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Front Page Challenge: A case study examining what the ethnic media promises and what it delivers

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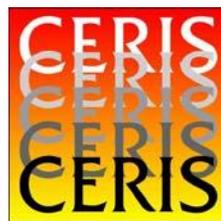
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Front Page Challenge: A case study examining what the ethnic media promises and what it delivers

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ABSTRACT

The editors and publishers of ethnic newspapers acknowledge the importance of reporting local news in helping their readers understand Canadian society. Yet detailed analyses of news content produced by ethnic media organizations often find that information that fosters understanding of life in Canada takes second place to news from the group's home country. This study investigates the local news content published about the Greater Toronto Area in the Chinese-language newspaper *Ming Pao* (Toronto-area edition) and identifies a significant imbalance in the mix of local news versus homeland news from China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The author argues that newcomers trying to understand their adopted place would benefit from access to more extensive and varied local news and suggests that providing journalists who work in ethnic news media with greater opportunities for professional development would be one way to achieve this goal. Programs could include journalism skills workshops as well as seminars that explore the role of local news in helping immigrants adapt. Professional development sessions would also bring together journalists from different ethnocultural communities to discuss the challenges they face, develop joint projects, and acquaint editors and publishers with the latest research on the role of local news in fostering intercultural understanding.

KEYWORDS

Ethnocultural news media, interculturalism, immigrants

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INTRODUCTION

When the editors and publishers of ethnic news outlets in Canada are asked about their newsroom mandates, they identify priorities that include building bridges among cultures (Miller 2006; Murray, Ahadi, and Yu 2007) and providing news that helps newcomers adapt (DiversiPro 2007). Yet detailed analyses of news content produced by ethnic media organizations in this country and elsewhere often reveal that information that fosters understanding of life in Canada takes second place to news from the group's home country (Ahadi and Murray 2009; Karim 2002a; Karim, Eid, and Ebanda de B'Berri 2007; Lin and Song 2006; Lindgren in press).

This study investigates the extent to which the editorial goals of the Chinese-language daily newspaper *Ming Pao* (Toronto edition) are reflected in the publication's news content. It identifies a significant imbalance in the mix of local (defined here as news stories and photographs that deal primarily with events, people, issues, and places in the Greater Toronto Area) versus news from China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. Given that local news is a key factor in helping newcomers understand their adopted place, professional development programs for journalists working in the ethnic news media are proposed as one way to address the local news deficit.

CONTEXT

More than 200 different ethnic groups have been identified in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), which consists of the central City of Toronto, and two dozen smaller towns and cities in the surrounding regions of Peel, York, Halton, and Durham (Figure 1).

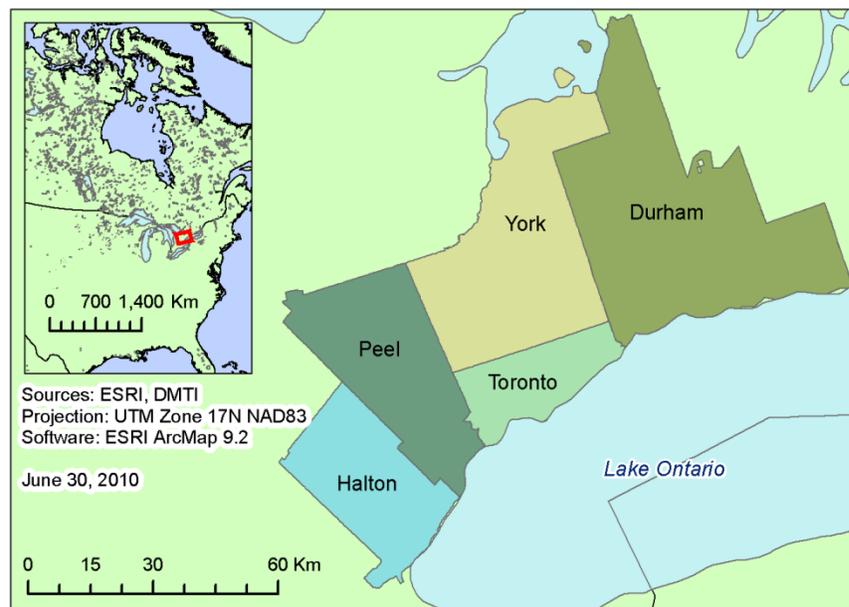


Figure 1. The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in southern Ontario is Canada's most populous metropolitan area

