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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Framing the population debate: a comparison of source and news frames in the Philippines

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This study compares frames constructed by two sides of the Philippine population management debate with media frames of the issue. Analysis was conducted through neural network analysis with the CatPac computer program. On the one hand, supporters of the policy use a ‘development frame’ which defines population as a problem borne out of people having large families; it is argued that unchecked population growth negatively impacts on development outcomes such as education and income. In the development frame, the proposed solution is to institute a population management policy that promotes family planning (contraceptive use) to help Filipinos achieve their desired family size. Opponents on the other hand use two frames, one which equates the policies with abortion, and another which argues that such policies will lead to a degradation of moral values. Results delineate the competing frames from both sides and show that the media frame reflects both views, but that the discourse is presented as conflict.

Keywords: framing; network analysis; population

In the Philippines, population management through family planning is not only a public health concern but is also a highly contested political issue. Political discourse regarding state support for family planning programs as a means to manage what has been characterized repeatedly as ‘runaway population growth’ is comprised in large part of strong opposition from conservative religious groups who have been actively influencing policy-making at the national level. This study analyzes the framing of political discourse about population management in the public sphere. It examines how two prominent sets of actors on each side of the population debate in the Philippines frame the issue, and then compares these with the news media’s frames to determine how the issue is presented to the public. The research hopes to generate better understanding of how actors on the two sides of this debate have framed the issue and how the competing frames are depicted in news coverage. It is critically important to understand how the population debate is being represented by advocates as they shape how the media will frame the issue, whose coverage in turn have been shown to influence citizens’ attitudes and opinions (e.g., Domke, Shah, & Wackman, 1996; Iyengar, 1991; McLeod, 1995; Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1996).

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Framing analysis has allowed scholars to understand more precisely the way through which communication can influence human consciousness (Entman, 1993). Specifically, framing is defined as selecting 'some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described' (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

Much of communication research on framing focuses on the products of news media. When applied to media research, framing is defined broadly as 'the central organizing idea for making sense of an issue or conflict and suggesting what is at stake' (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Koch, 1998, p. 210). The press can intentionally or unintentionally frame public issues in a way that may invite or discourage public and policy debate. For example, citizens' opinions about the legitimacy of political rallies, even as extreme as those of the white supremacist group Ku Klux Klan, depends on whether elites frame the rally as a free speech issue or a public safety issue (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Framing processes are fundamentally conflicts over meanings and shared understandings that are at the core of new issues and interests (Joachim, 2003). It is not an activity undergone exclusively by media. Gitlin's (1980) elaboration on the definition of framing includes all entities who construct communication; it is understood as 'persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation and presentation, or selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol handlers routinely organize discourse' (p. 7). Problems, solutions, and political motives identified by different interest groups or issue elites, although concerning a single issue, may conflict and contradict each other (e.g., Murphy, 2001). As Schon and Rein (1994, p. 29) aptly describe it, struggles 'over the naming and framing of a policy situation are symbolic contests over the social meaning of an issue domain'. The international redefinition of population from 'family planning' to 'reproductive health' is a prime example of this, where gender and human rights interest groups succeeded in redefining the core goals of the program as reflected by symbolic changes in the labels and language used to discuss the issue.

This article extends existing work on framing by examining competing frames from two sides of a debate and comparing these with framing in press coverage, presenting evidence that provides a picture of how alternative frames generated by important issue actors influence press coverage of an issue. This article also contributes to the empirical work on framing by applying neural network analysis to an issue framing question which more frequently uses either qualitative textual analysis techniques or quantitative content analysis coding. The potentials of neural network analysis for communication research are discussed. Following is a brief description of the context surrounding the population debate in the Philippines.

Competing to frame the population debate

Population growth was identified as an urgent global problem more than four decades ago and, in most countries around the world, it has been successfully managed through family planning programs that provide medically safe ways to regulate fertility in order to allow couples to have only the number of children that they desire. Along the way these programs have improved maternal and child health, easing poverty in some of the poorest countries in the world (Balisacan & Tubianosa,

2004; Pernia, 2007). The Philippines is one of the handful of remaining countries in the region with high fertility rates; the total fertility rate or number of births per woman during 1990 was 4.3 and it did not decrease significantly in the that decade as World Bank estimates show the country's total fertility rate for 2000 was still 3.5 and in 2008 it was 3.1, a long way away from the goal of replacement fertility (2.1) (World Bank HNPStats, 2008). In comparison, the fertility rates of neighboring Thailand and Indonesia are 1.8 and 2.2, respectively. From 20 million in the year 1950, the Philippine's population expanded to 75 million in 2000 and then, in the last census of 2007, estimates pegged the population at 88 million, making it the ninth most populous country on earth. A 2007 Family Planning Survey showed that only around a third of married women use modern methods of family planning, and almost all sexually active unmarried women do not use any form of contraception (NSO-FPS National Statistics Office, 2007).

