

SPANISH NEWSPAPER COVERAGE AND THE ARIZONA MEXICAN AMERICAN
STUDIES BAN
A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

by

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Abstract

A growing body of literature has attempted to explore the ban on Mexican American Studies in Tucson Unified School District located in Tucson, Arizona (Acosta et al., 2014). While education researchers and practitioners in Arizona have attempted to understand the implications of the Ethnic Studies ban for multicultural educators nationwide (Acosta et al., 2014), little is known regarding how the local and regional Spanish media framed this ethnic studies controversy. The objective of this Critical Discourse Analysis was to explore how the local Spanish media covered the issue of the ethnic studies ban in Arizona in 2010, with a specific focus on the Tucson Unified School District. Secondary data from media publications were obtained from the library and the Internet. Critical Discourse Analysis was conducted to identify the main themes emerging from the Spanish media reporting of the Mexican American ethnic studies ban controversy. Findings showed that the Spanish media employed various discourses when framing the Mexican American ethnic studies controversy including: the ethnic studies ban was racially motivated, defending ethnic studies and student rights, concerns about constitutionality of banning Mexican American Studies, especially regarding censorship of the freedom of expression. Additional discourses included ethnic studies ban hindering culture and ethnic diversity, feelings of persecution, apartheid, and potential efforts attempted at suppressing Mexican American history. The discourses employed by the Spanish language media largely emphasize the value of Mexican American ethnic studies as the media projects an image that ethnic studies educate learners about their cultural roots, values, and history. Spanish language media discourses also centered how ethnic studies enhance student engagement in school, reduce dropouts, and contribute to examination scores. Through student protests and public demonstrations, the Spanish language media helped create awareness about ethnic studies, with

the movement attracting national interest in support of ethnic studies included in the educational curriculum. Future studies may improve on the current findings by collecting primary data using surveys, interviews, and focus groups to supplement the obtained data, and corroborate the current findings.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the year 2010, the then Arizona Governor Jan Brewer signed a law banning the Tucson Unified School District's (TUSD's) Mexican American studies (MAS) program (Bender-Slack & Godwyll, 2022; Ojeda et al., 2014). Under the House Bill 2281 (HB 2281), public and charter schools in TUSD and across Arizona were prohibited from including classes or courses that either promoted resentment towards a class or race of people or advocated for the overthrow of the United States government (Acosta, 2014; Orozco, 2012). On his part, the then-state superintendent, Tom Horne, believed the MAS classes were designed to indoctrinate students and create hatred for other races by breeding ethnic solidarity (Hector, 2021). Following the 2010 banning of the MAS program, subsequent years were characterized by political brawls, student and community protests, and courtroom battles to suspend the ban on ethnic studies (Acosta & Mir, 2012; Bender-Slack & Godwyll, 2022).

Proponents of the MAS courses including educators and Democratic politicians saw an opportunity to use ethnic studies to inspire underperforming Latino, Latina, or Latinx students by overhauling the way American history was taught (Acosta, 2019; Haltinner, 2015). In this study, Latino is a masculine term commonly referring to United States male inhabitants with cultural ties to Latin America (Cammarota, 2016). Latina is a feminine term, while Latinx is a gender-neutral term and both refer to United States inhabitants or ethnic groups with cultural ties to Latin America (Cammarota, 2016). Moreover, supporters of the MAS program saw it as a way not only to engage students but to ensure that past wrongs against marginalized communities wouldn't be repeated (Fernandez & Hammer, 2012). Since its ban, the divide between advocates and opponents of its ban has engaged in endless debates on ethnic and racial resentment in schools and society (Doran, 2022). While education researchers and practitioners in Arizona have

attempted to understand the implications of the MAS ban for multicultural educators nationwide, little is known regarding how the local and regional Spanish media framed this ethnic studies controversy.

The paucity of academic insight on this topic creates a potential knowledge gap in the literature concerning the local Spanish media coverage of the ethnic studies ban in Arizona thereby the motivation to undertake this study. Specifically, there is a need to fill the extant body of ethnic studies literature with new insights into the potential discourses that the Spanish media employed in framing the Mexican American ethnic studies controversy. Also, there is a need to explore how the Spanish media portrayed or continues to portray the MAS ban controversy especially following the 2017 court ruling by the United States District Court for the District of Arizona; Arizona state officials had acted out of racial animus in shutting down the MAS program in Tucson's public schools (Cabrera & Chang, 2019). Lastly, considering the paucity of knowledge on this topic, there is a need to understand what the various discourses used by the local Spanish media say about the value of Mexican American ethnic studies, especially in Arizona. The current chapter presents the background to the study, identifies the problem statement, research focus, research aims and questions, definition of key terms, and the significance of undertaking this study. The chapter concludes with an outline of how the rest of the dissertation is organized.

Background to the Study

Before the year 2007, the MAS studies curriculum was relatively unknown in the Tucson Unified School District. According to Doran (2022), the MAS program, which consisted of a series of middle and high school classes highlighting Mexican American contributions to American culture and history, had shown promise in raising Latino students' test scores and

increasing graduation rates. Noriega (2017) clarified that the MAS program in Tucson originated in 1997 when Latino litigants in a desegregation case dating back to the 1970s requested courses that better reflected their history. Under the *Cisneros v. Corpus Christi Independent School District* (1970), the court established Mexican Americans as an identifiable ethnic minority group for purposes of public-school desegregation. The desegregation case is considered as providing a basis for tailored ethnic studies for Latino children in Tucson. By 2002, Augustine Romero was appointed a director of what they called “Hispanic studies.” Educator Romero then changed the Hispanic studies name to MAS to radically refurbish the way the Tucson district taught its Latino students their history (Noriega, 2017). By the year 2006, only a few opponents had attended school board meetings to complain about the curriculum's race-based beliefs.

Then, Jonathan Paton, a Tucson Republican lawmaker obtained a recording of the Chicano rights icon and labor organizer, Dolores Huerta, informing an auditorium of Tucson High School students, “Republicans hate Latinos” (Cabrera & Chang, 2019, p.9). The recording triggered an outcry from GOP lawmakers in Phoenix who decried “Raza studies” (in literal translation the word ‘Raza’ is taken to mean “race”). At the time, the ethnic studies were known as Raza studies and republicans claimed the program was designed to indoctrinate students with ideas about white people being racist and Latinos being their victims (Doran & Hengesteg, 2021). According to Noriega (2017), although “Raza” is Spanish for “race”, teachers who adopted the word intended its translation to be more akin to “the people”. A legislative panel asked school administrators to defend the program in Phoenix, with Jon Kyl, the then-Republican senator accusing the Tucson school district of running a sweatshop for liberalism (Stephenson, 2021).

By 2008, Republican lawmakers strongly set their sights on banning MAS across the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD). The ban included a bill that prohibited curriculum content that advocated beliefs that were perceived to denigrate American values (Noriega, 2017). For example, Russell Pearce, a Republican representative who sponsored initial attempts to outlaw such courses was recorded voicing his concerns that “organizations that spew anti-American or race-based rhetoric have no place” (García & Gonzales, 2021, p. 87). Pearce also supported the need for unity and diversity as opposed to empowering such organizations with taxpayer dollars (García & Gonzales, 2021). However, proponents of the MAS studies embraced the program in schools as a way of not only engaging Latino learners, but also ensuring past wrongs related to marginalized communities were not to be repeated. For example, Linda Lopez, a Democratic legislator, retorted, “at one time in our nation's history, part of our 'American values' was the enslavement of other human beings” (Noriega, 2017, p. 17).

