

News Media Coverage of Poverty in the United States and the UK: A Systematic Review and Agendas for Future Research

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Recently, public concerns on poverty and economic disparity have surged all around the world. This may sound far-fetched to those who remember that the validity of “class” as an analytical concept was once questioned in academic fields and was even deemed as a ‘zombie category’ (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). However, recurring economic crises in various parts of the world, the subsequent widening economic inequality, and even the current COVID-19 global pandemic have signaled an urgent need to bring our attention back to and address relevant issues, as numerous academics have insisted (for example, Piketty, 2013; Stiglitz, 2015, among others).

This urgency to tackle economic inequality and poverty is motivating scholars in various fields to reassess relevant issues. The studies of media and mass communication are no exception. Rather, a more imperative request should be made to the field given the crucial influence that mass media wield on public attitudes toward relevant issues through the delivery of news and information on poverty and depictions

of people living in poverty (Iyengar, 1991; Vossen & Schulpen, 2019). In this sense, two recent publications in the field are noteworthy: *The Routledge Companion to Media and Poverty* (Borden, 2021) and *Poverty in the News Media: Continuities, Ruptures, and Change in the Reporting Socioeconomic Inequality* (Lugo-Ocando, 2019). The significance of the former is that it is the first attempt to proclaim “poverty and (news) media” as a distinct field of study and invited relevant research in discrete fields. While similar attempts have been observed, such as *Class and News* (Heider, 2004), *Media and Class* (Deery & Press, 2017), and *The Routledge Companion to Media and Class* (Polson, Schofield & Gajjala, 2020), they embraced a comparatively wider range of topics, types of media, and media genres compared to *The Routledge Companion to Media and Poverty* (Borden, 2021), which focuses only on news media. In addition, a critical difference is that previous publications approached the issues from the class analysis perspective, hence touching upon the issues on middle- and upper-class as well, whereas the lat-

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ter is more focused on the poor and poverty. Likewise, Lugo-Ocando's review article (2019) is distinct in that it endeavored to provide a systematic review of previous research on poverty and news media.

In the context of this existing literature, this article aims to chart current studies on news media coverage of poverty by critically assessing them, and to suggest future research to further expand this area of study. Especially, to provide a more focused, systematic review of the extant research, this article attempts to delimit its scope of analysis to research on news media texts and to categorize them into three

1. The scope and methodology: Based on a critical examination of Lugo-Ocando's review (2019)

Lugo-Ocando's review (2019) serves as a valuable starting point to determine the scope and methodology of this article. He has published noticeable research pertaining to journalism and domestic and global poverty in the UK and other countries, and this review is one of his current studies. In his review, he outlined major findings of previous research under three categories: first, a general overview of relevant research; second, the main features of poverty reporting; third, the absent elements in poverty coverage. To be more specific, the first part titled "What we know" offers a broader overview of previous research related to news media and poverty. Therefore, a variety of previous literature is introduced here, including research on

groups according to their methodologies and subjects of analysis. This article is structured as follows: first, Lugo-Ocando's review (2019) is examined to demarcate the scope of previous research addressed within this article and to draw new categories for mapping. Second, according to the three identified categories — content, techniques, and ideology — major findings of previous research are introduced and assessed. Third, future research agendas are suggested indicating points to be revisited and strategies to remedy shortcomings of previous literature.

news media's framing effects on public opinion over the issue of poverty, characteristics of journalistic practices in poverty reporting, etc. The second part, entitled "Key ideas of poverty in the news" delineates three major elements of mass media's poverty reporting: the binary language of the deserving and undeserving poor and its persistence in poverty reporting, othering, and journalism's role in legitimizing the ruling power, which is far from its original normative role as 'a watchdog of the power' (Berry, 2009; Norris, 2014). In the last part, the author noted weaknesses in news media coverage of poverty, such as the lack of contextual analysis, the absence of the issue of inequality, and the paucity of voices of the poor in news reports.