There are two clearly identifiable sides in the population debate in the Philippines, the pro and anti population management sides, with population management being closely tied with state promotion and supply of modern contraceptive methods. These sides are similar to the abortion debate in the United States where supporters and opponents of legalized abortion frame the issue differently by, for instance, self-labeling each movement as pro-life and pro-choice. Such labeling has been adopted in the Philippines by those who are opposed to any kind of government support for contraception (including birth control pills, condoms, intrauterine devices, and other hormonal contraceptives), naming their groups 'pro-life' and calling family planning and population management policies 'anti-life' or 'pro-abortion' (Pernia et al., 2008).

Support for family planning and population management programs come from certain groups of legislators, women's interest groups, the medical community, and policy-makers such as economists, demographers, and statisticians who do research on population. Over the past several years there have been repeated attempts to legislate on and lay out a national population management policy (alternatively labeled family planning or reproductive health policies) which sets forth a comprehensive program that would include provisions for supplying contraceptives in public health centers, requiring age-appropriate sex education in public schools, and requiring public health workers to provide clients with information on all legal forms of contraception and family planning (Orbeta, 2002). Since 1987 there has been no significant progress on this front, with all versions of the policy being repeatedly faced with aggressive opposition from conservative groups.

Proponents of population management policies cite research-based evidence of links between population and national development, poverty, and environmental degradation (Balisacan & Tubianosa, 2004; Orbeta, 2005; Pernia et al., 2004). The state's attempts to arrive at a policy on population management frequently cite research that shows higher poverty incidences in larger families and the negative impacts of high population growth rates on the national economy and human development. A recent proposal for a Reproductive Health Bill in the Congress has reinvigorated the debate on population and family planning in the country, a discussion that has remained dormant for the past few years due, at least in part, to a Presidential administration that has pronounced it is against the promotion of modern contraception and will only provide government funding for natural family planning methods. Proponents of population management programs often cite the

church's influence on the public and politicians when they attempt to explain why the country's fertility rate has remained very high.

Opposition to government policies and spending to promote population management through family planning and contraception come most strongly from the Philippine Catholic Church hierarchy. Over 80% of Filipinos are Roman Catholic and church organizations are active in influencing politics and policy. Some of the most prominent groups include the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), Couples for Christ, and ProLife Philippines who actively lobby against government efforts to promote modern contraception as well as (age-appropriate) sex education in the public school system. Their arguments are rooted in ideas of freedom of religion as well as Constitutional protections on 'right to life' where life is defined as beginning at the time of conception, and conception is defined as the moment a woman's egg is fertilized. Modern contraceptive methods are connected to abortion, and those who are against contraception call proponents 'pro-abortion' or 'anti-life'. Opposition to sex education in public schools and the teaching of condom use to protect against STDs is borne out of a concern that teaching sex will lead to promiscuity and eventually a 'breakdown in the moral fiber' of the nation. The 'Pro Life' movement accepts only what they call 'natural family planning methods' practiced within the context of marriage: namely the Billings method, basal body temperature, and abstinence. For unmarried individuals, only abstinence is acceptable. Moreover, opponents of population management directly refute the arguments of supporters that connect family size and population growth to poverty and development.

Framing

There has been strong interest in framing analysis among communication scholars; perhaps because it speaks directly of media's ability to provide symbolic, rather than literal, depictions of events (Goffman, 1974; Tuchman, 1978). A frame can invite certain kinds of interpretations and promote a solution through the deliberate choice of words and arguments designed for a particular audience. Framing is done not only by media but also by actors such as issue advocates and policy experts (Joachim, 2003; Murphy & Maynard, 2000). Actors can and do package and frame policy ideas 'to convince others that certain policy proposals constitute acceptable solutions to pressing problems' (Campbell, 1998, p. 381). A large part of the challenge to actors in a social movement is to mobilize public or institutional sentiment and support for their cause (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993; Joachim, 2003; Snow & Benford, 1988), a task that requires the strategic use of messages to promote a particular interpretation of an issue (Lind & Salo, 2002). Thus, for a policy issue under debate, one can expect the presence of alternative frames of an issue competing for dominance in influencing media frames and, consequently, public understanding. Media will construct their own frames but can also be influenced strongly by how elite actors or political elites, who are frequently the sources for news events, frame the issue (Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Crawley, 2007).