Underwriting the above considerations, it may be noted that supporters of the MAS program were of the view that it was through opposition and a revolution in the minds of the people that the country was able to eliminate some American principles like enslavement. Yet, Republicans perceived that through MAS, teachers were indoctrinating students to do the left's political bidding, establishing a Marxist youth program to oppose authority and hate the white race (Doran, 2022). Such a debate further echoes the year of deliberations and the prolonged fight for ethnic studies since the 1970s. Republican legislators were primarily aiming for a Mexican American history curriculum at Tucson High School, which has an 88 percent Hispanic¹ community (Noriega, 2017). The bill's authors, Republicans Tom Horne and John

¹ "Hispanic or Latino" refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race (Noriega, 2017)

Huppenthal argued the “MAS programs were inciting ethnic animosity and marginalizing youngsters” (Delgado, 2012, p. 5). To support their concerns, Horne shared his concerns in his open letter to the citizens of Tucson that part of the curriculum content was designed to support Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Rodolfo Acuna's *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, and class decorations featuring a Che Guevara portrait (Delgado, 2012).

Concerned that MAS was indoctrinating children, Horne and Huppenthal introduced HB 2281 in 2010, which prohibited programs and literature that "encourage the overthrowing of the United States administration "animosity against an ethnicity, class, or community," or "racial unity" (Cammarota & Romero, 2014). Additionally, the law prevents schools from incorporating courses or seminars that involved any of the following four issues:

1. Advocates for the overthrow of the United States government.
2. Fosters hostility toward a particular race or class of people.
3. Is primarily targeted at pupils of a particular ethnic group.
4. Promotes ethnic solidarity over treating learners as individuals (HB 2281).

The introduction of HB 2281 occurred shortly after the enactment of SB 1070, that empowered local law enforcement to probe an individual's citizenship (Cappellucci et al., 2011). Huppenthal claims that the measure did not affect other ethnic studies courses in Tucson. Huppenthal further argued that the professors of Mexican-American studies courses at Tucson High were brainwashing kids (Cammarota & Romero, 2014). According to Huppenthal, they were using Karl Marx's thesis, "All history is a struggle between the oppressor and the oppressed," labeling Caucasians as controllers and Hispanics as victims. “One of the things you'd hear was that our classes were horrible. That we were instilling resentment in [our students],”

according to Curtis Acosta, who supervised one of the Mexican-American Studies courses (Acosta, 2013 p. 32).

According to Delgado (2012), while an estimated 48 percent of Latino students were dropping out of high school, 100 percent of all those same learners participating in MAS programs at Tucson High were finishing, and 85 percent were moving on to colleges. These statistics demonstrate that MAS programs were effective to some extent in reducing dropout rates, increasing graduation rates, and enhancing the transition to college (Delgado, 2012).

Christine Sleeter (2010), an Emerita Professor at California State University, conducted a systematic review of the evidence on Ethnic Studies outcomes in a report commissioned by the National Education Association (NEA). Her findings demonstrated that ethnic studies enhance student engagement, attention, and interest in the classroom which translates to better reading skills, general accomplishment, and positive perceptions regarding education (Sleeter, 2011).

During the 2010 NEA literature review on the Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies, Sleeter added that “As kids of color advance through the schooling institutions, study reveals that the overpowering domination of Euro-American ideas causes very many kids to disconnect from scholastic achievement” (Sleeter, 2011, p. 20). As such, there is a need to ensure curriculum includes culturally responsive curriculum to meet the needs of students from ethnic minorities (Department of Accountability and Research, 2011a; Cammarota & Romero, 2014). Noriega (2017) added that through ethnic studies, minority students from disadvantaged ethnic backgrounds develop a sense of belonging and a feeling of power. Therefore, through ethnic studies, students are not just studying their past; they are also changing their perceptions (Department of Accountability and Research, 2011b; Noriega, 2017). As a recent study by Delgado and Villalpando (2019) discovered, students who receive ethnic studies curriculum

substantially show a reduced risk of dropping from school. Therefore, attending a class that addresses the influence of ethnicity on personality strongly boosts student turnout and academic achievement. As Sleeter (2011) elaborated, “kids respond when the program relates to their lives or the things they learn are important to them... but get exhausted mentally or quit when what they learn does not echo their expectations” (p. 16). To address the MAS program, and ban controversy in Tucson, a series of court petitions were submitted to the court.

A federal judge was set to rule on if Republican lawmakers breached students' constitutional protections by effectively eliminating Tucson High's Mexican-American Studies curriculum (Kaleem, 2018). According to Delgado and Stefancic (2012), this trial brought up a lot of old feelings for the minority Latino students, their teachers, and family members. On his part, Huppenthal remained firm in his belief that ethnic studies internalized oppression in the classroom (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Huppenthal was of the view that “I think it is irresponsible to educate youngsters that they are victimized and cannot achieve forward in life because someone else is pulling them back” (Huicochea, 2011, p.11). As per recent research published in the publication *Child Development*, the argument that the world is fair and free of institutional discrimination and imperialism is harmful to minority students. Acosta, who lost his program due to the restriction, continued to assist other districts in incorporating ethnic studies into their curriculum (Acosta, 2014). Despite the initial setbacks related to the MAS ban controversy, Acosta believed that Tucson's Mexican-American Studies department would still survive and continue its minority-focused curriculum. As dramatic as this has been, Acosta (2014) added that the exciting and reassuring concept is that ethnic studies were increasingly becoming a recognized discipline and it could be utilized to resurrect optimism following the MAS ban controversy.

The continuing controversy between proponents and critics of the Department raised fundamental concerns in public debate in State and national courts regarding how dominant groups and minority societies communicate with university institutions around the globe (Acosta & Mir, 2012; Bender-Slack & Godwyll, 2022). Based on the 2017 ruling, the federal court was categorical that the Arizona law HB 2281 now called Arizona Revised Statute (ARS) 15-112, which had sought to prohibit MAS ethnic studies in 2010 violated the Latino student's first rights amendment. In a judgment of the Court, Federal Court Wallace Tashima (2017) elaborated that "Race animus is the basis for both implementation and regulation" (p. 20). Further, Tashima expounded that "When a training program was effectively shut down in the Unified School District of Tucson, the national government decided to demonstrate political motivation" (p. 21). In the face of this court ruling in Arizona, there have been concerns about ethnic studies initiatives and the extent its related curriculum should be designed to meet the educational needs of students from minority ethnic groups. Part of the MAS controversy debate has largely been anchored on both local, regional, and international media. Despite the central role the media played in reporting the MAS ban controversy in Arizona, the academic literature has hardly explored how the Spanish media portrayed the whole controversy necessitating the need for this research. The knowledge gap that informed the need for this study is further presented and discussed below.

History of MAS Media Coverage

According to the Tucson Weekly, MAS programs at the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) began in 1998. They proceeded without serious controversy until 2006 when renowned Hispanic labor organizer Dolores Huerta remarked to Tucson high school learners that "Republicans hate Latinos." Republicans around the state and nation, particularly Arizona

Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne, were outraged by Huerta's remarks (Horne, 2010). Horne proceeded to be the state attorney general, and according to the Weekly, he openly supported HB 2281. HB 2281 criticizes and prohibits ethnic studies programs that use pro-government and "anti-racist" language (Horne, 2010). The government determines and proclaims that public school students must be educated to regard and esteem one another as people rather than detest or despise other ethnicities or backgrounds (Horne, 2012). Any subject or course that includes any of the below would not be included in the curriculum of a school district or charter school in the state of Arizona.

