variance between the differences occurs between *Wall Street Journal’s* 42% and CNN’s 12%. All the sources used the human interest frame equally so there was no significant difference in the sources’ use

of the frame as shown in the Chi-square test results ($\chi^2 = 13.04$, $df = 3$, $p < .005$), seen in Table 9.

Question Research 3

The third question sought to assess if there was significant differences between FOX's original content and its syndicated content? The researcher coded for type of authorship because FOX had a significant amount of syndicated content from the Associated Press (AP) and the Washington Examiner. Although the researcher did not set out to stratify the number of content from FOX, syndicated or original, as the researcher did systematically eliminate articles, the percentage of articles of FOX's original content was 50% and 50% was syndicated content.

The researcher then ran Chi-square tests on the news author's relationship to the source and to the frame. When the source of the articles examined was cross-tabulated with authorship, the Chi-square test output came out significant at ($\chi^2 = 102.86$, $df = 3$, $p < .000$), with 42.9% of the variance accounted by the relationship measured. See Table 12, and Table 14 for outputs of the Chi-square tests.

However, when the frames were examined with the source and author, SPSS did not return any values for the syndicated content because the source was constant, only FOX had syndicated content. For example, the Chi-square test for news authorship, source, and the policy frame came out with ($\chi^2 = 10.65$, $df = 3$, $p < .014$), with only 3.4% accounting for the variance in the variables but there was no output for syndicated content, see Table 14.

The reason for coding the news authorship of the articles came from the realization that a significant number of FOX's articles were syndicated. The researcher

questioned whether the frames identified in the syndicated content could be attributed to FOX. FOX's authorship was then cross-tabulated with each frames and the Chi-square findings were as follows: Racial: ($X^2 = 0.00$, $df = 1$, $p < 1.000$); Conflict: ($X^2 = 0.32$, $df = 1$, $p < .573$); Consequences: ($X^2 = 0.30$, $df = 1$, $p < .584$); Morality: ($X^2 = 4.29$, $df = 1$, $p < .038$); Human Interest: ($X^2 = 1.07$, $df = 1$, $p < .302$); and Policy: ($X^2 = 3.27$, $df = 1$, $p < .071$).

The results show there were no significant differences in the frames used in FOX's original content and its syndicated content, except in the morality frame. There was significant difference between the syndicated and original content because the syndicated content did not use any morality frame. Therefore, we can confidently attribute the occurrences of the frames reported in the FOX's articles, whether syndicated or original, to FOX, as in no instance did the syndicated content contribute more significantly to the overall results than the original content.

CHAPTER 5

Discussions

The result that showed no visible or actual difference between the sources' use of the human interest frame versus, in relations to the way they used other frames, make sense when one considers what the human interest frame represents. The human interest frame was simply an indication that an article or message was emotional, put a human face to the issue and generally meant to invoke a sympathetic or understanding feeling to the people affected by an issue. When the media report on issues, as opposed to an incident, they often use the human interest theme. While the "shithole countries" comment was indeed an incident, the coverage about it did not focus on the specific incident but rather tied it to an overarching issue, defined by the specific frame used. Iyengar (1991) classifies the two approaches to frame use as episodic (focusing only on the incident) versus thematic (tying a specific incident to the larger number of incidents, trends, and context).

Conflict versus Consequences Frames

Apart from human interest, the two most used frames were conflict and consequences. The *Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times* used the conflict frame significantly. They framed the incident as Donald Trump rejecting the immigration and his consequent blaming of the fall-out, stalemate, and Congress shutdown on

Democrats. They had less coverage of Democrats versus Republican, or us versus them frame. CNN and FOX used consequences frame significantly. Both news organizations focused a significant amount of their coverage on the actions of Democrat politicians in response to the words allegedly said by Donald Trump and the reactions from the international community. The finding of this study is similar to Gamson's (1992) and de Vreese et al.'s (2001) finding that the most commonly used frames by news organization are conflict and consequences.

It is however interesting to discover which organization used the conflict frame more versus the consequences frame. Without looking at the data, one would expect CNN and FOX, since they are national news channels with broadcast capabilities and assumed to be partisan, would use more of the conflict frame. Americans believe that partisan news organizations positively cover the political party they lean towards and negatively cover the other side (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2008; Kohring & Matthes, 2007). As such, one would expect more of a Democrats versus Republican slant to the reporting than other news sources. And since *The New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* are internationally acclaimed newspapers, seen as to be centrist in their news articles, one would think they would both focus more on the consequences frame. Without looking at the data, one might opine that the coverage would be more focused on international community's response to the incident and focus on the apparent or threatened fall-out caused by the issue.