For many policy issues the public is reliant on the media and important political actors who together shape the rhetoric that defines policy debates and alternatives (Callaghan & Schnell, 2001). As politicians and interest groups struggle to shape the structure of media coverage in order to improve the likelihood of outcomes that are favorable to their interests, the press is expected to sift through the opposing sides'

rhetoric and interests in the process, perhaps, of shaping their own version of an issue frame. Gaining control of how an issue is framed, through assertion of a particular form of political rhetoric, can influence public opinion. The 'entrenchment of some terms and the disappearance of others is often a signal of political triumph and defeat' (Kinder & Sanders, 1990, p. 1).

In an examination of the role of the news in framing elite policy discourse, Callaghan and Schnell (2001) conceptualized three possible outcome scenarios in the press as a result of framing struggles between interest groups: these are (a) domination of one side's message spin, (b) arbitration by the media resulting from combining all players' views, or (c) a purely media-generated version of the debate, different from the political actors' rhetoric. The implication of such an approach is that media are conceptualized not simply as transmitters of debate but consequential actors; themselves constructing unique frames in addition to transmitting other people's framing of an issue (Callaghan & Schnell, 2001; Cook, 1998; Patterson, 1998). After all, the media have their own interests to protect. They are motivated by the desire to earn profits (and thus, to reflect the interest of the public; Bennett, 1988; Sahr, 1993), pressures and accessibility of sources (Bennett, 1990; Tuchman, 1978), and journalistic routines and norms (Graber, 1993; Tuchman, 1978). A comparative content analysis of texts generated by opposing political actors and news coverage of the US gun control issue shows that the media can indeed intervene in the framing process (Callaghan & Schnell, 2001).

How does one examine frames in political content? Linguistic approaches to frame analysis posit that frames are constructed through the strategic selection of words and phrases to present an argument under a certain light. From texts, one can glean stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and 'sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments' (Entman, 1993, p. 52). Indicators of frames include word choices that imply a particular interpretation of a piece of information. For example, Murphy (2001) studied expert disagreement surrounding the nicotine addiction debate within the context of expert testimony given during a Congressional hearing. Through semantic network or word clustering techniques, her analysis revealed that tobacco industry experts use language implying a preference for citing laboratory studies (e.g., word cluster data/lab/go/look/whether) that suggest a link between nicotine and addiction has not been found (e.g., don't/know/think/never). In contrast, academic research experts draw on concerns about public health (e.g., addiction/nicotine/cigarettes/public/American) and beliefs about the health effects of smoking (e.g., cancer/disease/smoking/people/think). The same method has been employed in examining the framing of genetic testing using testimony for public policy factions (Murphy & Maynard, 2000).

News frames have been found to contain information that facilitate a particular definition of a problem and attribute these to causal agents or identify the forces that have created the problem (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Family planning advocates frequently cite the influence of the church on the Filipino family's decision to limit or space births. When national population programs fail, many inevitably mention, either as a central argument or as a minor mitigating factor, the Catholic Church. Frames can also contain moral judgments either through arguments based on political ideology (i.e., normative democratic theory), human rights, or religion, to name a few. Finally, they also offer remedies or solutions that are inherently intertwined with the causes and moral judgments invoked.

Framing of news has been shown to have effects on audiences particularly in the process of understanding, remembering, and evaluating a problem and its consequent solutions (Reese, 2001; Rhee, 1997; Valkenburg, Semetko, & De Vreese, 1999). Those with control over how a story is told, how certain details are highlighted and others downplayed, or how arguments in support of a position are made more salient over those in opposition to it, can affect the direction of public opinion by limiting and shaping the way individuals understand the nature and consequences of an issue (e.g., Brewer, 2002). Thus, the press is in a uniquely influential position because their responsibilities include the filtering and processing of sources, content, arguments, and even facts. In the process of putting a story together, reporters highlight what is important and what is not, they define what the public should know and do not need to know. Through this they have the capacity to shape public opinion.

Neural network analysis is applied to this comparative study of how the population management issue has been framed by those who support it and those who oppose it. In addition, these two frames are compared with the framing of the news media; with the expectation that press coverage will contain signs of both frames. The following research questions are posed.

How do proponents and supporters of national population management policies frame their arguments and rationales for state support or intervention? How do opponents frame their objections to such state support? What are the values that inform both sides? On the news media side, we explore whether these frames are found in press coverage of population management.