On the surface, these tenets are not inherently problematic. It is interpretation and implantation that they do. For example, there is a compelling educational interest in preventing racial animosity in class. However, this should not be construed to mean we have to therefore ignore race, as Horne did during his findings of noncompliance (Horne, 2010). HB2281 was passed during a summer of anti-Brown people measures being implemented in 2010 Arizona (Horne, 2010). One of the more notable, SB 1070, is remembered as one of the country's most draconian anti-immigration measures (Horne, 2010). This new law follows Arizona's reactionary anti-immigration law, SB1070, which legalizes racial profiling by requiring police to stop and question anyone suspected of being an undocumented immigrant. This follows the Arizona State Department of Education's announcement that teachers with heavy accents should be removed from classrooms with children who are still learning English. It enables authorities to examine anybody they suspected of being unregistered. When taken together, this means that school-aged Latino kids of prospective undocumented immigrants would be unable to study the histories of movement and opposition to anti-Latino legislation. All learners who participate in ethnic studies courses benefit from their education (Fong, 2014).

Fong (2014), in a magazine, reported that children in the MAS program did better and remained in school at higher rates. MAS was formed to rectify some troubling academic patterns among Tucson's Chicano youth. In Tucson, the MAS program was praised for empowering Latino students and allowing them to reach their full scholastic and personal capabilities. Educators, learners, and advocates continued to fight in courts and on the masses for ethnic studies programs. The lawsuit is named after lead plaintiff Curtis Acosta, one of the program's developers, and lead defendant John Huppenthal, Horne's replacement as superintendent (Acosta, et al., 2014). Huppenthal once compared MAS to Nazi Germany's Hitler youth program and pledged in a campaign ad to "stop *la Raza*," a term popularized by Latino activists in the 1970s to promote community pride and action against oppression (Biggers, 2012). In a 2011 recall election, Huppenthal endorsed then-state Senate President Russell Pearce, who publicly backed White nationalists. With the bill's support, Huppenthal was able to outlaw MAS in Tucson in 2012, but not until Acosta's lawyer filed the lawsuit in 2011 (Biggers, 2012).

The case was effectively challenged by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which remanded it back to the lower in *Arce v. Douglas* (formerly *Arce v. Huppenthal*). The lawsuit filed by students in the TUSD challenges the constitutionality of Arizona Revised Statute 15-112, which prohibited the use of class materials or books that encourage the overthrow of the government, "promote resentment toward a race or class of people," are "designed primarily for pupils of a particular ethnic group" and "advocate ethnic solidarity instead of the treatment of pupils as individuals" (Cabrera et al., 2013). According to a 2015 piece in the *Atlantic*, Acosta resigned from his TUSD teaching job in 2012 because of the new bill, which constrained his hands. He subsequently went into education consultancy, where he helps school districts throughout the country put ethnic studies programs in place (Cabrera et al., 2011). Meanwhile,

Delgado (2012) described the events of student-led protests when some rushed to the streets to defend MAS, storming a school board meeting in 2011 and locking themselves to seats while yelling, “When our education’s under attack, what do we do? Stand up fight back!”

Knowledge Gap and Rationale

Ethnic studies are fundamental in the creation of global thinking and an understanding of a variety of class, race, gender, and sexuality issues (Acosta, 2015). Media plays a pivotal role in informing and educating their audience globally through channels like television, radio, and the internet (Santa Ana, 2002, 2013). Concerning the Spanish media in America, most of the research has concentrated on the consumer patterns of Spanish media and, to a lesser degree, the role the Spanish media plays in their communities (Casero-Ripollés et al., 2017; Khazaal & Almiron, 2021). Since the 2010 ban of the MAS program, the Spanish media is among the most logical platforms for addressing the ongoing controversy on ethnic studies because of its continued coverage of the events and informing the public about legal suits, public protests, and other controversies associated with its ban. Since the MAS program was mainly created to benefit Mexican American students, the Spanish media had been vocal in informing the public about the potential implications of the law on ethnic studies (Johnson, 2021; Ruiz, 2021).

Even though there was a difference in the curriculum materials that were examined, Huppenthal submitted “the limited materials the auditors reviewed, and materials submitted to ADE contained content promoting resentment towards a race or class of people” (p.2) which he considered a clear violation of the statute. In essence, the rationale refers to previously evaluated documents, which he suggests are one-sided since they only give one perspective. The perspective related to “that of Latino people being persecuted, oppressed, and subjugated by the “hegemony” – or white America” (p. 2). Later, this attitude is reiterated in both a literal and

figurative sense by Horne (2012) with “school is a place to broaden horizons, not narrow them. And students should be taught to treat others as individuals, and not on the basis of race” (p. 2).

These assumptions of how and what MAS students ‘should’ be taught present a paradoxical appeal to ethos that, as O’Leary, Romero, Cabrera and Rascon (2011) assert “[i]s decidedly authoritarian in that it assumes local school districts are not capable of oversight and implementation of local programs, and thus require direct supervision by state officials” (p. 104). Apple (2009) reiterates “school districts throughout the country are constantly looking over their shoulders, worried that their... programs will be challenged by the forces of the authoritarian right” (p. 242). Amid this controversy, however, there remains a potential knowledge gap concerning the Spanish language media discourses related to this MAS controversy especially when explored through the agenda setting framework. An interesting aspect, therefore, is to understand whether the Spanish language media set an agenda around MAS within the Spanish speaking community.

Huppenthal continued with this contradictory rationale primarily by citing the MAS section on TUSD’s website and target demographic as indicating it is “designed primarily for pupils of a particular ethnic group-Latino students” (2011, p. 2) an approach he perceived to be a violation of the previously established ARS § 15-112 A (3). Such a concern about the MAS department was attributed to what Horne explained as being “explicitly directed toward Latino students” (p. 2) and intended to “enhance the academic success of Latino students” (p. 2), thereby could be interpreted to defy the state’s standards. However, these concerns largely conflicted with an account given by Bill Buckmaster in 2011 referring to curriculum development as “week-by-week, through the entire process, what are they supposed to know, what kind of materials are coming into the classroom...large support staff that can detail the

curriculum” (p. 3), fundamentally a “public input process might go back and forth as they look that over and the citizens would talk about whether it’s appropriate or not” (Huppenthal, 2011, p. 4). While such a rhetoric might have been dominant in the mainstream media reports, there is need to explore to what extent this specific form of media functions within the Spanish speaking community. That is, it is not yet clear the precise role the Spanish language media played in agenda setting for the controversy thereby the need to undertake this study.