However, *The New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* used the conflict frame more, which is explained by the fact that these two sources also used the policy frame more than the other two sources. The policy frame situates the "shithole countries"

remark within immigration policies like the diversity visa lottery and DACA.

Republicans and Democrats are often on opposing sides of the issue; as such often news coverage about immigration policies will include mentions or exploration of the difference in opinions between the two camps. Even more, the comment caused a stall in the bi-partisan immigration talks and contributed to the shutdown of Congress for a few days because Republicans and Democrats could not agree in a timely manner on certain issues. Trump blamed the fallout and shutdown on the Democrats refusal to play ball with Republicans. Covering all of these includes pointing out the conflict and differences of opinion between the two opposing groups.

While the researcher can explain *The New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* using more of the conflict frame than CNN and FOX, she cannot explain why CNN and FOX used more of the consequences frame. It is also important to state that while CNN significantly used less conflict frame than consequences while FOX's use of the conflict and consequence frame in its coverage were a little close, at 30% and 33.3%. However, compared to the total occurrence of the frame in all the sources, it is significantly less at 24.3% to *The New York Times'* and the *Wall Street Journal's* 31.1% and 32.4% respectively.

Partisan Use of the Frames

The only instance where CNN and *The New York Times* had more occurrence of a frame as compared to FOX and *Wall Street Journal* was in the racial frame. FOX was quite close to CNN's use of the racial frame. New York Times' racial frame use contributed to 42% of the total while CNN and FOX contributed 28% and 24% respectively. Therefore, it is hard to infer that left-leaning news organizations used the

racial frame more than right-leaning news organizations when the difference between the percentage of CNN and FOX's use of the racial frame was only 4%.

However, the racial frame was CNN's and *The New York Times*' third most used frame, while the racial frame was FOX's and *Wall Street Journal*'s fourth frame, as seen in Table 15. However, any ability to draw an inference from this placement is rendered moot by the fact that the other four frames, apart from human interest, did not occur in a predictable manner. For example, while one can point out that CNN and *The New York Times* switches its consequence frame and its conflict frame: having one or the other as either the second or the fifth most used frame, one cannot make such inference with FOX and *Wall Street Journal*. Although conflict and consequences frames flipped in the *Wall Street Journal*, they did not flip with FOX. Instead, FOX has consequences frame as its second most used frame and the policy frame as its fifth most used frame.

Trying to compare CNN with *The New York Times* versus FOX and the *Wall Street Journal* proved futile as the frames did not occur in a hierarchical manner that made inference possible. While the way CNN and *The New York Times* used the frames were a little similar and did work in pairs: conflict and consequences and morality and policy, FOX and the *Wall Street Journal* did not pair in a similar way. As such, it's hard to draw any inference when you compare them together this way.

This ties in to research such as as D'Alessio & Allen (2000), Graber (1980), Hofstetter (1976), and Just (1997) which point out there is no partisan bias among news organizations despite a significant number of Americans believing otherwise. As Zaltsberg (2016) points out, Trump's leverage of media bias against mainstream media

stems from his belief that the media reports more negative articles about him than Hilary Clinton or other people.

The media focus on Trump is because of his entertainment value, which allowed and allows him to pass through the press filter (Patterson, 2016). During the election cycle, he was able to exploit the press because he was more newsworthy than “the candidate who veers off message is more newsworthy than the candidate who sticks to her teleprompter to deliver the same speech reporters have heard countless times,” (Draper, 2016; Lawrence & Boystun, 2017).

On the surface, it might seem like mainstream media, which are perceived to be liberal and lean left, is negative in its coverage of the “Shithole Countries” incident and Trump in general. But, this is not so. It is rather a continuation of the media’s interest in Trump who is known to “deliver his signature controversial lines in speeches that depart from his prepared remarks” (Draper, 2016). The reason for the significant amount of seemingly negative coverage by the media is because Trump makes a significant amount of controversial remarks, often negative, more than previous candidates and Presidents. The media simply report on these incidents. And as Lawrence and Boystun (2017) point out, “the media are not—in the simplistic sense—to blame for Trump” (p. 152).