Method

The data used in this study was part of a larger project entitled 'Framing the Population Debate' whose principal investigators are Clarissa David and Antonio La Viña. It sought to thoroughly describe and analyze the dominant frames within the population debate through an examination of news texts, policy position papers, research produced by policy proponents, public statements, and legislation proposed in both the Senate and Congress.

Sample

Included in the sample for this study were the three most widely circulated broadsheet newspapers in the country, namely the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, the *Philippine Star*, and the *Manila Bulletin* published between the years 1987 and 2007. Two six-month periods were randomly sampled from the six-year terms of Presidents Aquino, Ramos, and Arroyo. One six-month period was sampled for the truncated term of President Estrada. All 12 months of 2007 was included in the sample to skew it more heavily toward recent coverage since there has been renewed coverage of the policy discussions. In all, four and a half years' worth of newspapers was manually scanned for news stories related to family planning, contraceptive use, and population. These included coverage of statements made by public officials, stories about new government programs, medical stories about new forms of contraception, and release of new projections and data about population estimates. This procedure yielded 364 articles.

In all three newspapers there were opinion columnists who espouse the Pro-Life message and who are active in writing about their positions. The articles written by these columnists were selected if they were published within the same time frame as the news articles. A total of 23 column articles were included in the sample to represent messages by those who oppose population management and family planning. In addition, text was extracted from the websites of two prominent groups, the 'Pro-Life' movement and the CBCP. The texts included three pastoral statements, three editorials, and 26 press releases.

Messages of those who promote population management and family planning policies frequently cite research conducted to support policy. These are commissioned or conducted by individuals in government, think-tanks, or foundations for population issues. There are only a handful of experts in the field; the content selected to represent the arguments of proponents of population management were position papers, discussion papers, and research papers of these experts. A total of 12 papers were included in the sample.

Analytical strategy

There are different ways to conduct framing analysis, ranging from purely qualitative textual analysis approaches to purely automated word frequency-based approaches (see Matthes & Kohring, 2008, for review), while others use a combination of methods (Papacharissi & Oliveira, 2008). Traditional content analytic techniques which take a holistic approach by generating working frames from in-depth analysis and then manually coding text units within a set of codes would be difficult to implement in this study. Unlike many framing studies of media texts, not all texts included here are news articles, posing a challenge for uniform unitizing across the three sources. Thus, a computer-assisted quantitative procedure was utilized, based on Entman's (1993) notion that frames are manifested in the use of certain words.

Analysis was conducted through a computer-based textual analysis of word clustering patterns with a computational algorithm that follows neural network analysis. The software used is called CatPac (Woelfel, Danielsen, & Woelfel, 1995) which uses word frequencies and distances to estimate patterns of association. Procedurally, all news articles were combined in one file, all articles supporting population management in one file, all articles opposing it in another file, and all news articles in a separate file. The software allows analysts to screen out all words that are not consequential to framing; these are treated as semantic clutter and include prepositions, pronouns, and other words identified by the analyst. It will run through the entire set of text and rank words according to frequencies; a cut-off point of 35 words was set for the number of words that will be used in the final network analysis.

The network analysis proceeds by treating each word in the text as a neuron and then scanning a window of a particular size set by the researcher (the window size used was 7) through the text. When the word appears in the window the associated neuron is activated. Associations that make up the network are identified via co-occurrences of words within the window as it moves through the text. 'The connections between neurons (words) that are simultaneously active in the window (i.e., within five words of one another) become positively interconnected in the network, while those that seldom or never co-occur become negatively interconnected' (Murphy, 2001, p. 283). Words cluster together in

distinct patterns determined by the weights or connections between neurons through minimum variance cluster analysis called the Wards Method (see Barnett, 1996; Murphy, 2001; Woelfel et al., 1995). The software's output is a dendrogram that depicts how the most frequently-occurring frame-consequent words cluster together; this output is then used to generate a visual depiction through accompanying software called ThoughtView. The three sets of texts, from namely (1) opponents of population management, (2) proponents of population management, and (3) news articles on population, were analyzed separately with each set of texts yielding different word clusters.

Frames can be manifested through the presence or absence of keywords and stock phrases or catchphrases used frequently by a source (Entman, 1993). Efforts to frame or re-frame an issue entails use of certain labels or a strategic selection of words such as using the term 'baby' versus 'fetus' in a discussion about abortion (Simon & Jerit, 2007). Further, frequent use of certain words or co-occurring words indicates the presence of particular arguments. For instance if the words 'population' and 'development' co-occur frequently, this would signal a message that links the phenomenon of population with development (such as economic or social development). On the other hand, close proximity between 'contraception' and 'abortion' would suggest that the argument attempts to equate or link the two, a tack frequently employed by groups who oppose modern contraception. The word clustering patterns that emerge are then interpreted by the researcher who should have general knowledge about the arguments being posed by those engaged in the debate.