While in support of Lugo-Ocando's major points and with appreciation for the exhaustive review of previous research across subjects and fields, this article further proposes two necessities to sketch a more focused and detailed map of relevant research: the need to restrict the scope of research reviewed and to classify and re-juxtapose them with consideration of the methodology and research topic of each study. With these proposals, first, this article limits the scope of review to research that analyzed media texts of poverty reporting by news media. Here, "news media" refers to newspapers, news magazines, television broadcasting news, and television documentaries. In addition, the scope of this article only embraces previous research that analyzed news media coverage of domestic poverty in specific countries and excludes those on poverty in foreign countries such as research that analyzed news articles published in the UK but covering the issue of poverty in Africa. This is because the dis/accordance of the location/subject of coverage affects approaches, tones, and other aspects of coverage. Finally, this article embraces previous research written in English that investigated news media in the United States and the UK. This ascribes to several conditions: the accessibility of research, the linguistic ability of the author, and proximity in political and policy developments in the two nations. The closeness in political and policy developments in the two nations provides the opportunity to explore the similarity and distinctiveness

presented in news media coverage on poverty under the liberal political and welfare regime in the two nations. To collect journal articles and books analyzed in the review, a search was conducted in the database of Communication & Mass Media Complete and the Google Scholar site with keywords: poverty or poor & media, poverty or poor & news, poverty or poor & image, poverty or poor & discourse, and poverty or poor & frame or framing. Additionally, books and journal articles mentioned in the bibliographies of the previously collected journal articles and books were also included to review.

Second, the major findings of previous research are mapped according to three categories: content, techniques, and ideology. These categories were determined by interrogating the methodologies of each study and the central research subjects analyzed in each methodology. To be more specific, three dominant types of methodologies were identified in previous literature on poverty coverage by news media: framing analysis employing (quantitative) content analysis, analysis of visual images with (quantitative) content analysis, and discourse analysis with qualitative textual analysis. While each methodology is well known for its diversities in research subjects, specific research methods, and analytical theories (for example, for framing analysis refer to D'Angelo, 2018; D'Angelo & Kuypers 2010 for discourse analysis do Wetherell et al., 2001; Wodak & Meyer, 2001 among others), major research subjects covered in pre-

vious research center on three categories suggested above. Therefore, this article attempts to more fully investigate the major findings of previous research under each category and to articulate the close relation between findings under discrete categories.

Especially, the category of techniques needs further clarification in its usage in this article. Techniques, in this article, describe a variety of devices within media texts, or a format, or elements constituting news coverage of poverty. The subject of techniques is not individually pronounced in previous research but masked as part of frames identified in media coverage of poverty. This lack of acknowledgement of techniques in the notion of frame/framing may be derived from its inherent diversity in the definition and application of the notion of frame analysis. As noted by numerous scholars in framing analysis, frame analysis is originally known for its wide range of applications in various disciplines with a variety of theoretical approaches and methods (Hertog & McLeod, 2001; Kitzinger, 2007). Despite this sheer variety, frame analysis in media and communication studies may be briefly classified as three fields according to its objects of analysis: how and why journalists produce certain frames, identification of frames in the media text, and what effects are made onto readers/viewers in diverse conditions of reception (D'Angelo, 2018, p. xxxiii).

Initially, frame analysis came from the field of behavioral sociology. In his seminal work (1974),

Goffman coined the notion of “frame” to explain that people tend to adopt specific “schemata of interpretation” or “frameworks” to comprehend and render implications on events happening around them (Goffman, 1974, p. 21). In other words, people make use of frames to grasp a situation, to weigh its importance, and thus to decide what reaction they would take toward the issue. Based on this initial conception of frame in the field of behavioral sociology, media scholar Entman wrote:

Framing essentially involves *selection* and *salience*. To frame is to *select 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)

In addition, especially with regard to the realm of media text, Entman wrote, “The text contains frames, which are manifested by the presence or absence of certain key-words, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments” (1993, p. 52).

His explanation about frame/framing implies two elements—content and techniques—are contained in the concept of frame/framing, al-

though he does not particularly pronounce them. Likewise, while a string of research detailed these techniques in framing analysis as “framing devices” (Gamson & Lasch, 1983; Pan & Kosichi, 1993), previous research examined in this article did not consider them as an individual

subject of analysis. However, since previous research dedicated much attention to techniques as a constituent element of framing, as will be investigated later, this article attempted to nominate them as one of the categories to investigate major findings of previous research.