The GTA is one of the most ethnically diverse metropolitan areas in the world and home to more than five million people (Statistics Canada 2008). Nearly 450,000 new immigrants

settled in the metropolitan area between 2001 and 2006 and ethnic newspapers – publications that target readers from a particular group in their own language – are repeatedly identified by researchers as a source of information for newcomers trying to making sense of their adopted homeland. A recent report counted no fewer than 10 daily ethnic newspapers (Diversity Institute 2010) in the Greater Toronto Area. More than 200 other ethnocultural publications appear less frequently (DiversiPro 2007) and are distributed for free.

This investigation of *Ming Pao*'s content reflects a growing interest in the nature, practices, and role that ethnic news outlets play in highly diverse metropolitan areas. While there is a significant body of scholarly research on the misrepresentation and underrepresentation of visible minorities and ethnic communities in mainstream media, Kymlicka (2008) notes that we need a better understanding of the institutional structures – including news media structures – in ethnic communities and the role they play in the integration process for newcomers. Mahtani (2008) has called for more analysis of the content provided by ethnic media outlets, for research that leads to a better understanding of when members of ethnic groups turn to the ethnic media for information, and for inquiries into the ways and extent to which ethnic media represent the immigrant voice. Murray, Yu, and Ahadi (2007) say more remains to be done to determine the extent to which ethnic media actually deliver on claims that they help newcomers understand their adopted communities, act as a bridge between groups, and help groups retain cultural links with home countries.

Research suggests that access to local news helps newcomers bond with their adopted communities. Lin and Song (2006), in their study of ethnic media serving Latin and Asian neighbourhoods in Los Angeles, noted that ethnic media can “connect people to events and issues of community life that may engender feelings of allegiance and ties to the community” (366). The link between newspaper readership and political participation has also been firmly established (McLeod et al. 1996; McLeod, Scheufele, and Moy 1999; Friedland 2001; Paek, Yoon, and Shah 2005; Mahrt 2008). Ball-Rokeach, Kim, and Matei (2001), for instance, examined neighbourhood “storytelling” in seven ethnic neighborhoods in Los Angeles in their investigation of links between the role of multi-level storytelling (by city-wide media, community media including ethnic media, and among individual residents) and residents’ sense of belonging and community engagement. They concluded that robust storytelling on all levels was a key factor in the process through which “people go from being occupants of a house to being members of a neighborhood” (394). They also found that relative to more established immigrant communities, the immigrant neighbourhoods with a high proportion of recently arrived residents (Chinese and Koreans) tended to have local media that emphasized reporting home-country news and paid less attention to local news. These same Asian communities experienced lower levels of belonging than the more established African American and Latino neighbourhoods. A subsequent examination of the newspapers targeting Asian and Latino neighbourhoods in Los Angeles found that just 3% of content in Chinese-language publications met the researchers’ definition of local (Lin and Song 2006).

THE BEST OF INTENTIONS: THE ROLE OF ETHNIC NEWS OUTLETS IN ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

The editors and publishers of ethnic newspapers acknowledge the importance of reporting local news. Senior officials from Vancouver-based ethnic news media outlets, for instance,

identified their journalism as a “bridge” between mainstream and ethnic communities and insisted their mandate was to “serve the community members in their acculturation process, while helping to retain a cultural link with their ‘home’ country” (Murray, Yu, and Ahadi 2007, 34). A survey of ethnic broadcasters and publishers in the Greater Toronto Area (DiversiPro 2007) found that 77% ranked providing news that explains “how to function in Canadian society” as the key role of their publications ahead of “providing news from the home country” and “preserving your own culture.”

In a Canada-wide survey of ethnic newspaper editors and publishers, 45% of respondents said their publications serve readers by building bridges between cultures (Miller 2006). The next most common mandate identified was preserving their own community’s culture (33%). When members of the same group were asked about the kind of editorial content their readers consider important, 98% ranked coverage of local community events as the number-one priority. This was closely followed by positive news about community achievements, information about Canadian customs and culture, news about education, news from the home country, and news about immigration.

The priorities identified by ethnic publishers and editors are consistent with the social responsibility theory of journalism, defined by Ahadi and Murray (2009) as local news coverage that aims to “raise intercultural awareness and assist new immigrants with integration” (603). Scholarly research, however, suggests there are significant differences in the extent to which individual ethnic news outlets live up to these goals.