The strength of this inductive method, as has been pointed out in existing works, is that identification of the frame themes is done through purely objective indicators (i.e., word frequencies and co-occurrences as they appear in the text) which are then interpreted by the researcher (Murphy, 2001). Its protocol for identifying frames and arguments within those frames is not researcher-defined from the beginning as it is done with traditional content analysis. The advantage of neural network analysis is that it shields the process from presuppositions, intended or unintended, of the researcher. It also allows for the efficient analysis of large volumes of text. There are also some disadvantages, most notable of which is that framing devices that are employed but are not frequently used will be excluded from the analysis which weighs significance using frequencies (Hertog & McLeod, 2001). Each set of texts from those who oppose, support, and report on population management yields distinct word clusters. The cluster themes from each set are then compared against each other to glean differences in the framing of population management as an issue.

Results and discussion

Word clusters from each set of text are reported and discussed separately first before discussing the comparisons. In discussing the results, words that appear in the clusters are italicized in the body of the text.

Support for population management

Supporters of population management programs are typically legislators and policy-makers who rely on research generated by academic institutions or government think-tanks to inform policy. The texts selected to represent the views and arguments of

Table 1. Word groupings of text supporting population management.

Cluster 1 Impacts of large family size on development	Age/women/child/children/size/fertility/household/member/ Poverty/poor/education/income/impact/development Family/planning/policy
Cluster 2 Cross-country comparisons	Economic/countries/reduction/plan/per/rate/information Government/expenditures/PPMP
Cluster 3 Proposing a national population program	National/population/program/services/health/data Reproductive/growth

Note: Words within the clusters joined by slashes are grouped by the authors according to interpreted substantive meanings.

supporters of population management are from position papers and research papers of experts in population research in the country. Table 1 presents the four word clusters that emerged and Figure 1 presents the spatial representation of the word clusters.

Being mostly drawn from research papers in support of a population management policy, Cluster 1 is comprised of words that describe the problem of high fertility rates and suggest potential consequences and causes. The cluster reports on averages of family size or *household size*, an alternative way of presenting *fertility* rate which is computed out of the number of *children* women have over their lifetimes. It also includes references to the *impacts* of large families or population which are *poverty*, *education*, and *income and development*. *Family planning policy*, or more accurately the lack of it, is often singled out as a mitigating factor for the persistently high fertility rates in the country. The cluster is thus labeled ‘impacts of large family size’.

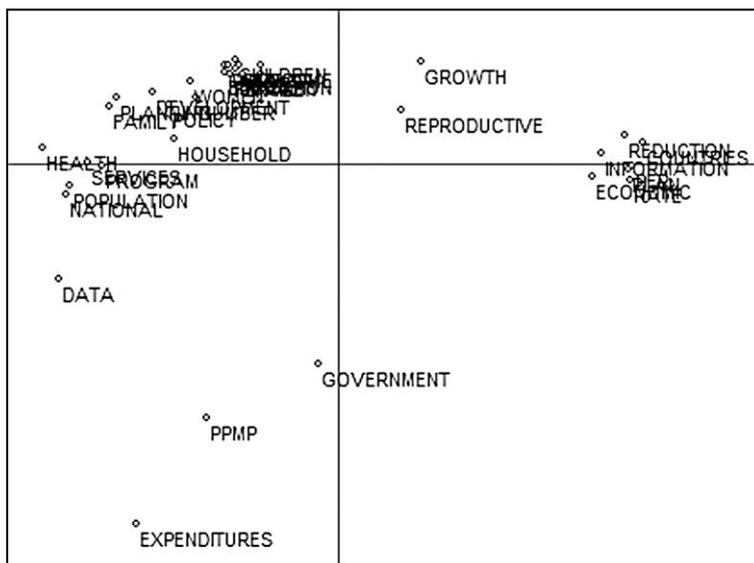


Figure 1. Word groupings of text supporting population management.

Cluster 2 words signify cross-country comparisons in the *reduction* of growth rates (presumable population or fertility) and deal with *economic* consequences of such reduction. In legislation and in policy, supporters frequently compare population size and growth rates (or decline of growth rates) of the Philippines to its neighboring countries. PPMP stands for the Philippine Population Management Program, which is an existing *government* program that has been characterized in the past as being underfunded (*expenditures*) and therefore ineffective.