2. Content of news media coverage of poverty

2.1 Small amount of coverage and tendency to incorporate with relevant themes

One notable feature of news media coverage on poverty is its meager amount of coverage (Kendall, 2011; Martin, 2019). Indeed, multiple studies, especially those employing a quantitative research method, begin by underscoring the noticeably small number of news items covering poverty compared to other socio-political issues such as elections. The unpopularity of poverty and relevant issues as a news item seems to remain consistent regardless of the period or nations in which news items are produced and aired (Kendall, 2011). Furthermore, the issue of poverty fails to catch constant public attention. Rather, poverty coverage is subject to season or is highly influenced by the occurrence of rele-

vant, newsworthy events. For example, Kendall (2011) found that poverty coverage is more likely to appear in year-end seasons, when charity activities for disenfranchised people become more arresting to society. Similarly, when crimes committed by the poor become news, or related welfare policies are implemented (Bullcock et al., 2001; Harkins & Lugo-Ocando, 2017; Kim et al., 2010), poverty coverage increases. This minimization of news values and dependency on other incidents of poverty coverage, in turn, suggest the need to fully consider socio-political contexts and the inextricable relationship between poverty and related issues when investigating media coverage of poverty.

2.2 Portrayals of the poor: Based on consideration of relations with social institutions and demographic variables

2.2.1 Socio-historical origins

The tendency that news coverage of poverty is associated with relevant themes and incidents simultaneously has further implications: the issue of poverty tends to be discussed in relation to welfare systems or crimes (or punitive sys-

tem), as with the case for people in poverty being described as welfare recipients, or criminals. These two social institutions along with employment (wage labor) comprise major social relations integral to ‘governing’ the poor, in either

the form of regulation-punishment or social provisions (Geremek, 1994). The origin of these social relations dates to 1601, when The Act for the Relief of the Poor was implemented in the UK, in which a variety of transitions from feudal, agricultural to modern, capitalistic society had begun to appear. In pre-modern medieval societies, the poor had primarily subsisted on charity and relief from benevolent individuals or religious organizations seeking religious virtues (Geremek, 1994). However, the incipient modern state began policing the poor as those who should be investigated and regulated by centralized governing power (Dean, 1992). To regulate the poor, public officials advanced classificatory work to decide whether one should be put to work or endowed public provision. Here, the criterion was whether one is able-bodied to undertake wage labor. Under this bifurcation, the able-bodied were sent to workhouses to serve labor whereas the impotent poor were sent to almshouses to live with public provisions. (Alcock, 1997, pp. 10-11)

With these major social relations associated with poor people, one more aspect should be considered: moral adjudication toward poverty, in relation with those social relations as well. This originates from the 19th century when modern capitalism driven by the Industrial Rev-

olution began to bloom, which led to various socio, economic, political apparatus introduced to cope with mass poverty wrought by it, such as the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, the approach of social economy, etc. In this period, poverty became no longer deemed natural but engendered by “a series of different forms of conduct” (Procacci, 1991, p. 160) of poor people outside wage labor. Consequently, intervention in (lack of) morality occupied the locus of governing the poor (Dean, 1992; Procacci, 1991), starting with distinguishing ‘the undeserving poor’ with moral flaws from ‘the deserving poor’ (Gans, 1995; Katz, 1990). These moral failings could be exemplified as psychological/behavioral deviance from the norms associated with social relations mentioned above: indolence and unwillingness to work relates to wage labor, dependency or abuse of systems or public goods equates to the welfare systems in contemporary terms, and criminality relates to punitive systems. This, at the same time, coincides with the figure standing on the right opposite side of the fundamental principles constituting modern, capitalistic nation-states, an economically independent (male) citizen serving wage labor who simultaneously constitutes middle-class norms (Fraser & Gordon, 1994).

2.2.2 The undeserving poor as welfare recipients and their moral failing

With this backdrop, one of major findings of previous research is that news media coverage of

poverty centers on the binary classification of the deserving poor and the undeserving poor

and underscores the moral deficiency conveyed by the latter. Especially, first, previous literature on media coverage in the UK points to the marked ways of over describing deliberate dependency on or abuse of the welfare system in news media. The origin of this interest can be traced back to the seminal work of Golding and Middleton (1982). In this research, they conducted an extensive investigation of 14 mass media outlets in the UK including national newspapers, local radio programs, and evening television news bulletins, thereby gaining a final sample of 1063 items, over 125 days other than weekends in the second half of 1976. In 1976 the UK suffered from a financial crisis known as the “Sterling crisis,” a nagging economic downturn, and received a bailout from the IMF (Harmon, 1997). It was also ‘the year of the cuts’ on public social services (Golding and Middleton, 1982, p. 59). According to their findings, unemployment benefit and social welfare abuses were the most prevalent topics in news stories on welfare with greater emphasis on national welfare provision than local social benefits. While formally routinized events, such as legislation, statements, or publications of reports dominated these news stories, notably stories of prosecution or conviction of social security fraud or sponging took up the largest portion of a total, 30.8%. This implies media coverage of welfare recipients is likely to pay greater attention to welfare fraud. Several follow-up studies showed this tendency remained persistent in the 2000s