Racial Frames

The racial theme’s finding was one of the most interesting things about this study. Going into the study, the researcher assumed that the racial theme would be one of the top two frames used by the sources, especially by CNN. The preliminary reading of the articles and initial preparation of the study made it seem like CNN had used the

racial frame the most. However, the racial frame came in the fourth place out of six frames with 13.37%, sharing the spot with policy when you combine all the frame counts together. Human interest, conflict, and consequences frames were used more than the racial frame by the four news organizations.

When you narrow the results down to sources, the *Wall Street Journal* used the frame the least. And as stated above, CNN and *The New York Times* used the frame more together than FOX and the *Wall Street Journal*. We can theoretically state that the left-leaning news organizations used the racial frame more than the right-leaning news organizations on the surface level, as long as we are also willing to accept certain limitations of this study.

We can also say that CNN and FOX used the frame in similar proportions with 28% and 24% respectively. This dispels any assumption that CNN might have framed the incident as more racial than FOX, a notable news source for conservatives. Conservatives have consistently accused CNN of being fake news, especially since Trump has used the phrase several times on Twitter (Wemple, 2018; Wendling 2018). A significant reason for the fake news label is less that CNN reports untruths but that it negatively covers Trump, Republicans, and the Republican point of views. As such, the “shithole countries” incident was the perfect incident to measure CNN’s coverage of Trump. Considering that the racism frame paints a negative picture and is accusatory in nature, if the assumption of CNN’s negative bias is true, then theoretically its use of the racial frame should be much higher than reported.

Both CNN and FOX’s used the racial frame as quotes or reported speeches to explain the diverging opinions on the debate about Donald Trump inclination. In the

sample, FOX had three different sources defend Trump while CNN had only two people who defended Trump by saying he was not racist. However, it is a leap to use this as an evidence of partisan bias on CNN's part. The examined articles from the two sources were not similar because the researcher used systematic sampling. Some stories were included in one source but eliminated in the other. For example, the coverage of Ugandan's president's support of Donald Trump was eliminated in from the CNN's sample pool but was included in the FOX's sample pool. And as the research results show, with 95% confidence level, CNN and FOX used the racial frame a bit similar.

CHAPTER 6

Limitations and Future Research

A content analysis was done on the coverage of the "shithole countries" incident by CNN, FOX, the *Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*. The study showed that six frames were used by the four news sources in their coverage of the story, with the human interest, conflict, and consequences frames used the most in the coverage. It also showed that there was no significant partisan difference between the left-leaning organizations and the right-leaning organizations used in the study.

One of the limitations of this study was that the researcher examined only the first two weeks of the news coverage and only focused on four sources: CNN, FOX, *The New York Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. As such, its findings cannot be generalized to other coverage periods or other news sources. Also, as much as the research purposefully included news organizations with perceived slants, the findings from this research cannot be used to compare or generalize differences in coverage between news organizations perceived to be slanted right and news organizations perceived to be slanted left by the public.

Another significant limitation is the type of research conducted. The use of content analysis, especially qualitative content analysis, comes with its limitations. First, content analysis is purely a descriptive statistical method. It cannot be used to draw out the causation and effect of things. It also does not explain exactly what causes

the patterns it observes. It can only describe the expected and observed results. To minimize that limitation, the researcher's use of the summative qualitative content analysis approach allowed the researcher to illuminate the context around the results provided in the discussion chapter of this research paper. The approach did provide a rudimentary insight into how the sources used the frames however it did not offer broader meanings to the data and results gotten from the study, which according to Hsieh and Shannon (2005) is one of the disadvantages of using this approach.

The last limitation of this study was its use of a multi-response strategy when coding the frames. The researcher coded the frames with the assumption that some parts of the text, like the lead and the body, would include multiple frames. This approach further limited the type of results that could be drawn from data. It limited the study to finding the frequency of occurrences and the results could only be looked at in a horizontal manner. The researcher could only do individual Chi-square test of the frames in relations to the sources. It could only look at two or three variables at the most. When directly cross-tabbing the variables so as to get the Chi-square tests and symmetric measures, SPSS treated each frame as a separate entity and yielded multiple summary tables accordingly. And, the multiple response analysis in SPSS would only provide frequency outputs. The chi-square test of statistical significance, graphs, and other tests could not be obtained by using the multiple response analysis.