Further, Buckmaster cited that "folks" may be confused with his conclusions of noncompliance in the MAS curriculum, even though he had not explored the actual curriculum or an audit that confirmed that MAS classes complied with ARS section 15-112, (p. 2). Based on this more holistic approach that Huppenthal purported, it would follow that Huppenthal would verify this suspicion by confronting the support staff, sticking with the audit that marginally outlined the literature utilized in the classes, and getting public input, including that of those in the city of Tucson. The move was preferable to merely citing a few sentences on the success of the program under contention electronically with no identifiable numbers. Huppenthal seems to have had a slippery slope explanation for the incorrectness of MAS development based on the 'findings' of Tom Horne and a few pages on the website of the MAS department. Huppenthal assumed that "there is cognitive unity across the board in communication" (Santa Ana, 2002, p. 27, 28), and he portrayed Mexican American studies as more threatening than other Ethnic Studies departments because of his focus on MAS as a standalone component of the Ethnic Studies program and his failure to provide solid evidence outside of that department’s website.

In the light of the above considerations, it may be noted that exploring the contribution of the Spanish media to the issue would greatly help understand how its framing informed the controversy, and this is critically important because it helps to understand how locals perceive

the ban through various frames such as racism, cultural restriction, or censorship of their freedom of expression. In addition, the Spanish media can communicate with Latinx speakers in the United States but across the region, making sure that they understand the various issues around the controversy and how they should act about it (Ruiz, 2021). Khazaal and Almiron (2021) examined the Spanish media in the United States and found that there are several potential roles it orchestrates to its audience. As an example, one function that Spanish media is adding to is a sense of community, unity, and cultural identity (Khazaal & Almiron, 2021). García (2013) made similar observations in his critical review of the Spanish media. That is, the Spanish media plays an important role in representing their ethnic identity by serving as their voice (García, 2013).

In the light of the potential influence that the Spanish media has in informing and educating the Latino community, it may be postulated that the target audience is likely to consume online media to stay updated on current happenings concerning international and local politics (Khazaal & Almiron, 2021). The same notion holds for controversial state policies such as the ethnic studies ban in Arizona. Fong (2014) noted that following the MAS ban, the local media was largely focused on reporting the impact of the ban on curriculum. At the time, the local media was awash with reports that ARS 15-112 made it illegal for a school district or charter school to include courses or programs that advocate for the overthrow of the United States government or foster hostility toward a particular race or class of people (Miranda & Soto, 2010).

The ban did in the process meet resistance from minority ethnic communities particularly the Hispanics who were against it citing discrimination against them. The events of student and community protests were largely captured by the media highlighting various issues being

contested and the political and legal issues that emerged from the resistance (Knox, 2017). For example, the Latino Network News (LNN) reported that the opposition by the Hispanic community was well justified because the population of Hispanics in America is over 50 million, and the Hispanic community remains to be one of the most rapidly growing populations in the United States of America today (Santa Ana, 2013). In this context, the revelation shows that the LNN perceived the banning of ethnic studies in Arizona as going contrary to the learner's right to information about their heritage and Spanish history (Ames, 2012).

Chouliaraki and Fairclough (2017) discuss and explain how critical discourse analysis (CDA) is useful in finding the discursive ideologies of our modern social and cultural change. Specifically, the language of the mass media is criticized as an institution of power, transparent and neutral. Media institutions often portray themselves as neutral, reporting information without partisanship or any certain viewpoint. Fairclough (2013) argued that many political, economic, social, cultural, and structures have an impact on the broadcasting media in a dance of turns as these institutions also influence the media. The media is under the influence of management and supervision of such institutions with legislative, economic, and cultural power (Fairclough, 2013). Fairclough (2013) raised concerns that various institutions manipulate media with self-preserving ideologies. Thus, the media can never represent truths but only representations of various truths. That is, the concern is not just that the media cannot represent truth, but that the truths they offer tend to represent the interests of the ruling elite and frequently frame their analyses around that orientation (Herman & Chomsky, 2011). Such influences on media often involve local politics and the local media. Although supposed to be independent of political or local arm twisting, the notion depicts how the media has found itself cornered in a society that

dictates the direction, manner, and how far the media should go in terms of promoting freedom of expression and information (Ribera, 2018).

Chovanec (2017) reported that media and society are entwined as daily news events sum up occurrences in society on various social, economic, and political events. As such, understanding how the local media constructs important social phenomena, including the ethnic studies ban, highlights the importance for academics and policymakers interested in addressing these challenges. Although the controversial discourse phenomena surrounding the ethnic studies ban has received a plethora of attention from academia (García, 2013; Hector, 2021; Martinez, 2013), it has done so primarily by looking at the discourse of the key actors during the MAS ban controversy in TUSD (e.g., Jensen, 2013; Oost, 2017) and in the light of student and teachers protests (Duarte, 2011; Titul, 2010). However, an extensive search of past literature shows that there have not been any analyses of the Spanish or even English language media coverage of the controversy. In the current study, the focus was to fill this knowledge gap because it appears that across the academic literature, analysis of Spanish media on the ethnic studies ban have been largely neglected as a field of inquiry. Therefore, this study sought to fill this knowledge gap by addressing how local Spanish media frames the MAS ban in Tucson, Arizona.

The MAS ban in Arizona, now known as ARS §15-112, exemplifies a controversial political event that harmed Mexican American students, especially in learning about the history of their culture and its contribution to American culture (Acosta, 2014; Orozco, 2012). As such, it may be needed that this topic is still at its nascent phases and to date, it remains less explored from the Spanish media perspective. Thus, the current dissertation will be the first to explore this research problem. Despite the substantial percentage of the Hispanic community in Arizona, the Spanish media remains ignored in the scholarly debates about the ideologies offered by the

media regarding the MAS controversy (Martínez, 2020). Essentially, there is little evidence about how Hispanic / Latino populations create their discourse in the Spanish media with few available media studies limited to the depiction of gender violence, racist ideologies, and immigration issues (Martínez, 2020; Santaemilia & Maruenda, 2014). Lack of academic insights on this topic further complicates notions of MAS controversy discourse because it becomes uncertain to understand how Latino populations set important discourses like ethnic studies about themselves. Therefore, the rationale for undertaking this study was informed by the need to address this knowledge gap.

Problem Statement

The problem is that while various media outlets widely covered and reported the MAS controversy, little is known in the academic literature regarding how the local Spanish media covered the issue of the ethnic studies ban in Arizona. An examination into the Spanish media's discourse on the ethnic studies ban would provide a lens to balance the Hispanic/ Latino community's Spanish print media interpretation. Therefore, the problem is that while past media reports on the MAS ban have explored the potential influence such a political ban had on restricting Spanish ethnic studies (Doran & Hengesteg, 2021; Johnson, 2021; Martinez, 2013, little is known concerning how the local Spanish media covered the MAS ban conflict in Arizona. For example, various studies have explored the MAS ban in Arizona including research conducted by Acosta (2014) on the MAS ban and its impact on Latino students' critical thinking. Findings showed that while the MAS studies were still in place, they had a positive effect on students in terms of achievement and graduation rates (Acosta, 2014).

However, Jensen (2013) reported that following the MAS ban, there were reversal effects on students including possible decline of student achievement in Arizona state standardized tests,

with reduced high school graduation rates. Other researchers also explored the debate on MAS and ethnic studies in Arizona and reported its influence on teaching Mexican American history, improving their engagement in school, encouraging school attendance, and boosting graduation rates (Davila, 2012; Fernandez & Hammer, 2012; Orozco, 2012). However, these studies largely limited their focus on the academic aspects and possible impacts that the MAS ban will have on Latino students. Yet, there is a paucity in the ethnic studies literature in Arizona concerning how the local Spanish media reported and framed the MAS controversy, thereby the motivation to undertake this study.