Finally, a third cluster of words is labeled 'proposing a national population program' as it contains words that are related to the provision of services to address the problem of high fertility. The words *national*, *population*, and *program* co-occur frequently along with *services* and *health*. These words point to a proposed national program that provides services to curb population *growth*. Such a program would be subsumed under government's provision of general *health* services through the public health care system.

All three word clusters can be considered as indicative of a single frame since they revolve around the same general argument. Clusters 1 and 2 define the problem while Cluster 3 prescribes a solution. The set is considered a 'Development Frame' which argues that population growth is a problem that must be addressed because, if it is left unchecked, it will arrest economic and social development. The development frame concludes that the solution must be a national population management program.

Opposition to population management

Opposition to population management programs argue against it on two fronts. First, the objection to use and promotion of contraceptives is based on their belief that these are abortive and therefore violate Constitutional and moral demands of 'right to life'. Second, 'pro-life' groups lobby vehemently against efforts to mandate any form of sex education in the public school system because of an expectation that teaching sex education would lead to promiscuity and breaking down of religious values and morals. These two arguments appear in the two word clusters that emerged from the texts of those opposing population management programs (Table 2 and Figure 2).

Table 2. Word groupings of text opposing population management.

Cluster 1 Anti-abortion	Abortion/human/life/pro Population/control/development Catholic/church Women/family/people Reproductive/health/bill/RH/Manila/House/Congress
Cluster 2 Sex education	Children/education/sexual/parents Contraceptives/contraception Government/law/countries/world Moral/natural/planning Birth/growth

Note: Words within the clusters joined by slashes are grouped by the authors according to interpreted substantive meanings.

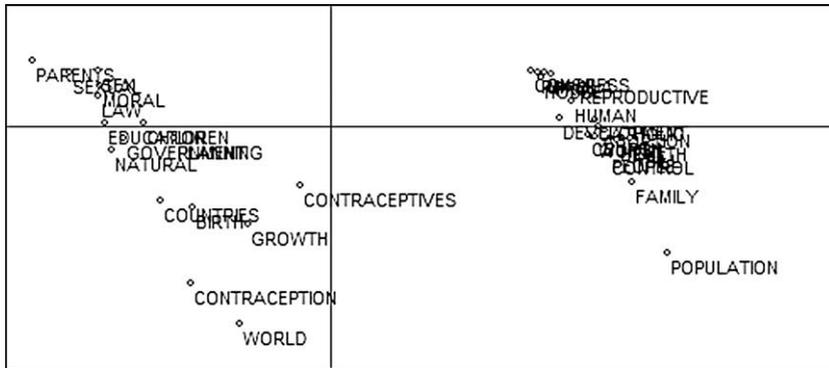


Figure 2. Word groupings of text opposing population management.

The first cluster of words is labeled 'reproductive health as abortion' because it contains the stock words used by opposition groups (namely the *Catholic Church*) to equate reproductive health programs proposed by the government (which includes contraception or 'birth control') to *abortion*. The term 'birth control' or 'population control' was abandoned by the population management movement many years ago because it opened the door for conservative groups to criticize government family planning policies as promoting abortion. It is now invoked almost exclusively by those who are against population management in order to connect reproductive health programs with abortion. They promote only 'natural' forms of family planning and consider contraception such as birth control pills as abortive and an 'attack to human life'. The cluster singles out efforts by government to legislate a population management program shown by the words *reproductive, health, bill, RH, Manila, House, and Congress*. The cluster also includes the word *development* which occurs in the development frame of supporters, presumably in a context of opposing the other side's argument.

A second cluster of words revolves around the conservative groups' objections to *government* attempts to legislate on *sex(ual) education* in schools which they believe promotes the use of *contraceptives* rather than *natural family planning* and is an affront to the *morals* of the country. It is their contention that such education should be conducted in the family and should come from the *parents*. Since the two clusters refer to two different problems within the broader issue of population management, these are considered two separate frames. The first is an 'Anti-abortion Frame' and the second a 'Sex Education' frame.