Investigations of the ethnic news media in the Vancouver area, for instance, suggest there is relatively robust coverage of local news on the West Coast. Cheng’s examination (2005) of front-page news in the Western Canadian edition of *Ming Pao* found that 49% of stories dealt with local issues in the Greater Vancouver area, while Hong Kong news represented just 13% of front-page content. A more comprehensive analysis of British Columbia’s ethnic media (Murray, Yu, and Ahadi 2007; Murray 2008) looked at 19 major ethnic newspaper and television outlets serving four of the province’s largest immigrant communities and found that among the non-English news outlets, 40% of news items dealt with local issues pertaining to the Vancouver region; provincial and national news represented 10% of coverage; and international news coverage made up 50% of news items.

Other studies, however, suggest that many ethnic news outlets find it a challenge to fulfill editors’ and publishers’ integrative and intercultural communication aspirations. Karim’s content analysis of English-language South Asian print publications (2002a) concluded that the proportion of news articles conveying information that either promoted integration into the larger Canadian society or enhanced citizenship ranged from 3.8% to 30.5% of published content. An extensive study of the ethnic media serving 11 ethnic groups in four Ontario cities found that three-quarters of the newspaper content on settlement information (information on everything from housing and legal issues to consumer and political matters) consisted of advertising (Karim, Eid, and Ebanda de B’Berri 2007) and concluded that “ethnic media had poor coverage overall on issues of health, employment, legal services, immigration and citizenship” (87). Another examination of civic discourse in Canadian South Asian media concluded that while discussions of public affairs related to Canada could be found in well-

established weekly newspapers in Toronto and Vancouver, such debates were limited or non-existent in smaller, less frequent publications (Karim 2002b).

Ethnic groups themselves are also posing tough questions about the performance of news operations that aspire to tell their stories. In a recent issue of the *Ryerson Review of Journalism*, for instance, members of the Chinese-Canadian community criticized the dearth of original reporting, lack of reporter training, and context-free news content offered by Canada-based Chinese language television stations (Yip 2010). A story in *Toronto Life* magazine reported on a controversy over the translation practices at *Sing Tao*, the Toronto area's largest-circulation Chinese-language newspaper (Hune-Brown 2008). Critics accused the paper of deleting local residents' criticism of the Chinese government from news articles it obtained through its partnership with the *Toronto Star*, the GTA's largest-circulation daily newspaper.

South Asian focus-group participants in Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal were asked by researchers about the role of English-language South Asian print publications in providing information to help immigrants understand the rights and responsibilities intrinsic to participation in Canadian affairs. The researchers found that "there was a consensus among the participants that South Asian print media produced in Canada did not meet the general needs of the community... The biggest criticism voiced by the participants was that the South Asian print media focused primarily on news from the homeland, neglecting the news, social issues and political processes that affect the South Asian community living in Canada" (Karim 2002a, 5-6).

When participants in another round of focus groups were asked about the role ethnic media play in making settlement information available to newcomers, one person observed that the news outlets do not provide sufficient information "on what you need to survive" (Karim, Eid, and Ebanda de B'Berri 2007, 18). Interviews with media and community stakeholders representing Vancouver's Chinese, Punjabi, Iranian, and Korean communities led researchers to observe that "the majority of the interviewees expressed some concern with a perceived lack of intercultural communication" (Murray, Yu, and Ahadi 2007, 108).

METHODS

Ming Pao is a major ethnocultural publication serving the second-largest visible minority group in the GTA (after South Asians). The 2006 census (Statistics Canada 2006a) found that people of Chinese background make up 9.6% (486,300) of the 5.1 million people in the Toronto census metropolitan area (CMA). While the Toronto CMA is slightly smaller than the Greater Toronto Area in geographical terms, it captures all but about 6,000 of the GTA's population of Chinese-origin (City of Toronto 2008; Statistics Canada 2006a). One-fifth of the Chinese-origin population arrived between 2001 and 2006 and 74.7% were foreign-born (Statistics Canada 2006a).