Research Focus

The focus of this study was to explore how the local Spanish media covered the 2010 Mexican American studies in Tucson Unified School District in Arizona. Specific research interest was to discover the discourses the local Spanish media employed in framing the Mexican American ethnic studies controversy, and how the discourses support or impede the goal of ethnic studies being a form of educational self-determination. Also, the study explores and understands what the identified discourses employed by the Spanish language media say about the community value of Mexican American Studies. To understand this problem, a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the Arizona Spanish media's discourses was conducted as it pertains to the banning of MAS. A secondary search of published media headlines on the MAS studies ban was conducted on various online media websites.

The types of media explored during this study included print media (such as newspapers, and magazines), broadcast media (TV, Radio), and internet media publications. Critical discourse analysis was then performed on the identified media publications on the MAS ban controversy. All news publications from the year 2010 to the year 2012 were included in the

critical discourse analysis. As a research design, critical discourse analysis enables a researcher to go beyond the individual meaning of words in media publication and looks at the overall meanings conveyed by language in context. In this study, “context” refers to the historical, political, cultural, and social, background of the discourse (i.e., the notion of a conversation in media reporting of various events) (Wodak & Meyer, 2019). Through discourse assessment of published media news, a researcher identifies various frames (or agenda being set) being communicated to the public (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2017). In the process, it was possible to use critical discourse analysis to identify the discourses the Spanish media employed when reporting the MAS ban controversy, and also understand how they support or impede the goal of ethnic studies as a form of self-determination.

Research Aim and Questions

This critical discourse analysis aimed to explore how the local Spanish media covered the issue of the ethnic studies ban in Arizona in 2010, with a specific focus on the Tucson school district. To understand this research aim, three research questions were developed as outlined below:

Research Question 1: What are the discourses the Spanish media employ in framing the Mexican American ethnic studies controversy?

Research Question 2: What do the discourses employed by the Spanish language media say about the value of Mexican American ethnic studies?

Research Question 3: Do the identified discourses in the Spanish media support or impede the goal of ethnic studies being a form of educational self-determination?

Definition of Terms

Hispanic. The word ‘Hispanic’ or ‘Latino’ in this study is used to refer to persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race (Cabrera et al., 2014).

Latinx. Latinx is an American English neologism that is occasionally used to refer to people in the United States who have a Latin American cultural or ethnic identity (Cabrera et al., 2014). The gender-neutral suffix -x substitutes the grammatical gender-specific -o/-a endings of Latino and Latina in Spanish (Haltinner, 2015).

Latino. Latino, along with its feminine variant Latina, is a noun and adjective frequently used in English, Spanish, and Portuguese to refer to residents of the United States who have cultural ties to Latin America (Cabrera et al., 2014).

Mexican American Studies. A multidisciplinary academic subject that examines the Chicana/o, Mexican American, and Latina/o immigrant experiences from historical, social, political, educational, and cultural perspectives (Hector, 2021).

Importance of the Study

Undertaking this study is important in addressing knowledge gap in the extant literature regarding how Spanish media framed the MAS ban controversy. Insights from the reviewed literature shed light about the discourses offered by education officials (such as Horne and Huppenthal), but it is unclear how the Spanish language media is covering it. These the Spanish media reports projected contrary views indicating potential outcomes of ethnic studies in preserving ethnic and cultural values of Hispanic minorities. Insights from the reviewed literature largely held a view that MAS curriculum enabled learners to learn and appreciate their history, and the contributions that the Latinx community has made to enrich the American

culture as opposed to propagating fears of racial divisions or radicalizing Hispanic students (Noriega, 2017).

While Horne argued that the MAS ban was attempted to preserve the US government from being overthrown by radicalization of Latinx students, it is important to note that the dominant theme in the mainstream media was that MAS created a discourse of racial intolerance advanced by education officials. The media alluded that ethnic studies potentially contributed to attacks on cultural values, advanced oppression, created negative stereotypes about Hispanic students and the Latinx community as being hostile and unpatriotic to the government (Cantú, 2020; Doharty et al., 2020; Depenbrock, 2017; Gazzar, 2017; Gershon, 2017). Yet, it remains unclear how the Spanish media portrays the importance of ethnic studies in Arizona. Insights drawn from this study are key to understanding and filling this knowledge gap (Cabrera et al., 2014; Davila, 2012; Gershon, 2017; Huicochea, 2011a).

Assessment of past scholarly work shows that lack of research on the topic has left a lacuna for speculations about how media portrayed MAS ban controversy (Biggers, 2012; Creno, 2014; 2011; Cummings, 2006; Duarte, 2011; Editorial Board, 2011). Considering that there is hardly any research that has examined how Hispanic media might have countered statements made by education and political officials following the MAS ban in Tucson Arizona, it was important to address this knowledge gap. Therefore, undertaking this study was considered important to understand how Spanish media counters contents of the Arizona House Bill 2281. That is, to understand media personnel's' perceptions about MAS studies and claims over the overthrowal of the United States government, promotion of resentment toward other races, designed of students from a specific ethnic group, and claims of supporting ethnic solidarity (Acosta, 2014; Orozco, 2012; Delgado, 2012; Terry, 2013; Hector, 2021).

Finally, little is known from past literature regarding how various media discourses are likely to support or impede the goal of ethnic studies in Arizona such as providing theoretical understandings in racial and ethnic groups' histories, cultures, and experiences (Acosta & Mir, 2012; Bender-Slack & Godwyll, 2022). Findings from past literature show that the media plays an influential role in framing societal issues that might influence favorable political opinion such as policy formulation to support or hinder public calls for the inclusion of ethnic studies in the curriculum (Camarota & Romero, 2014; García, 2013; Khazaal & Almiron, 2021). By undertaking the current study, it will be interesting to understand how media discourses contribute to or hinder calls for the inclusion of ethnic studies in the classrooms. Therefore, findings from this study help create new knowledge on how the identified discourses in the Spanish media support or impede the goal of ethnic studies being a form of educational self-determination among Latina / Spanish groups in Arizona.

Conclusion and Organization of the Dissertation

The current introduction chapter has presented the background facts upon which the current critical discourse analysis of Spanish media was based. Insights from the past literature show that research has previously been conducted on the MAS ban controversy. However, to date there is hardly any academic research on how Spanish media framed the MAS ban controversy making it difficult to understand how Latino groups in the United States represented themselves via the Spanish media concerning the ethnic studies ban. Considering the potential knowledge gap on the topic, there was a need to undertake the current study and add new knowledge to the extant body of literature on the discourses the Spanish media employed in framing the Mexican American ethnic studies controversy. The rest of the dissertation is organized as followed: Chapter 2 details past literature on the topic, highlighting how scholars to

date have assessed the media coverage of the MAS controversy. The theoretical framework is also presented in Chapter 2 focusing on the framing theory and critical race theories.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methods and strategies that were used to collect relevant data to answer the formulated research questions. The chapter also presents the data analysis process and presentation of findings. Chapter 4 presents key insights collected from past studies focusing on the main discourses used by Spanish media. The findings are presented in line with the formulated research questions. Chapter 5 will discuss the key findings and compare them to past literature studies, theoretical framework, and primary research questions. Points of contention and convergence will be made from the obtained findings and compared to past publications on the topic. The discussion chapter will also identify potential limitations that might have affected the obtained findings. Also, the chapter will provide recommendations for future research to further improve on the current findings.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this critical discourse analysis was to explore how the local Spanish media covered the issue of the ethnic studies ban in Arizona in 2010, with a specific focus on the Tucson school district. The identified study problem is that while past discourse analysis studies, in English, from the majority group on the Hispanic / Latino groups have resulted in findings of gender violence, immigration, and racist ideologies, little is known regarding how Hispanic /Latino groups represent themselves via the Spanish media in the wake of the MAS ban controversy. There is growing evidence that the ethnic studies ban in Arizona provided an abundance of media coverage due to its controversial underpinnings (Delgado, 2012; EFE, 2017; Gonzalez, 2020 Kaleem, 2018; Stephenson, 2021). Yet, there is hardly any examination into the Spanish media's discourse on the ethnic studies ban, creating a potential knowledge gap. As such, exploring this topic from the Spanish media lens would provide a clear balance of the Hispanic/ Latino community's Spanish print media interpretation of the MAS ban controversy.