Future research can build on this research by putting into considerations the limitations of this research. Future research could compare international news sources with American newspapers. The international media could have used the frames differently or used different frames from the one selected by the researcher. Using the

international new sources could provide more depth to the consequences frame.

Another interesting research that could be done would be to see how the coverage on the “shithole countries” affected how the media cover and frame conversation about Africa and African issues. The study that would examine the media’s frame of Africa and its issues before the Donald Trump’s alleged words and its coverage of Africa after the “shithole countries” would be significant and interesting to read. All of these studies would add to the scholarship of media framing.

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Appendix 1

Coding Book

1. Coded By _____

2. Headline number _____

3. News Source

(1) Online (2) Print

4. Type of publication (circle one)

(1) CNN (2) FOX (3) *New York Times* (4) *Wall Street Journal*

5. News Author (circle one)

(1) Syndicated (2) Original/Organization's own journalist

6. Syntax (circle one)

(1) Headline (2) Lead (3) Body

7. Types of frames

Code the sample units according to the six frames identified and selected. The frame may have certain keyword or may be inferred from the certain words. Do note that certain units, such as the lead and headline, may have more than one frame. Code the units accordingly.

Frames	Present (Y)	Absent (N)
<i>Racial frame</i> : paints Trump as someone who disregards the existence, validity and humanity of non-white person who may be racist, white supremacist, or a combination of both. Also, may argue that Trump is not racist, white supremacist, or a combination of both. The keywords		

include racist, racial, and race.		
<i>Conflict frames:</i> addresses the rift between two entities, which includes disagreement, falling out, or strong opposing emotional words. The frames only mentions the existence of a divide between two entities, like Trump and Democrats or Democrats and Republicans, etc. Also, internal squabbles between U.S. entities and actions by people without power were coded as conflicts. For example, Haitians-American protesting Trump’s alleged words were coded as conflict as they had no significant economic or image repercussions for the U.S.		
<i>Economic and reputation consequences:</i> focuses on repercussions to the United States as an entity and Trump as a person on a somewhat larger, significant scale. So, actions by African leaders, like writing a join letter was coded as a consequence. Also, Democrats refusing to attend Trump’s first State of the Union because of this incident, in addition to previous ones, was coded as consequences		
<i>Morality:</i> focuses on religious morals and societal values and expectations of morals. Mention of God, and phrases like “our nation's values,” “American values” or “American fairness,” and the prescriptions of how public officials should behave, in the case often how Trump should behave, was coded as morality frame.		
<i>Human interest:</i> focuses on emotional and personal angle of the story. Part of article that offers a human face to the story, evoke sentimental emotions such as outrage, compassion, sympathy or such other, emphasizes how non-white people are affected by this incident, or tries to humanize the actors involved in the incident was coded as human interest		
<i>Policy:</i> coded as discussion about immigration policies such as the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the U.S. diversity lottery system, explanation of how these policies work and how they affect those who benefit from them were coded as policy. Also, mention of the Congress sittings, debates, and ruling on policies were coded as policies.		

Appendix 2

Quantitative Coding Data Scheme/ Excel Sheet

Type of Org

Online = 1
Print = 2

News Source

CNN = 1
FOX = 2
New York Times = 3
Wall Street Journal = 4

News Author

Aggregate/syndicated = 1
Original/org's own
journalist

Syntax

Headline = 1
Lead (first three paragraphs) = 2
Supporting/Body = consequent
paragraphs = 3

Types of frame (preselected)

Racial = 1
Conflict = 2
Consequences = 3
Morality = 4
Human interest = 5
Policy = 6

#	Source	Syntax	Pub. Type	Author	Types of Frames					
					1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2
2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2
3	2	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	1
4	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
5	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
6	2	3	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2
7	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2
8	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2
9	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
10	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2