While members of the Chinese community in the Greater Toronto Area have access to a wide range of online, television, radio, and print news sources (Keown 2006) in English and French, studies suggest they remain committed consumers of media produced in their mother tongue. A survey of 3,000 new Canadians in Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal (Research

Solutions Group 2006) found, for instance, that 75% of Chinese-Canadians had turned to at least one ethnic newspaper, radio, or television station in the previous seven days. An Ipsos Reid survey (2007) of first-generation Chinese Canadians older than 18 in the Greater Toronto Area and the Greater Vancouver area found that while 30% of respondents read both English- and Chinese-language newspapers and magazines, 52% read Chinese-language publications exclusively. Finally, 77,000 Toronto-area residents who listed a Chinese language as their mother tongue speak neither of Canada's official languages (Statistics Canada 2006b), suggesting this group turns to ethnic media out of necessity.

Ming Pao is the second-largest Chinese-language daily newspaper in the GTA and one of the largest-circulation ethnic newspapers in the country (Miller 2006) with a daily circulation of 51,000, weekly readership of 227,000, and 500,000 visits per month to the online site Mingpaoto.ca (Chan 2010). Karim, Eid, and Ebanda de B'Berri (2007) found that the smaller the ethnic media outlet, the less likely it is that its news coverage will deal with Canadian issues. Therefore, one could expect that *Ming Pao*, by virtue of its size, would include relatively comprehensive local news coverage.

The Toronto and Vancouver editions of *Ming Pao*, launched in 1993, are part of a large Hong Kong-based transnational company called Media Chinese International Limited. The company publishes five newspapers in 14 editions in North American, Southeast Asia and China (*Ming Pao Daily News* 2010). The Toronto-area broadsheet is published seven days a week, is sold by subscription and on newsstands, and typically contains about 80 pages of editorial content and advertisements.

At the time of this content analysis in 2008, the daily newspaper was produced by an editorial staff of 35 people, consisting of 14 editors, 10 reporters, five translators, three photographers, two graphic designers, and one library staff member, who work out of a newsroom in suburban northeast Toronto. A team of 15 – two senior editors, nine general news reporters, one local business and finance reporter, and three photographers – was responsible for the GTA content (Lam 2010).

While the competing Chinese-language publication *Sing Tao* does have a larger circulation, it operates in partnership with the *Toronto Star* newspaper and therefore publishes translated *Toronto Star* articles (Hune-Brown 2008). This arrangement, which makes local news items more accessible to *Sing Tao*, is not typical of a GTA ethnic newspaper. *Ming Pao*'s reliance on its own reporting staff to generate local news coverage is more representative of ethnic news media in general and therefore made it a more appropriate study subject.

CODING PROCEDURE

Although Chinese immigrants do not share a single language, most are comfortable reading the single unified written Chinese language in its traditional or simplified version. *Ming Pao*, published in traditional form, was coded by two coders fluent in Chinese.

The coders analyzed 28 full issues of *Ming Pao* published between January 7, 2008, and August 23, 2008. Constructed week sampling (Monday from the first week, Tuesday from the next week, Wednesday from the third week, etc.) ensured that content from different days was

examined and that no major news event was overrepresented. Content analysis suggests that two constructed weeks are adequate to produce reliable data that is representative of a full year (Riffe, Aust, and Lacy 1993). This study examined four weeks over an eight-month period.

The coders read each newspaper in its entirety and counted the total number of articles and photographs that dealt primarily with local events, people, issues, and places in the Greater Toronto Area; the total number of articles that dealt with Canadian provincial or national news; the total number of China-related news items dealing with mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan; and the total number of international (non-Canadian, non-China) news items.

Each local item was categorized according to one of the subject categories listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Subject categories for local articles and photographs

PO	Police/crime/legal/courts/local public safety
ED	Education
HE	Health/health protection/medical
TR	Transit/gridlock/sprawl/traffic
SO	Social supports/affordable housing/poverty/social justice
LU	Land use/urban design/development/redevelopment
MU	Municipal politics/services/budget
EW	Environment/weather
FA	Fire/accident
RI	Religious-cultural diversity/multiculturalism/immigration issues
AE	Arts/entertainment/local attractions
BU	Business
SP	Sports
NS	Local impact of national security/terrorism/foreign policy/foreign disasters/human rights/ Canadian soldiers/casualties
FP	Federal or provincial politics/initiatives – local angle
OT	Other/pets/travel/human interest

Local articles and photographs were further classified according to a more detailed subject category; for example, police/crime items could be categorized as violent crime, white-collar crime, or traffic-related criminal offences. Other variables used for the content analysis included the location of the item in the paper, item source (staff written or wire service), and the news item's form (news story, photograph, column, editorial, review, letter, or item submitted by a reader). Where a particular ethnic, racial or religious group was referenced in a news article or where people of an identifiable ethnic background appeared in a photograph, this information was added to the database. If there was any doubt about the racial/ethnic background of individuals in photos, coders entered "not identifiable."