and the 2010s with some points even reinforced (Gavin, 2021; Harkins & Lugo-Ocando, 2015; Lundström, 2013). For example, Lundström (2013) investigated newspapers and internet blog posts in the UK as well as in Sweden between October 1, 2000 and December 31, 2010 and argued that media in the UK are more likely to employ crime news narratives and portrayals of personal immorality in relation to the social security system when they cover the issue of welfare fraud. This characteristic even stands out compared to Sweden’s coverage, which tended to report the issue of welfare fraud in the format of policy discussion in the line of the national health program as a collective social problem. The author credited this difference to the liberal political, social regimes of UK and the social democratic regime of Sweden.

What is interesting is the reversed relationship between the poor and welfare fraud and the welfare system itself. In their analysis, Golding and Middleton (1982) examined how the scope of the issue covered by media was expanded, shifted, and re-juxtaposed the targets of anti-welfare sentiment. Here, they focused on media coverage of the Derek Deevy’ case at Liverpool Crown Court in July 1976. Deevy was a 42-year-old unemployed man living in Liverpool. In the earlier coverage, media delivered extensive, serialized coverage of welfare fraud in a sensationalized way and unveiled similar subsequent events. Here, media put their spotlight on the extent of immoral, fraudulent behav-

iors of the welfare claimant and the threat it would pose to those who are in 'genuine' need of benefits and taxpayers. However, later, media outlets' target shifted to a general concern on the social security system, especially its genericity, laxity, inefficiency, and the financial burden shouldered by the cost of the social security system. This implied that a sense of anxiety toward excessive, illegal abuse of the welfare system

2.2.3 Demographic variables : Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) of race and gender in the United States

While previous research conducted in the United States shows that its media coverage of poverty is in line with the UK tendency that bifurcates the deserving poor and undeserving poor and that underscores the latter's moral deficiency, it has its own feature of media coverage of poverty: stark appearance of specific demographic groups. For example, first, a considerable body of research has argued that race has persistently operated as one of the most decisive factors, especially in the United States. Gilens (1996) demonstrated that African Americans accounted for more than 50% of media portrayals of those in poverty by investigating weekly magazines and television news in the United States between 1988 and 1992. This dominant presence of African Americans in media coverage of poverty betrayed their actual percentage in the poor population in the United States during the same period, which made up less than one-third of the entire number of peo-

ple with poverty. In his extended research tracing changes in the relationship between mass media coverage of the poor, racial stereotypes, and the public's attitudes toward welfare in the United States from 1950 to 1992, Gilens (1999) further revealed that the overrepresentation of the African American poor in the magazines and television news broadcasts in the United States compared to the actual number of them was not a temporal incident but had perpetuated since the mid-1960s. In particular, he indicated that the media coverage investigated in his research were more likely to employ images of African American welfare recipients in news items with a critical tone toward welfare policies, whereas white Americans tended to appear more in the news items with a neutral, positive, or empathetic tone toward the welfare system. He concluded that this association between African Americans and the welfare system, in turn, racialized the welfare system and

instilled it with anti-welfare sentiment. Several following studies demonstrated the persistency of portraying the poor as African American. Clawson and Trice (2000) and Clawson and Hurst (2013, as cited in Clawson & Jett, 2019, p. 213) examined articles covering poverty in five U.S. news magazines between 1993 and 1998 and 2009 and 2012 and reached the same conclusion as Gilens (1996, 1999): African Americans continued to dominate images of poverty in news media while they comprised only 27% and 22% of the actual number of the poor during each period. In addition, Van Doorn (2015) reaffirmed the recurrent tendency for news media to racialize poverty, which again did not correspond to the actual poverty rate of African Americans, in four U.S. news magazines between 1992 and 2010.