Appendix 3

Qualitative Coding Data Scheme/ Word Sheet

		CNN	FOX	NYT	WSJ
Racial	H	<p>“Rep. John Lewis calls Trump 'racist,' won't vote on government funding without DACA deal”</p> <p>“GOP Rep. Mia Love: The President's comment about 'shithole countries' was racist”</p> <p>“NAACP president on Trump: 'We know he's a racist'”</p> <p>“UN human rights office calls Trump's comments</p>	<p>“Botswana government says Trump's government is racist, and responds directly to Trump's comment. Uganda president says he likes Trump regardless.”</p> <p>“African ambassadors to UN blast Trump remark as 'racist'”</p> <p>“Wilson and a few plan to sit out the SOTU because of Trump's racist behavior”</p> <p>“Haiti is shocked and outraged at erroneous and racist view”</p> <p>“John Lewis won't</p>	<p>“Again, Words Stoke Flames Of Racial Fire”</p> <p>“A President Who Fans, Rather Than Douses, the Nation's Racial Fires”</p> <p>“In Trump's Immigration Remarks, Echoes of a Century-Old Racial Ranking”</p> <p>“‘I'm Not a Racist,' Trump Says in Denying Vulgar Comment”</p>	

		'racist''	attend Trump's first State of the Union: 'I think he is a racist'' "Trump says Dems don't want to make DACA deal, adds he's 'not a racist''		
	L		<p>"The African group of ambassadors to the United Nations has issued an extraordinary statement condemning the "outrageous, racist and xenophobic remarks" by President Donald Trump and demanding a retraction and apology."</p> <p>"Wilson, who was elected in 2010 and made headlines last year for fighting with Trump over his telephone call to the widow of a fallen soldier, cited the president's "recent racist and incendiary</p>	<p>"The Haitian government called the remarks racist."</p> <p>"Mr. Trump's remarks, the latest example of his penchant for racially tinged remarks denigrating immigrants, left members of Congress from both parties attending the meeting in the Oval Office alarmed and mystified."</p> <p>"Many in this prosperous Scandinavian country were already asleep, but several prominent Norwegians who were still online took to Twitter to vent their outrage and disgust, not only at Mr. Trump's vulgar language but at what many saw as a racially tinged insult. / "The real White House: Trump calls Haiti and African countries 'shithole' countries to the face of members of</p>	

			remarks about Haiti and African nations" for reasons why she wouldn't be attending the Jan. 30 speech."	Congress, and uses Norway to prove his racism," wrote Andreas Wiese, a newspaper commentator who manages the House of Literature, a popular cultural center in Oslo, Norway's capital."	
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Appendix 4

Tables and Chi-square Results

Table 1: Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) Media Frame Measurement

Human interest frame

- Does the story provide a human example or “human face” on the issue?
- Does the story employ adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion?
- Does the story emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem?
- Does the story go into the private or personal lives of the actors?
- Does the story contain visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, empathy, caring, sympathy, or compassion?

Conflict frame

- Does the story reflect disagreement between parties/individuals/groups/countries?
- Does one party/individual/group/country reproach another?
- Does the story refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue?
- Does the story refer to winners and losers?

Morality frame

- Does the story contain any moral message?
- Does the story make reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets?
- Does the story offer specific social prescriptions about how to behave?

Consequences frame

- Is there a mention of (financial) losses or gains now or in the future?
 - Is there a mention of the costs/degree of expense involved?
 - Is there a reference to (economic) consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?
-

Table 2: Distribution of Publications

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	CNN	60	25	25	25
	FOX	60	25	25	50
	NYT	60	25	25	75
	WSJ	60	25	25	100
	Total	240	100	100	

Table 3: Intercoder Reliability

Frames	Percentage of agreement	Krippendorff's Alpha
Racial	87.4	.8750
Conflict	73.9	.7414
Consequences	80.6	.8081
Morality	89.7	.8984
Human Interest	74.9	.7509
Policy	72.7	.7293