Following coder training, a full intercoder reliability test was conducted based on the standards and guidelines outlined by Lombard, Snyder-Duch, and Campanella Bracken (2002). Five randomly selected issues of the 28 were used in the test to ensure the sample represented more than 10% of the data.

Intercoder reliability for interval variables such as the number of local articles and photographs was calculated using Lin's concordance. Reliability was considered acceptable at or above 0.700. Across the five test issues, the Lin's concordance coefficient was at or above 0.716 for all item count variables, with the exception of 10 minor variables. In most of these cases, the low level of agreement was due to the small number of news items in the category. These variables were eliminated from the analysis and discussion.

Intercoder reliability for nominal variables such as the subject matter of each news item was measured using Cohen's kappa, a relatively conservative index (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, and Campanella Bracken 2002). Reliability was considered acceptable at or above 0.700. At the item level, intercoder reliability was at or above 0.754 for all variables, with one exception. This variable was eliminated from the analysis and discussion. In the case of geographic references, the Lin's concordance coefficient for the number of references was 0.969, while the Cohen's kappa coefficient for the geographic references themselves was 0.829.

Before incorporating the five test issues into the full 28-issue sample, disagreements that surfaced during the coding test were resolved through discussion and, where necessary, clarification of the coding guide.

Additional details of the coding methodology are available from the author.

RESULTS

Local News Content in Ming Pao

The first step in the analysis of *Ming Pao's* content was to distinguish between local and non-local news. Of the 13,641 photographs and stories published in the 28-issue sample, 1,157 or 8% were considered local in nature.

The geographic breakdown of *Ming Pao's* news coverage (Figure 2) shows that more than half of all photographs and news items published in the paper dealt with issues, events, and

people in China. News about other countries (33%) was the next largest category, followed by local news (8%) and Canadian provincial and federal news (7%).