In the current literature chapter, the focus was to identify how scholars to date have analyzed the media coverage of the MAS controversy. The chapter presents a brief on the literature search strategy used to identify relevant studies used to conduct a synthesis of the current literature. Then, the main theories used in past literature are presented with a specific focus on the Agenda Setting Theory and the Framing Theory; detailing how these theories help understand the media framing of the MAS controversy. Subsequent sections then present the main literature findings detailing the main themes of how researchers and practitioners have assessed the media coverage of the MAS controversy in Arizona. The literature also identifies potential knowledge gaps in the literature and highlights potential areas for future research improvements that have been recommended by past researchers.

Literature Search Strategy

A secondary literature search strategy was utilized to research articles about MAS ban in Arizona. A predetermined inclusion and exclusion were used to identify relevant articles for this study. The inclusion criteria were limited to articles published between the years January 2006 and May 2022 because they cover key debate timelines on ethnic study controversy since the MAS ban. The choice for starting the search in the year 2006 was informed by the fact that the MAS curriculum controversy first made headlines in 2006 (“Republicans Hate Latinos”). In 2006, the then Republican lawmaker, Jonathan Paton, representing Tucson at the time got a hold of a recording of labor organizer and Chicano rights icon Dolores Huerta telling an auditorium of Tucson High School students, “Republicans hate Latinos.” The GOP lawmakers in Phoenix decried that “Raza Studies,” were developed to indoctrinate Hispanic students with ideas about white people as racists and people of color as their victims. Thus, exploring articles published between 2006 and 2022 could help understand the controversies surrounding the MAS ban. All articles used in this study were published in English and were largely limited to the primary topic of the MAS ban controversy in Arizona. However, for theoretical references, a few articles were selected before the year 2010 to provide the context of the origin of the MAS studies in Arizona.

All articles used in this study were extracted from various academic databases and online internet sites. The main academic databases consulted included ERIC, EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, and Scopus. Internet sites and online media websites consulted included *La Voz*, *Vision Hispana*, *La Opinión*, *Hoy Los Angeles*, *Huffington Post*, *Mundo Hispanico*, and *El Observador*. To identify relevant articles for the study, different phrases, terms, and keywords, or their combination, were used. Some of the keywords used included “Mexican American Studies ban”, “HB 2281 ethnic studies”, “Tucson ethnic studies protests”, “Tucson ethnic studies censorship”,

“ethnic curriculum in Arizona”, and “books ban in Tucson, Arizona.” Additional phrases also included “MAS studies controversy”, “Raza studies ban in Tucson”, “Arizona's HB 2281 and ethnic studies”, “MAS curriculum audit in Arizona”, and “court cases and Mexican American studies ban”.

After identifying relevant articles from the different academic articles, a selection criterion was used to ensure they met the predetermined inclusion framework. The evaluation criteria focused on perusing the articles’ titles or headings, summaries, and abstracts. Articles with a similar focus on the “MAS ban controversy,” “Arizona HB 2281 or ARS 15-112,” and “Mexican American studies ban” were shortlisted for further assessment before being used to conduct the current literature synthesis. Once collected, articles were reviewed to ensure they were relevant to the current analysis and n=52 were removed from the data pool. This approach yielded n=30 Spanish language articles which constitute the data source for this dissertation. The discussion of the selected and identified articles was done thematically (i.e. by focusing on common themes or issues that have been identified by past scholars regarding the MAS controversy). The surveyed media articles were also used to identify potential knowledge gaps in the literature that informed the need to conduct the current study.

Theoretical Framework

Over the years, there has been growing research interest to understand how media frames various contentious topics in society. Although there is no consensus in the literature on how the media assigns various discourses when reporting controversial topics like the Ethnic Studies Ban in Arizona, some of the common theories that have been applied include framing theory, and agenda-setting theory. Agenda setting entails efforts by the media to influence and determine issues (or agenda) to be discussed in the public sphere (Valenzuela & McCombs, 2019). Framing

not only sets the agenda of what the audience should think about issues but how to think about such topics (Valenzuela & McCombs, 2019). Framing not only sets the agenda of what the audience should think about issues but how to think about such topics (Valenzuela & McCombs, 2019). In this study, framing theory was used to understand how the Spanish language media framed the ethnic studies ban in Arizona.

The framing theory focuses on how media outlets and personnel set and create agendas (Goffman, 1974). The premise of framing theory is that the media directs attention to certain occurrences and then contextualizes them (Fairhurst & Sarr, 2019). As a mass communication theory, framing refers to the way the media bundles and delivers information to the public. According to the notion, the media emphasizes specific occurrences and then contextualizes them to promote or discourage various perspectives (Fairhurst & Sarr, 2019). The media, in this way, exerts a selective effect on how individuals see reality. Due to its close relationship to Agenda-Setting Theory, framing is occasionally referred to as second-level agenda-setting.

Media frames include preconceived notions that serve as heuristics, or "rules of thumb," that enable humans to assimilate information rapidly about how various ethnic and racial groups associate with each other (Lam, 2020). Frames are sometimes referred to as scripts or schemata in psychology. Media frames may be cultural in origin, and they are formed at a very young age. Almost every phrase in one's language conjures up a frame (Roslyng & Dindler, 2021). For example, when exploring media coverage of MAS ban controversy, the term "racism" may create a picture of "intersectionality," "white supremacy," "white privilege," "colorism," "negative stereotype," and "indifferent treatment" (Roslyng & Dindler, 2021). Even the term "communication" is circumscribed, and it may consist of the following components: a messenger, a message, a recipient, a medium, and a context. The media frequently uses frames

such as "fight against disease," "job exporting," and "war on terror," when reporting about pandemics, employment, and terrorism, respectively.

Underwriting the above considerations, it may be noted that the framing theory postulates that the way events are presented to an audience (denoted as "the frame") affects the processing decisions made by individuals. Frames are abstractions that help organize and frame the meaning of messages. The most typical application of frames is in terms of the context in which the news or media presents information. Fairhurst and Sarr (2019) reported that frames affect how the audience perceives the news, which might be interpreted as a type of second-level agenda-setting — they not only inform the audience what to think about (agenda-setting theory) but also how to think about it (second-level agenda setting, framing theory) (Fairhurst & Sarr, 2019). Therefore, using the framing theory in this study will help understand the discourses the Spanish media uses during the MAS controversy. According to Fairhurst and Sarr (2019), the media uses various framing techniques including the following:

- *Metaphor*: To frame a conceptual idea in terms of another object.
- *Stories* (myths, legends): To vividly and memorably frame a subject through narrative.
- *Tradition* (rituals, ceremonies): Cultural norms that invest the mundane with importance and are inextricably linked to items.
- *Slogan, jargon, catchphrase*: To encapsulate a thing in a memorable and relatable term.
- *Artifact*: Objects endowed with inherent symbolic worth — a cultural/ visual phenomenon imbued with more significance than the object itself.
- *Contrast*: To characterize an object by describing what it is not.
- *Spin*: to express a notion in such a way that an implicit value judgment (positive or negative) is conveyed; to introduce an inherent bias via definition.