News articles on population and family planning programs

We analyzed word cluster patterns for a set of news articles published between the years 1987 and 2007 to explore how the framing of support and opposition of population management programs are manifested in press coverage. Figure 3 shows the emergence of two very tightly clustered words. Such a pattern suggests strong commonality in terms used across all the news articles that come from three different newspapers spanning 20 years of coverage. The first cluster is labeled 'government

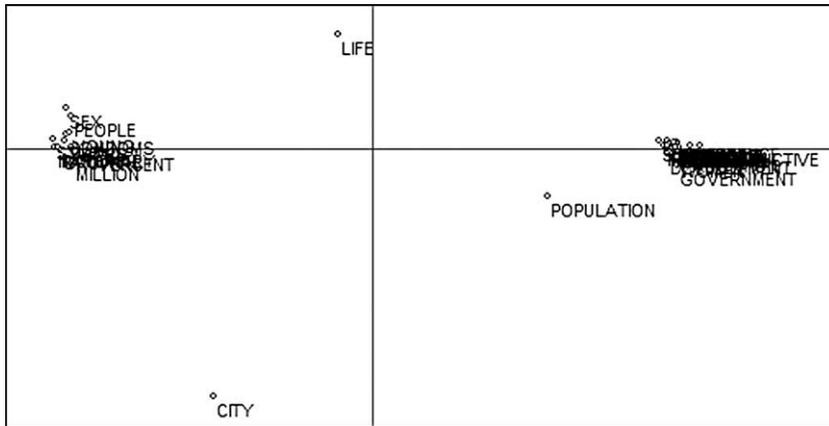


Figure 3. Word groupings of news articles on population and family planning.

population management programs and the church' and the second is labeled 'reporting of population size and growth'.

The first cluster of words (see Table 3) can be viewed as a combination of words from both sides of the population management debate. Recall that supporters frequently espouse the benefits of family planning and reproductive health services to families in the form of government programs in order to curb continued population growth rates. The words that indicate coverage within such framing include *government*, *President*, *program*, *services*, *family*, *planning*, *reproductive*, *health*, and *women*. The same cluster mentions *development* and *education* to identify consequences of population growth. Within the same cluster is mention of the opposition's actors and messages. It contains reference to *Catholic* and *church*. As has been discussed previously, those who oppose population management programs frequently call family planning or contraceptive methods as *birth control* in their efforts to link use of modern methods with *abortion*. They are also the only ones who are concerned with the *sexual* part of the issue, something that is almost never touched upon by proponents of population management.

The co-occurrence of terms that refer to government population management programs and its targets with those that refer to the church and its position suggests that in news reporting coverage of the population issue is frequently connected to

Table 3. Word groupings of news articles on population and family planning.

Cluster 1	Government/program/services/President/conference
Support of population management vs. church	Health/family/planning/reproductive Women/children Education/development Church/Catholic/birth/control/Manila/abortion/sexual
Cluster 2	Percent/million/people/growth/rate/study/years/national/country
Population size	Young/people/condoms

Note: Words within the clusters joined by slashes are grouped by the authors according to interpreted substantive meanings.

church positions. This suggests that the media, perhaps in its effort to present 'balanced' news, would report population management events and stories always with statements referring to objections by the Catholic Church with the church position being the 'other side' of the issue. The conflict with the church has become embedded in normal news reporting of events related to population, family planning, and reproductive health. The press depicts a politicized version of the population management issue as being more a conflict between the church and the government. This, as it appears from the clusters, has taken precedence over coverage of substantive policy options to address population growth. The frame is labeled 'Supporters of Population Management vs. Church'. Highlighting the conflict between political actors, rather than specific factors of the public policy problem and solutions, is a media-generated framing mechanism. Thus the media frame is not a simple representation of two opposing sides; it is an additional unique frame consistent with the conceptualization of the press as an active actor in the framing process (Callaghan & Schnell, 2001). The second cluster represents straight reports of research or empirical study findings pertaining to population size and growth. The appearance of the terms *young* and *condoms* are likely because a good portion of coverage about family planning and reproductive health revolve around concerns of early pregnancies and adolescent sexual health. This frame is labeled 'Population Size'.

Conclusions and implications

This research sought to examine framing of a highly contested issue in the Philippines, that of population management. By analyzing texts from each of the two debating sides we found distinct frames that differ in their definition of the problem and their identification of consequences presented by the common proposed solution. Examining the frames of news articles dealing with population management shows that the press covers both sides with key words associated with the opposition and the proponents co-occurring closely in news texts.

The three word clusters that emerged in the texts analyzed from supporters and proponents of population management can be viewed as falling under a single 'Population and Development Frame'. The first two clusters which hold words relating to impacts of large family size and cross-country comparisons are part of the frame that defines the parameters and nature of the 'population problem', as well as the consequences of leaving it unaddressed. The final cluster contains words that prescribe the solution which is to institutionalize a national population program.