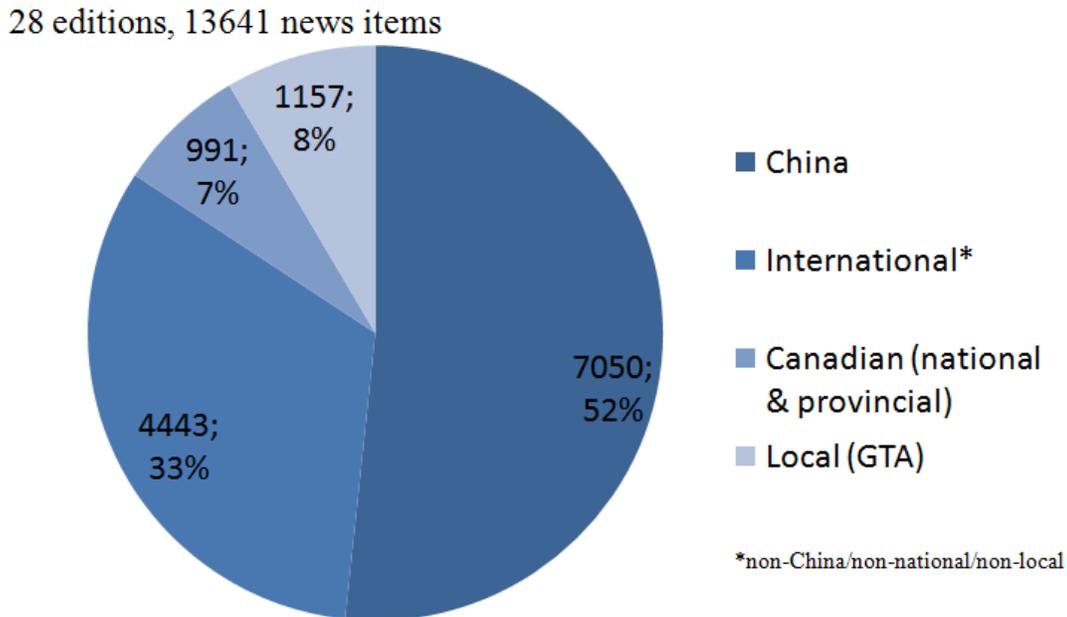


Figure 2. Geographic breakdown of *Ming Pao* content

Local News Topics

Police- and crime-related news formed the most common subject matter in *Ming Pao*'s overall local news coverage (Figure 3), accounting for 209 news items or 18% of local stories and photographs. A more detailed examination of the crime-related news items found that violent crime was the topic most often reported (94 items or 45%) followed by driving-related criminal offences (22 items or 10%) and news items about drug possession and trafficking (17 items or 8%).

Stories and photographs dealing with religious or cultural diversity, multiculturalism, or immigration matters (coded here as RI) were the second most common subject matter reported on in *Ming Pao*, accounting for 164 local news items or 14% of the total. The more detailed coding breakdown showed that 74 (45%) of the 164 items focused on festivals such as Chinese New Year, 23 items (14%) dealt with immigration-related issues and 13 items (8%) related to food. Eleven items (7%) reported on social services for immigrants; 10 dealt with issues of integration; and nine addressed employment issues.

Business and arts and entertainment coverage ranked third and fourth in terms of general topics covered in *Ming Pao*, while 102 stories and photos (9%) dealt with the local impact of national security issues and international events. More than 77% of all news items in this category (79 of 102 items) were about the community's response to the Sichuan earthquake.