These framing techniques used by the media may serve as confirmation or denial of how journalists perceive racism to impede MAS ban controversy (Abrica & Dorsten, 2021). The goal of media framing of contentious issues is to provide a focal point for talks concerning racism and to provide opportunities for the oppressed to be heard, particularly how Latino/Spanish people construct their experiences through the MAS curriculum (Bell & Busey, 2021). Thus, through the framing theory, it will be probable to establish how the Spanish language media frames ethnic studies ban and represents perceptions of the Latinx community following the MAS ban.

Literature Findings

The current section details the main findings from the explored literature on how scholars have assessed the media coverage of the MAS controversy. Based on the extracted literature, the common issues related to how media people covered the MAS controversy included framing the history of MAS programs in Tucson and its subsequent banning, cultural values suppression of minority history, resistance against minority oppression, and MAS influence on student performance, and race and prejudice. These key themes are discussed in the subsequent sections below.

Spanish Language Media's Importance of Agenda Setting

Past scholars have explored the Spanish language media's importance in agenda setting for the Spanish-speaking community. Findings from past studies show that the use of Spanish-language media in the past influences different issues including public opinion on various policy issues and enhances Latinx group consciousness. Key findings from past studies show that frequent use of Spanish-language media leads to more liberal attitudes toward immigration, and concerns about seclusion (Abrajano & Singh, 2009). Also, increased use of Spanish-language media has been shown to potentially lead to increased levels of group consciousness (Martinez,

2013). According to the findings of several studies (Benamou, 2022; García et al., 2020; Segal, 2013; Oller et al., 2019), the portrayal of various policy issues in Spanish-language media and ethnic media, in general, is significantly distinct from that in English-language general-market media.

In addition, several academics believe that the Spanish media, in general, can have a substantial impact on political beliefs (Anwar et al., 2020; Casero-Ripollés et al., 2018), while others believe that the fragmentation of television viewers can have significant implications for political conduct (Harlow et al., 2020). It is not quite obvious, however, whether or not Latinos are influenced by the various sorts of political communication that they get through English-language and Spanish-language media (Bødker & Morris, 2021; Dixon et al., 2019). Although the empirical evidence at the individual level is not very strong, several academics have stated that using media of one's ethnicity leads to a greater sense of one's own ethnic identity (Ribera Payá, 2018; Ruiz, 2021). According to the findings of one study that investigated the connection between ethnicity and language use, the consumption of ethnic media among Latinos is not a significant indicator of group awareness (Kerevel, 2011).

At a more general level, some researchers have discovered that a higher level of Spanish-speaking ability is associated with a greater level of pan ethnic identification (Jensen et al., 2006; Kerevel, 2011). On the other hand, Sanchez (2006) discovered that more English-proficient Latinos favor more restrictive policies on immigration and are less supportive of bilingual education. However, the theoretical reasons for why language proficiency is related to political attitudes are not clear, and previous research has not found convincing empirical evidence linking the use of Spanish-language media to systematic differences in opinion within the Latino

community (Sanchez, 2006). As such, this topic requires further research to explore the connection between Spanish language media and ethnic identification.

However, there is not a significant body of research that establishes a connection between the usage of the Spanish language and ethnic media and public opinion. Research conducted in the field of political science suggests that the effects of language and the use of ethnic media are much more complex than what is suggested by the literature coming from the fields of communications and marketing, which suggests that language and the use of ethnic media might matter for public opinion (Ruiz, 2021). In this research, language is viewed more as a proxy for the extent of cultural integration into the United States, and the one study that evaluated the use of ethnic media found no persuasive evidence that it matters for understanding minority politics (Dixon et al., 2019). In addition, the use of language and various forms of media did not constitute the primary theoretical concern of this investigation. The purpose of this study is to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in a manner that is more convincing theoretically (Veciana-Suarez, 2015; Zaller, 2017). Latinos who get the majority of their knowledge from sources written in Spanish have considerably different perspectives on the political climate in the United States compared to Latinos who get the majority of their information from sites written in English (Bodker & Morris, 2021). In elaboration, this difference in perspectives is because Spanish-language media and English-language media have different goals.

As a result, Spanish-language media places a greater emphasis on issues that are significant to Latinos and frames political debates in a manner that is understandable to Latinos (Kaleem, 2018; Stephenson, 2021). The use of media in Spanish has the effect of fostering a sense of group consciousness among people of Latino descent who currently reside in the United States (Bodker & Morris, 2021). Moreover, this occurs because of the media's ability to highlight both the shared

experiences of Latinos and their roots in Latin America. Latinos hailing from a variety of different nationalities. The Latino national public opinion survey from 2004 is used here to examine the validity of this claim (Delgado, 2012; Gonzalez, 2020).

The usage of a language is influenced not just by a person's linguistic aptitude, but also by a variety of other factors, including historical, geographical, and social circumstances, as well as social class and identity politics. The study of sociolinguistics proposes that there is a connection between the social context in which an act of speech takes place and the content of the language itself, which carries social connotations (Zaller, 2017). Language preference is related to the level of appropriateness attributed to each language dependent on the social context of the speaker, which is especially true of bilinguals (Kaleem, 2018). At least one academic has advanced the theory that Latinos, regardless of their level of proficiency in the language, make a deliberate decision to communicate with one another in Spanish to assert their cultural identity, combat racism, and reject "Americanization" (Stephenson, 2021). Nonetheless, the empirical basis for this claim is not particularly strong. Other scholars have proposed that social class should be considered when attempting to explain the use of Spanish and English among Latinos, with better socioeconomic status being associated with the use of English and poverty being associated with the maintenance of the Spanish language (Bodker & Morris, 2021; Veciana-Suarez, 2015). Thus, the choice of language among Latinos is a multifaceted phenomenon that is only partially influenced by linguistic aptitude. The decision between speaking Spanish or English sends a message to others about one's identification within the Latino community.

Many academics and activists (Dixon et al., 2019; Mastro & Ortiz, 2008; Zaller, 2017) have different opinions regarding the connection between the Spanish language and Latino identity; yet there is some agreement regarding the significance of the language employed by

ethnic media. According to Branton and Dunaway (2008), the consumption of media in Spanish by Latinos serves the dual purpose of cultural assimilation and integration into the dominant society, as well as the preservation of a distinct ethnic identity. Veciana-Suarez (2015) found in a longitudinal study of white ethnic groups that the use of ethnic media led to increased ethnic identification over time. Relyea and Amendum (2019) suggest that Latino media serves group-based and cultural needs that are not otherwise met in English-language media. Veciana's findings are consistent with those of Relyea and Amendum (2019).