Furthermore, there is one more demographic factor that intersects with this enduring racialization of poverty in news media in the United States: gender. In her analysis on how the “politics of disgust” is formulated in public discussions surrounding welfare reform in 1996, Hancock (2004) found that race and gender played a pivotal role in constructing the public identity of welfare recipients. By conducting a content analysis of news coverage of five national media outlets and political discourses between 1995 and 1996, she revealed that the public identity of

welfare recipients was incarnated as African American, single mothers. Two subsequent studies in the same vein reaffirmed the dominant narrative of African American female teenage single mothers in news coverage of poverty and welfare, both by investigating TV network news stories on welfare reform in the period ranging from 1993 to 2000 with quantitative content analysis (Luther et al., 2005), and from 1992 to 2007 with discourse and content analysis (Kelly, 2010). This intersectionality of gender and race operating within news media coverage of poverty in the United States had its root in: enduring marginalization of African Americans in the history of the United States; and consecutive neoliberal governments’ hostile attitude toward the welfare system, which set out with the presidency of Ronald Reagan who popularized the derogatory term “welfare queens” to garner support for welfare reforms in his presidential campaign in 1976 (Hancock, 2004). Indeed, most of the previous research revisited in this article not only examined media coverage of poverty from the perspective of intersectionality of gender and race, but also focused on the period under the influence of welfare reforms, specifically, the repeal of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and the subsequent introduction of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in the 1990s.

2.3 Description of moral deficiency and identification of responsibility for poverty

Moral deficiency of the poor tends to be symbol-

ized as deviant psychological/behavioral charac-

ters in news media coverage of poverty (Clawson & Trice, 2000; De Goede, 1996; Harkins & Lugo-Ocando, 2015; Kendall, 2011; Rose & Baumgartner, 2013). Detailed descriptions of these moral failings of the poor in media reproduce in our daily lives that which the above noted: laziness and work shyness against wage labor, dependency or fraud against welfare system, and crimes against the legal system. Here, what should be additionally noted is, especially in previous research in the United States, patriarchy adds to social relations that determine the moral deviancy of poor women in US media coverage, corresponding to the intersection of gender and race. One central trait underscored by previous research in this vein is their hyperfertility and dishonesty (Hancock, 2004; Luther et al., 2005). Several studies in the United States indicated that poor African American single mothers were portrayed as irresponsibly giving birth to many children out of wedlock even while on welfare. This seemingly indiscreet unwed childrearing further provided fodder for welfare opponents to accuse African American single mothers, who were symbolized as “welfare queens,” of moral deficiency and to lend credence to support for welfare cuts in the United States since the 1970s. Moreover, Luther et al. (2005) found that those manipulative and fraud aspects once underscored were replaced with incompetence in the 1990s. Here, not only lack of work ethic, laziness, fraud of the welfare system, and hyperfertility, but their childlike

and unintelligent characters were deployed to highlight their irresponsible childrearing as underqualified, bad mothers who could not manage to secure financial support for their children or to suggest good examples as a laborious worker to their children. This changed image of African American welfare mothers served to legitimate more punitive, or ‘paternalistic government of the poor’ (Waquant, 2009) accompanying closer monitoring and regulations upon them within public debates on welfare reform.

These highlighted descriptions of psychological/behavioral disorders as a moral failing of the poor, in turn, are closely associated with identifying the responsibility for poverty in both terms of its cause and treatment (De Goede, 1996; Harkins & Lugo-Ocando, 2015; Luther et al., 2005; Redden, 2014). For example, Luther et al. (2005) compared the ways that white American and African American welfare recipients were portrayed in news reports and revealed that African Americans’ poverty was more likely to be attributed to personal characteristics, whereas social, situational backgrounds and social programs and institutions were highlighted for their contributions in helping white American welfare recipients get out of poverty. This tendency prevailed both in the United States and the UK, as De Goede (1996) and Luther et al. (2005) found by looking into news media in the former and as Harkins and Lugo-Ocando (2015) and Redden (2014) did in the latter. In particular, Redden (2014) named this tendency

as the “individualization” frame of poverty, emphasizing how newspapers in the UK and Canada coincidentally blame people in destitute circumstances for their own poverty, thus placing the treatment responsibility on poor individuals rather than societal support. However, some inconsistent findings were also observed; for ex-

2.4 Child poverty as the deserving poor

Compared to the undeserving poor and their hyper-visibility in media coverage of poverty, the undeserving poor, who are emblemized by children or the elderly, have drawn less media attention. For example, by investigating news articles in the United States from 1993 to 1998, Clawson & Trice (2000) indicated the deserving poor, such as the elderly or children, have been underrepresented. This comparatively limited presence of the deserving poor is, in addition, coupled with their incarnations as white (Gilens, 1999).