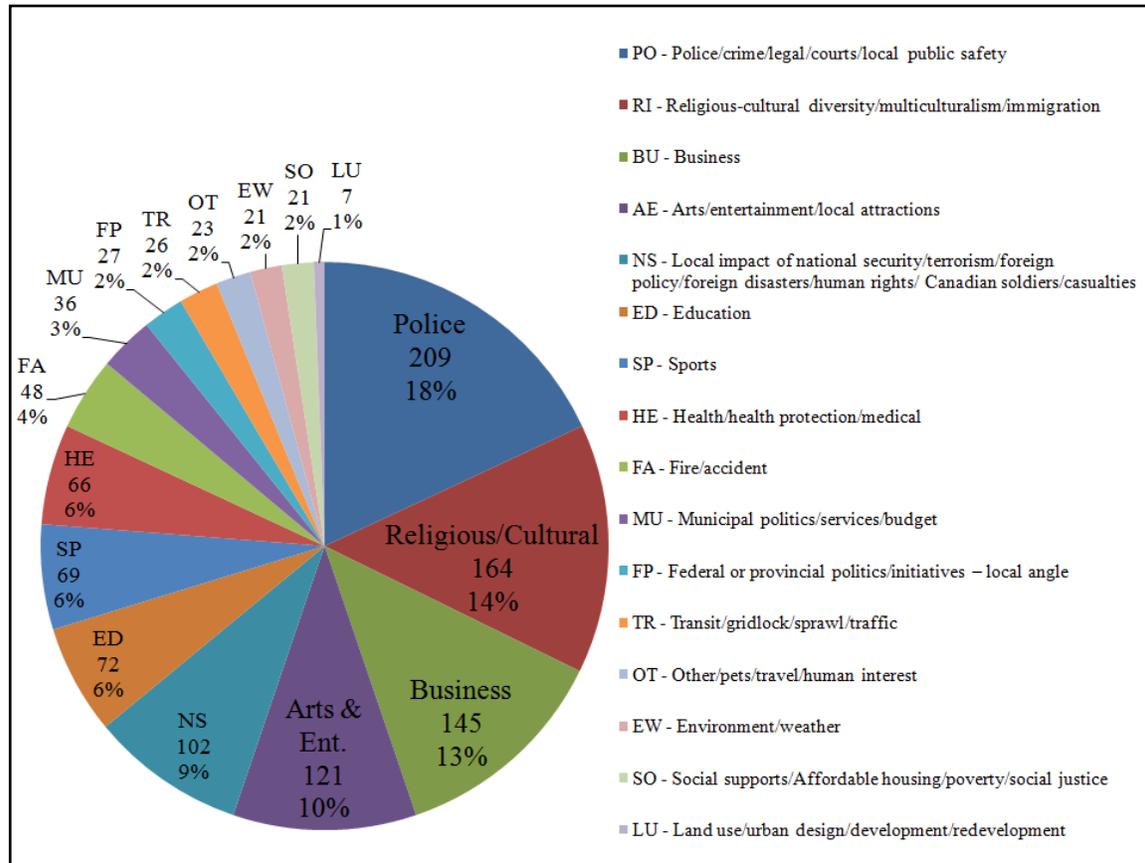


Figure 3. All local news in *Ming Pao* broken down by subject

Representation of Other Ethnic Groups

A total of 613 or 53% of local news items in *Ming Pao* made reference to race or ethnicity. The most common group to appear in photographs or text stories was Chinese: explicit references to this group appeared in 329 news items, or 28% of all local stories and photographs in the newspaper.

A detailed analysis of the remaining 284 new items that referenced race/ethnicity identified 22 different race/ethnic groups or regional groupings (Asian, South Asian, or Southeast Asian). In 11 cases, the race/ethnic group made only a single appearance in the four weeks' worth of newspapers analyzed for this study.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In an interview with the author, Tak Yin Lam, deputy editor-in-chief of *Ming Pao's* Toronto edition, said his paper's priority is to provide readers with information that helps them understand Canada and participate in Canadian life. Immigration-related issues, including any changes to policies and rules, are of particular concern, he said. Local municipal news coverage is also a key area of interest for readers because "that's something related to their daily lives, like transportation, like tax(es). They all affect (us) all directly" (Lam 2010). Lam said *Ming Pao* readers "also have a very strong desire" to know the news from their homeland

where many still have business interests, family, and friends. These priorities are consistent with the views expressed by other editors and publishers of ethnocultural news media (DiversiPro 2007; Miller 2006; Murray, Yu, and Ahadi 2007).

While *Ming Pao*'s local news team is substantially larger than that of most ethnocultural publications, its editorial content, consisting of 52% China-related news and 8% local news, signals a major difference in emphasis in terms of the amount of news coverage accorded each place.

A closer look at the subjects dealt with in *Ming Pao*'s local news coverage also raises questions about the extent to which the paper is furnishing its readers with the information they need to understand and adapt to life in Canada. While the 8% of *Ming Pao*'s content that deals with local matters does represent 1,157 news items, what appears at first glance to be a robust effort to acquaint readers with the Great Toronto Area masks news about a relatively limited range of subjects. Stories and photographs dealing with murder, violence, fires, accidents, and injury, for instance, dominate *Ming Pao*'s news coverage, accounting for nearly one in five of the newspaper's local news items. This means that other news that newcomers and others with only limited command of English need to become better acquainted with the Greater Toronto Area is crowded out, including coverage of local political institutions, powerbrokers, and social and political norms. Indeed the amount of attention devoted to crime, fire, and accidents – 257 news items in all – is almost as great as for nine other major news topics combined: a total of 299 news items (26% of all local coverage) dealt with matters related to education, health, municipal politics, local aspects of federal and provincial politics, transit, miscellaneous local matters, environmental and weather conditions, social supports, and land use issues.

Finally, the lack of representation in *Ming Pao*'s pages of the GTA's many other ethnic groups raises questions about the newspaper's role in helping newcomers understand the diversity that is a defining characteristic of life in the Greater Toronto Area. On a practical level, one way a newspaper such as *Ming Pao* could more accurately reflect the GTA's population would be to monitor the challenges confronting other ethnic communities so that issues of common concern can be investigated from a Chinese-Canadian perspective. For example, the tensions that arise when young people want to marry someone from outside their ethnic group or the exploitation of newcomers by established community members might surface as stories in other ethnic communities and become the starting point for stories that draw upon the Chinese-Canadian sources and examples. This type of reporting – apart from being quality journalism – would address issues facing the Chinese community at the same time that it introduces ethnic groups to one another through the identification of common problems and challenges.

Taking on such stories, however, will force reporters out of their comfort zone and require sophisticated reporting and editing skills that go beyond the straightforward recounting of daily events. The training of reporters who work in the ethnic media has surfaced repeatedly as an issue in scholarly research (Husband 2005; Murray, Yu, and Ahadi 2007; Zhou and Cai 2002). One study of the people who produced ethnocultural publications in Canada (Miller 2006) found that 41% had no business or journalism training. Researchers in British Columbia

have suggested that some proprietors of ethnic news operations are in the business more for the money than to provide a voice for the community (Ahadi and Murray 2009).