Table 4: Frames and Sources Crosstab

		CNN	FOX	NYT	WSJ	
Racial	Count	14 _a	12 _a	21 _a	3 _b	50
	% within Frame 1	28.0%	24.0%	42.0%	6.0%	100.0%
	% within Source	23.3%	20.0%	35.0%	5.0%	20.8%
	% of Total	5.8%	5.0%	8.8%	1.3%	20.8%
Conflict	Count	9 _a	18 _b	23 _b	24 _b	74
	% within Frame 2	12.2%	24.3%	31.1%	32.4%	100.0%
	% within Source	15.0%	30.0%	38.3%	40.0%	30.8%
	% of Total	3.8%	7.5%	9.6%	10.0%	30.8%
Consequences	Count	23 _a	20 _a	7 _b	2 _b	52
	% within Frame 3	44.2%	38.5%	13.5%	3.8%	100.0%
	% within Source	38.3%	33.3%	11.7%	3.3%	21.7%
	% of Total	9.6%	8.3%	2.9%	0.8%	21.7%
Morality	Count	10 _a	4 _{a, b}	3 _{b, c}	0 _c	17
	% within Frame 4	58.8%	23.5%	17.6%	0.0%	100.0%
	% within Source	16.7%	6.7%	5.0%	0.0%	7.1%
	% of Total	4.2%	1.7%	1.3%	0.0%	7.1%
Human Interest	Count	29 _a	30 _a	31 _{a, b}	41 _b	131
	% within Frame 5	22.1%	22.9%	23.7%	31.3%	100.0%
	% within Source	48.3%	50.0%	51.7%	68.3%	54.6%
	% of Total	12.1%	12.5%	12.9%	17.1%	54.6%
Policy	Count	6 _a	9 _a	14 _{a, b}	21 _b	50
	% within Frame 6	12.0%	18.0%	28.0%	42.0%	100.0%
	% within Source	10.0%	15.0%	23.3%	35.0%	20.8%
	% of Total	2.5%	3.8%	5.8%	8.8%	20.8%
Total	Count	60	60	60	60	240
	% within Total	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	100.0%

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of Source categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.

Table 5: Hierarchy of Frames Occurrence in Source

	CNN	NYT	FOX	WSJ
1	Human Interest	Human Interest	Human Interest	Human Interest
2	Consequences	Conflict	Consequences	Conflict
3	Racial	Racial	Conflict	Policy
4	Morality	Policy	Racial	Racial
5	Conflict	Consequences	Policy	Consequences
6	Policy	Morality	Morality	Morality

Table 6: Racial Frame Chi-square

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.674 ^a	3	.001
Likelihood Ratio	18.879	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.898	1	.089
N of Valid Cases	240		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.50.

Table 7: Conflict Frame Chi-square

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.019 ^a	3	.012
Likelihood Ratio	11.854	3	.008
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.728	1	.002
N of Valid Cases	240		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 18.50.

Table 8: Consequences Frame Chi-square

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.049 ^a	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	33.848	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	28.242	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	240		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.00.

Table 9: Morality Frame Chi-square

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.358 ^a	3	.004
Likelihood Ratio	15.498	3	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.117	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	240		

a. 4 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.25.

Table 10: Human Interest Frame Chi-square

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.236 ^a	3	.101
Likelihood Ratio	6.372	3	.095
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.583	1	.032
N of Valid Cases	240		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 27.25.

Table 11: Policy Frame Chi-square

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.036 ^a	3	.005
Likelihood Ratio	13.014	3	.005
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.579	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	240		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.50.

Table 12: Source and Author Cross-tabulation

Source			Syndicated	Original	
Source	CNN	Count	0 _a	60 _b	60
		% within Source	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% within News Author	0.0%	28.6%	25.0%
		% of Total	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
	FOX	Count	30 _a	30 _b	60
		% within Source	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within News Author	100.0%	14.3%	25.0%
		% of Total	12.5%	12.5%	25.0%
	NYT	Count	0 _a	60 _b	60
		% within Source	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% within News Author	0.0%	28.6%	25.0%
		% of Total	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%
WSJ	Count	0 _a	60 _b	60	
	% within Source	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% within News Author	0.0%	28.6%	25.0%	
	% of Total	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%	
Total	Count		30	210	240

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of News Author categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.

Table 13: Source and Author Chi-square

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	102.857 ^a	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	97.672	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.829	1	.009
N of Valid Cases	240		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.50.

Table 14: Source and Author Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.655	.000
	Cramer's V	.655	.000
N of Valid Cases		240	

Table 15: Policy Frame, Source and Author Chi-square

		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Syndicated	Pearson Chi-Square	. ^b		
	N of Valid Cases	30		
Original	Pearson Chi-Square	10.654 ^c	3	.014
	Likelihood Ratio	11.276	3	.010
	Linear-by-Linear Association	9.867	1	.002
	N of Valid Cases	210		
Total	Pearson Chi-Square	13.036 ^a	3	.005
	Likelihood Ratio	13.014	3	.005
	Linear-by-Linear Association	12.579	1	.000
	N of Valid Cases	240		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12.50.

b. No statistics are computed because Source is a constant.

c. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.86.