However, especially in the UK entering the 2000s, several studies observed a salient increase in the number of news articles covering child poverty (Chauhan & Foster, 2013; Harkins & Lugo-Ocando 2016, 2017; Redden, 2014). In a study of 2,938 articles from 1985 to 2014, Harkins and Lugo-Ocando (2016, 2017) demonstrated that the number of news articles on child poverty accounted for the second greatest number of articles from the entire pool, and they began to emerge in 2000, and peaked in number of articles in 2000. They attributed this surge of

ample, Kim et al. (2010) demonstrated that newspapers and television news in the United States from 1993 to 2007 mentioned societal responsibility as a cause and treatment of poverty rather than individuals. They noted that the political standpoint of each news organization and type of media may explain this.

news articles on child poverty to political advocates by the New Labor in the elections in 2000, and their following policy changes. As is known, UK politicians in the New Labor designated child poverty as a primary goal to address and they implemented a variety of policies during their primacy (Lister, 2006).

One salient characteristic of media coverage of child poverty is its replacement of responsibility for poverty. The fact that children are exempted from the responsibility to work because of their physical inability and inadequacy for wage labor does not entirely remove the question of the root cause of their poverty, instead it is diverted to their parents. Barnett et al. (2007) and Chauhan & Foster (2013) asserted that media coverage of poor children in UK and New Zealand during the 2000s diverted the attribution of responsibility for child poverty to their parents. Poor children were depicted as neglected victims whereas their parent(s) were denounced for irresponsibility in terms of their parenting, e.g., failing to provide appropriate economic, emotional care for children, etc. At

the basis of portrayals of bad parents of poor children is the assumption that children are innocent and vulnerable, thus need to be protected and nurtured by adults who are supposed to take on the responsibility of waged labor. In addition, Fink & Lomax(2014) contended that poor children are described as the symbol of

3. Techniques

Iyengar's conceptions of two binary frames offer us an indispensable starting point to investigate the issue of techniques in news media coverage of poverty. In his seminal work (Iyengar, 1991) analyzing framing effects, especially in relation to where viewers place responsibility for political issues, he included poverty in the list of political issues to be interrogated. Before he verified framing effects of media coverage of political issues through experiments on viewers, he examined television news items in the United States from 1988 to 1992 and classified them into two binary frames: the episodic frame and the thematic frame. Here, the former reports specific cases or events with an emphasis on concrete instances. The latter, in contrast, locates political issues in "more general or abstract context and takes the form of a "takeout" or "backgrounders," with reporting "general outcomes or conditions" (Iyengar, 1991, p. 14). In relation to media coverage of poverty, what should be noted is that poverty was one of a few political issues in which episodic frames predominated news items. This implies that poverty tends to

'problem families' in which irresponsible parents are accountable for children's poverty, which simultaneously contributes to legitimate welfare reforms by juxtaposing impoverished children as 'the victim of the social and moral failures of society' in contrast.

be illustrated in the format of individual stories rather than that of providing broader context, or external factors associated with poverty.

However, subsequent studies observed that episodic framing does not necessarily retain its prevalence in news media coverage of poverty. For example, Bullock et al. (2001) demonstrated that thematic frames outnumbered episodic ones in news coverage of poverty in 1999. They attributed the cause of this inconsistency with Iyengar's finding to the time of coverage, which was three years after the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) was enacted under President Clinton's cabinet in the United States. In other words, it was in need of underscoring the success and legitimacy of welfare reforms that a vast majority of newspaper articles presented poverty from a societal, structural perspective with thematic framing.

In considering the specific elements comprising Iyengar's two binary frames, as well as major subjects of news media studies, types of sources and the ways various sources are de-

ployed are another critical issues to explore. Here, types of sources could be largely divided into two types: human sources or non-human sources. The former includes various types of people with different affiliations or statuses in society, and the latter involves results of statistics, official reports from government or relevant organizations, etc. First, as to human sources, several previous studies found that politicians and government officials dominate news coverage of poverty (De Goede, 1996; Harkins & Lugo-Ocando, 2016, 2017). Such disproportionate reliance on politicians and government officials hinders the poor's ability to be heard in news media. Furthermore, De Goede (1996) emphasized that assigning the role to state the issue of poverty to only politicians and government officials, in turn, renders the poor as being passive without voice and political agency.

As to the non-human sources, De Goede (1996) and Redden (2014) identified the predominant use of statistical data in news media coverage of poverty in the United States and the UK. These studies coincidentally underline the undesirable

4. Ideologies

Though limited in number, some previous studies have explored the ideologies underpinning news coverage of poverty in the United States and the UK. First, Harkins and Lugo-Ocando (2015, 2016, 2017) have recurrently identified Malthusianism as the ideological origin that has overshadowed news media coverage of poverty

effect that statistics would mask poor people's actual, present situations under simple numbers. In addition, Redden (2014) suggested what should be interrogated here is not only the prevailing use of numbers but also how they are used, that is, numerical figures that individually appear without any explanation on a specific context or more extensive discussion.