Lam (2010) said that while most of his staff members did not receive formal journalism training in North America, the majority did study journalism in mainland China or Hong Kong and almost all had journalism experience prior to joining *Ming Pao*. His team, he said, is comfortable working in English and experienced (the junior reporter has been at the paper for two years; most of the others have closer to 10 years' experience). Lam was nonetheless enthusiastic about the prospect of training opportunities for his reporters, noting that they would benefit from writing and reporting tips (even if they were provided in English), as well as education sessions on Canadian law and human rights issues (Lam 2010).

CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATIONS

The mix of news reported in *Ming Pao* is due in large part to economic factors such editors' easy access to China-related news provided each day by the parent company, and the paper's relatively small advertising base, which limits editors' ability to hire more reporters and editors for local news reporting (Lindgren in press). It is beyond the scope of this paper to call for a dramatic rethink of the economic models underpinning ethnic newspapers. Instead, what follows are suggestions related to attitudinal change and journalistic practice that are designed to help ethnic news organizations live up to the socially responsible goals they set for themselves.

Offering more coverage that acquaints readers with the local community and fosters intercultural understanding is possible, provided there is a willingness within ethnic news organizations to rethink news priorities and to redeploy at least some existing staff and resources. Journalism educators and scholars and mainstream organizations representing journalists can assist by working with ethnic news organizations to develop education and training programs for journalists in the sector. Training opportunities of this sort are currently a rarity, though the limited experience to date suggests they are popular when offered: 300 journalists and ethnic news media proprietors attended when the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada offered its first-ever training seminar in 2009 (NEPMCC 2009). Business and advertising strategy sessions dominated the three-day seminar, sponsored by Heritage Canada, but the agenda did include one presentation devoted to interviewing techniques and a second that dealt with libel issues.

Calls for Heritage Canada or other branches of government to put money into training for journalists will raise concerns about attempts to "purchase" positive news coverage for the government in media that reach huge numbers of voters. One way to address this concern would be to direct the funding through established schools of journalism in major immigrant-destination cities across Canada. Journalism schools in Montreal, Vancouver, and Toronto all have faculty and instructors who could lead conferences, or one-day or evening workshops on everything from reporting skills to critical thinking about journalists' roles and news values.

Private foundations that focus on issues related to immigrant settlement, integration, and intercultural understanding are other potential sources of funding.

The results of this study suggest there would be particular value to training sessions in the following areas:

- Acquainting editors and publishers with the latest research on the role of local news in fostering intercultural understanding and in helping newcomers adapt. Practical suggestions for changes that can be accomplished within existing economic models – such as putting more local news on the front page of ethnic newspapers – should be emphasized.
- Exploring the ethical challenges faced by journalists who report on their own ethnic groups and who must deal with the tensions that arise between their professional practice and the expectations of their communities (Husband 2005).
- Offering specific training in specialized reporting and writing skills, including feature writing, interviewing skills and coverage of other ethnic groups because, as Mahtani (2008) has observed, “the ethnic media, like the mainstream media, is not exempt from the practices of misrepresenting and underrepresenting the immigrant voice” (246).
- Exploring similarities and differences in the ethics and news values of journalists from various ethnic communities and the mainstream media.
- Bringing together journalists from different ethnic communities to discuss the challenges they face, and share solutions. These sessions would also be opportunities for journalists from different ethnic media to exchange story ideas, develop joint projects, identify common problems, and investigate ways to report on tensions among different ethnic or visible minority communities.

Implementing this training and education agenda would also create an unprecedented opportunity for scholars at a time of growing interest in the role ethnic news media play in diverse communities. A program of research that assessed the news content of ethnic media outlets and engaged journalists in focus groups to discuss issues of professional practice could be undertaken before and after the training sessions to evaluate the utility of such sessions. Participating journalists and news managers could also provide valuable insight into the economics of ethnic news media, news values, and the challenges faced by reporters and editors working in these newsrooms.

The agenda for change outlined in this paper places obligations on a variety of players. Newsroom managers must be willing to encourage reporters and editors to take advantage of training opportunities. Journalism educators and ethnic and mainstream journalism organizations must be willing to provide the training. Organizations and governments with a stake in the successful integration of newcomers will have to consider making funding available in an arm’s-length way that respects the independence of news organizations.

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