There are two distinct frames in the opposing side of conservatives and church groups. These are reactions to the proposals of the supporters of population management on two sub-issues that are of concern. The first frame is called the 'Anti-Abortion Frame' which contains words that indicate the often-cited argument that reproductive health and family planning programs promote abortion. In this frame the problem is defined not as population growth, rather it is the 'solution' being proposed by government. The second frame is called 'Sex Education' which reflects the church's position that teaching sexuality and contraception to children is an assault to morals. The proposed solution here is to leave sex education to parents who should have control over their children's morals and values.

Competing frames built around the population management issue in the Philippines differ on the fundamental level of values which have important implications on problem definitions and acceptable solutions (Entman, 1993). Arguments upon which each frame rests suggest what is at stake (Koch, 1998); in the case of supporters it is poverty alleviation and development while in the case of the opposing side it is religious values and morals. Both sides consciously (we presume) select or avoid terms that carry connotations of the other side's argument. For instance, supporters' papers do not use the term 'contraception' or 'birth control', both of which are present in the opponent's side, which they use to connect to abortion. Poverty, which is at the center of the development rationale for population management, does not appear very often in the opposing side. The framing employed by both issue advocates and political elites (Joachim, 2003) are attempts to convince each other, and the general public, that population management policies are either acceptable or unacceptable (Campbell, 1998).

Analysis of press coverage yields two word clusters which can be treated as two frames. The first is a 'Population Management Supporters vs. Church' frame which suggests that news coverage of population management frequently cite church positions alongside its adoption of the development frame espoused by the supporting side. Next is a 'Population Size' frame which contains words that indicate straight reporting of research on population growth and population size. In the 'Government vs. Church' frame, which appears in media coverage, there is evidence of use of framing devices used by both the supporters and detractors of population management. However the consequence of having two frames competing for the press' attention is that the media, in the interest of balance, had opted to emphasize conflict (De Vreese, Peter, & Semetko, 2001), which is a new frame. This phenomenon is akin to the so-called 'issue dualism' phenomenon (Terkildsen, Schnell, & Ling, 1998) which describes the press' behavior of seeking balance in their coverage of controversial issues, ending up oftentimes with coverage that emphasizes conflict. Highlighting conflict accomplishes one of the media's main objectives, which is to attract heavier readership and attention. 'Issue dualism does not necessarily reflect issue fairness; it is more of a surrogate' (Terkildsen et al., 1998, p. 47). Terkildsen, Schnell, and Ling (1998) argue that it is the pressure on the media to include conflicting (not just a variety, but *opposing*) viewpoints that provide them the opportunity to create their own framing of public issues, projecting their own version of reality while 'maintaining the perception of impartiality' (p. 47). In heavily debated public issues, the journalistic balance norm determines who is and who is not covered by the media (Kruse, 2001). Media are also prone to reduce even highly complex issues to two *competing* positions when there are many (Gamson, 1988). Moreover, the focus on conflict creates a risk of making coverage focus on the actors rather than the issues (Kruse, 2001).

The presence of issue dualism is not indicative of 'balanced reporting', it may even skew public interpretation of the issue, 'altering perceptions of a group's political power by creating two sets of powerful issue advocates where only one exists' (Terkildsen et al., 1998, p. 49). This is true for the coverage of the population issue where Church advocates, by dint of the amount of coverage they receive regardless of the amount of public support they have, are depicted as being as powerful as the legislators. In fact there is substantial evidence that the vast majority

of the public support population policies. By the media artificially creating issue balance, they are creating realities, not mirroring them (Terkildsen et al., 1998).

Having strongly competing alternative frames for population management might reduce the issue to a discussion of appropriateness or inappropriateness of promoting sex education, family planning, and contraception to address the problem. Population management is a much larger issue that includes maternal and child health, general reproductive health, and migration policies; parts that have received little attention even from the press. The competition to dominate discourse on fundamental values that will dictate how the debate will progress continues, however none of the alternative frames have adopted a comprehensive view of population management policies. The implication of this dynamic is that legislation and policy will be deliberated upon using a narrow set of criteria determined by how the two sides have attempted to frame the issue, at the expense of a comprehensive understanding that may lead to a different solution altogether.

Use of semantic network analysis in conducting framing analysis is increasing in popularity (Murphy, 2001; Murphy & Maynard, 2000). Its ability to handle massive amounts of data in an efficient manner is a compelling reason for use, along with the benefit of shielding the analysis from the researcher's conscious or unconscious biases. There remain many interesting questions to answer in mapping out the process through which framing efforts of political elites and issue-oriented groups find their way to framing in the media. Examination of texts is one way of moving the field forward, but there must also be parallel efforts that would investigate the message-making exercise through a study of the actors themselves and their interactions with the press.

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