Finally, one more point to be observed is the relation between types of genre and usages of techniques. For example, it is noteworthy that Kim et al. (2010) related Iyengar's (1991) key finding to television news' genre characteristic. More specifically, in reaffirming the predominance of episodic framing in televisions news items on poverty, they attributed it to television's overall tendency to be event-oriented in telling the story (Wallack et al., 1993, as cited in Kim et al., 2010, p.577). This observation reminds us of the need to investigate unique techniques or formats embedded in individual media types, as well as further distinctive techniques employed in specific genres in one media type.

in the UK. Malthusianism dates to the late 18th to early 19th century when capitalism in its incipient stage began to take shape grounded on the development of private ownership of land and the Industrial Revolution. Malthus comprehended poverty as a natural phenomenon engendered by imbalance between over-popula-

tion and limited natural resources. By only underscoring the scarcity of resources and the necessity to maximize private property to enhance economic growth with unequal distribution of resources, he diverted the locus of poverty from society or capitalistic system to individuals (Ross, 1998, p. 16).

A distinct thread of previous research indicated neoliberalism is another pivotal ideology that permeates news coverage of poverty in the United States and the UK. Given its overarching influences on aspects all over the world, especially in the UK and the United States where neoliberal political economic regimes have undertaken power since the mid-1970s, media organizations and their products—undoubtedly

5. Agendas for further research

Based on the review above, this section proposes future research in succession to previous research, as well as shortcomings that they are required to remedy. Suggestions are provided for each category that this review previously identified. First, for content of news media coverage of poverty, the sociopolitical context surrounding poverty, or even consistently changing aspects of poverty, continues to require closer examination. This is first and foremost as news coverage of poverty is highly subject to the implementation of relevant welfare policies and political regimes, in terms of aspects including the number, tone, content and ideology embedded in the coverage, as noted by the extant lit-

including news media coverage of poverty—would be not an exception, as observed by a plethora of relevant studies (e.g., Meyers, 2019; Phelan, 2014). Especially, previous research identified the ideology of individual responsibility as a central neoliberal one salient in media coverage of poverty, which placed responsibility for cause and solutions of poverty on poor people (De Goede, 1996; Redden, 2014). However, it should be noted that interrogating the locus of responsibility for causes and treatment of poverty has been a centering issue that previous research has pursued while they did not relate it to neoliberalism (for example, Luther et al., 2005; Kim et al., 2010, etc.).

erature. To be more specific, such insistent attention to the sociopolitical context surrounding poverty includes not only political and policy regimes of a specific nation-state and related discourses and knowledge, but also other factors related to poverty such as continuously changing forms of labor; subsequent changes in the forms of un/employment and standards of work ethics; newly emerging different types of experience, relations, feelings, etc. that poor people are experiencing in their daily lives; and relevant discourses and knowledge. In the same vein, future research's attention should be extended to media systems (Hallin & Mancini, 2004) as part of sociopolitical context determining media cov-

erage of poverty. It is that further nuanced examination of the the sociopolitical context surrounding poverty and poverty coverage that will contribute to the proliferation of future research with a comparative perspective.

Second, techniques employed in news media coverage of poverty warrant further exploration. While some previous research holds a particular interest in techniques as illustrated above, neither the number of nor the scope of subjects of analysis can be considered ample. To enrich the study of techniques in news media coverage of poverty, first, a variety of techniques that have been employed but unarticulated should be pronounced and examined. Such further examination could be advanced, for example, by comparing each technique across different types of media, as Kim et al. (2010) briefly touched upon, or across genres in the same types of media. Especially for the latter comparison, it should be noted that a robust body of existing research on reality television shows on poverty in the UK, which is a seemingly similar but fundamentally different genre in television, is expected to offer an invaluable reference (for example, Barton & Davis, 2018; Jensen, 2014 among others). Second, how specific techniques are employed in coverage requires urgent attention. In particular, its deployment could be investigated in relation with not only content but also ideology.

Finally, while some previous research touched upon ideologies underpinned in news media cov-

erage of poverty, especially neoliberalism, there is a need for more thorough exploration. This includes, first, not only identifying the manifestation of neoliberal ideology as with most previous research, but also investigating how it develops in news coverage through various discursive strategies. Especially given that neoliberal ideology highly relies on its discursive naturalization in its development (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2001; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999), discursive strategy of legitimation is noteworthy (Reyes, 2011; Van Leeuwen, 2007). Second, along with the ideology of individual responsibility, which has continued to be problematized in previous research, future research is required to interrogate any possibility that different characteristics of neoliberal ideology influence news media coverage of poverty, such as financialization (for example, Martin, 2002) or entrepreneur self (for example, Miller & Rose, 2008), etc. Third, other than neoliberalism, relations with different ideologies, or socio-cultural discourses should also be considered, especially that of waged labor, work ethics, familialism, etc. In this sense, one possible option for future research is the approach of discourse analysis, which seeks to explore various discursive strategies, interdiscursivity, etc. This also broadens a possibility to re-conceptualize neoliberalism not as a static, consistent one, but as a multifaceted, amalgamated “neoliberalization” or “neoliberalizing process” (for example, Peck & Theodore, 2012; Springer, 2016) necessitating analysis of the power relations surround-

ing it.

6. Conclusion and further investigation

This review aimed to summarize key findings of previous research on news media coverage of poverty, to critically assess them and to suggest some research topics to be explored by future research. To do so, grounded on the critical examination of Lugo-Ocando's review (2019), it first restricted its scope of analysis to research (written in English) on the manifestation of poverty as a domestic issue in news media in the UK and the United States. Second, it classified and mapped major findings of previous research under three categories: content, technique, and ideology, which were achieved by looking into subjects of analysis and methodologies employed by the previous research analyzed in this review. In doing so, not only were the implications of each research presented but also the relations between each study were articulated. Some agendas for future research according to each category were also suggested.

In lieu of a conclusion, this section is devoted to briefly introducing subsequent studies that the author will attempt to address limitations of this review. First, the author of this article will undertake another review of media coverage of

poverty in Japan. This arises from the substantial need for the research on media coverage of poverty in non-Western countries, especially those that do not follow liberal regimes of politics and policy like the UK and the United States. While the amount of extant research is comparatively insignificant, the succeeding review is expected to provide a bedrock to advance an empirical study investigating media coverage of poverty in Japan, which the author of this article has pursued with a particular interest in investigating the sociohistorical discursive construction of poverty in Japanese television documentaries during the Heisei period. Second, despite this article's demarcation of the scope of review to previous research analyzing media texts of news media on poverty, it does not necessarily deny the need to investigate the close relationship between media texts and the external conditions surrounding them, such as journalists' practices, political-economic aspects of media organizations, etc. Therefore, further investigation on research analyzing such relationships will also be conducted.

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News Media Coverage of Poverty in the United States and the UK: A Systematic Review and Agendas for Future Research

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With a growing awareness of economic inequality and poverty all over the world, academic research that reexamines the relationship between media and relevant issues has burgeoned in recent years. Against this backdrop, this article aims to offer a systematic review of previous studies on news media coverage of poverty in the United States and the UK. Placing particular emphasis on the existing studies of news media texts, the current review introduces their key findings according to three categories drawn by assessing their methodologies and subjects of analysis: content, techniques, and ideology. The findings of the review are as follows: first, for content, extant research demonstrates four tendencies in news media coverage of poverty in both countries: limited news items on poverty; their dependency on relevant themes; bifurcation of the deserving poor and the undeserving poor; the prevailing depictions of the latter's moral failings. In addition, in the United States, racialized and gendered portrayals of the poor are glaring. Descriptions of the moral deficiency of the undeserving poor are symbolized by their psychological and behavioral deviance from social norms: laziness and work shyness against wage labor, fraudulence toward the welfare system, criminality to the legal system, and hyperfertility against patriarchy. These personal moral flaws are ultimately intertwined with news media's tendency to ascribe the responsibility for the cause and treatment of poverty to impoverished people's lack of virtue. Meanwhile, news coverage of impoverished children—the deserving poor—has a documented upsurge in quantity since the 2000s in the UK with a tendency to divert the attribution of responsibility for the cause of poverty to their parents. Second, for techniques, statements of politicians and government officials and numerical figures dominate news media coverage of poverty. Third, for ideology, some studies identify Malthusianism and neoliberalism embedded in poverty news coverage. In the last section, directions and suggestions for future research are advanced: consistent emphasis on sociopolitical contexts for content; extended investigation of techniques; and further identification and in-depth exploration of ideologies underpinning news coverage of poverty.

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Key Words : Poverty, Welfare, News, Media, United States, United Kingdom