Both Benamou (2022) and Garca et al. (2020) have argued that the purpose of Hispanic media in the United States is to "de-nationalize" Latinos to create a pan ethnic identity that eliminates differences that are based on national origin. Spanish-language media also uses content based in Latin America as a symbolic and cultural referent to promote Latino cultural identity (Dixon et al., 2019, p. 235), as well as to retain a connection to the "homeland." Hispanic media owners and operators see themselves as spokespersons and advocates for the entirety of the Latino population in the United States, and they place a special emphasis on the Spanish language as a means of promoting and maintaining a group-based Latino identity (Bdker & Morris, 2021; Dixon et al., 2019). Hispanic media operators and owners view themselves as spokespersons and advocates for the entirety of the Latino population in the United States. In a nutshell, those who produce media that is catered specifically to Latinos as well as those who devise marketing techniques with Latinos in mind both make two assumptions. First, the usage of Spanish is essential if one wants to communicate with Latinos living in the United States, as the language is widely considered to be an essential part of Latino identity (Dixon et al., 2019).

If, as many academics have hypothesized, the purpose of ethnic media is to foster pan ethnic identity, then one might expect that the consumption of media in Spanish should be

connected to a sense of group consciousness among Latinos (Orozco, 2012; Delgado, 2012). This is something that has been suggested by many academics. In the United States, academics who study racial and ethnic politics are interested in group consciousness for several reasons, the primary one being the impact that it has on political beliefs and conduct (Cabrera et al., 2014; Davila, 2012). According to Valenzuela and McCombs (2019) group consciousness is attributed to cases when “a community maintains a sense of affinity and group identification with other members of the group, which leads to a collective orientation to become more politically active. A sense of political awareness that the individual political and economic fortunes of group members are linked is an essential component of group consciousness. Group consciousness encompasses much more than simple identification with a certain group. Cabrera et al. (2014) view access to Latinx information sources to be an essential factor that helps predict a sense of group consciousness among Spanish populations. Although Cabrera et al. (2014) did not have adequate measures to test this theoretical relationship, it is possible that in the case of Latinos, access to Spanish-language media designed to give special emphasis to issues affecting Latinos will influence perceptions of common group interests among Latinos.

There is a lot of evidence to demonstrate that the news coverage in Spanish-language media is quite different from that of its equivalent in English-language media. In the San Diego area, for instance, Kristin Moran (2006) analyzed local news broadcasts in Spanish and English and discovered considerable disparities in the kind of topics that were covered by each language's respective newscasts. Moran (2006:397) found that Spanish-language broadcasts had a significantly greater amount of coverage of local, national, and international politics, as well as a significantly higher number of stories related to issues concerning the border and immigration. The observations are in comparison to English-language broadcasts. Moran was taken aback by

the fact that immigration and the border received almost little attention in the English-language local news despite the close vicinity of San Diego to the Mexican border. When English broadcasts did address topics connected to Latinos, the tales typically tended to overstate the contrasts between Latinos and Anglo people and were intended to foster a "we versus them" mentality (Moran, 2006:400).

Additionally, it appears that more coverage is given in Spanish-language media to charitable and community-oriented events that are beneficial to Latinos. Moran (2006) discovered that during election season, Spanish-language stations delivered a significantly increased amount of coverage on the issues and candidates, as well as information on where and how to vote. Most broadcasts in the English language did not provide this category of information (Moran, 2006:398). Subervi-Velez (1999) discovered that Spanish-language television made a deliberate effort to link health-related coverage to Latinos. This enabled the audience to connect the material to their own beliefs and conventions, which was one of the goals of the endeavor.

In summary, research has revealed that publications are written in English and those written in Spanish report on immigration policy in different ways (Branton and Dunaway, 2008; Abrajano and Singh, 2009). According to the findings of Branton and Dunaway (2008), who conducted a content analysis of Spanish- and English-language newspapers from California, from March 2004 through March 2005, Spanish-language papers produced significantly more coverage of immigration issues than English-language papers did, and they were less likely to focus on the negative aspects of immigration than English-language papers were. Similarly, Abrajano and Singh (2009) conducted a content analysis of television news transcripts from major English- and Spanish-language networks in early 2004. They discovered that most stories

about immigration adopted a neutral tone, but that a larger percentage of Spanish-language stories adopted a pro-immigration stance compared to English-language stories. This was found to be the case when comparing the percentage of stories that took a pro-immigration stance between the two languages. Both studies demonstrate that ethnic media takes different viewpoints towards immigration compared to mainstream English-language media, and what is most relevant for this study is that these impacts were visible around the time that the data that was used for this analysis was obtained.

Unfortunately, there does not appear to be any previous research that examines how Spanish-language media differs from mainstream English media in terms of non-ethnically salient issues, such as abortion or same-sex marriage, and it is beyond the scope of this study to engage in content analysis of Spanish-language media. In addition, there does not appear to be any previous research that examines how Spanish-language media differs from mainstream media in terms of non-ethnically salient issues, such as same-sex marriage. Few studies that have attempted to analyze Latinx opinion reveals via Spanish language media show that noncitizens and Spanish-dominant Latinos tend to hold more conservative sentiments about social problems than citizen Latinos do (Leal, 2014; Sanchez, 2016). Although this is only a hypothesis, the research that has been done so far suggests that Latinx who are more likely to consume media in Spanish may have more conservative views on issues such as abortion and marriage between people of the same sexual orientation. That is, it is not clear whether Spanish-language media panders to socially conservative attitudes or avoids discussing these topics entirely, nor is it clear how, if at all, its coverage differs from that of English-language media. Also unknown is whether Spanish-language media caters to socially conservative attitudes. Nevertheless, given that previous research suggests that one of the primary objectives of Spanish-language media is to

promote a common ethnic identity among Latinos in the United States (Oller et al., 2019), it seems unlikely that Spanish-language media as a whole would adopt a systematically different stance towards issues that are unrelated to pan ethnic identity, and it is possible that Spanish-language media would even avoid these particular issues to reduce the likelihood of potential conflicts occurring among the Latinx community.

Attack on Cultural Values and History Suppression

Insights from the explored literature shows that studies about the MAS controversy have extensively demonstrated that media people raised concerns about racial, cultural, and historical issues (Bebout, 2017; Cantú, 2020; Doharty et al., 2020; Depenbrock, 2017; Gazzar, 2017; Gershon, 2017; Lacy, 2011; Monteiro, 2011). For example, Bebout (2017) explored how media people framed the MAS controversy with specific focus on articles published in the New York times regarding the racial motive behind the MAS controversy. In the article, initially published by Marc Lacy, *Rift in Arizona as Latino Class Is Found Illegal*, media people raised concerns that the MAS ban was largely influenced by racial profiling of the minority Hispanic community to an extent of censorship students from learning about their history (Bebout, 2017). However, Bebout (2017) observes that political officials who supported the MAS ban such as Horne and Huppenthal expressed concerns about the brainwashing and propagandizing of students by educators who inclined to hide behind cultural values and struggles for minority rights. In the New York article, Lacy (2011) highlighted how media reporters described the events with classrooms at Tucson High Magnet School, classroom walls featured protest signs that included descriptions such as “United Together in *La Lucha!*” or the struggle. These findings show that the New York media was utilized as setting the contexts for their arguments, but these are not media analyses like Santa Ana’s work.

Cantú (2020) conducted a media review to understand how media reporters portrayed the MAS controversy and ethnic studies from the lens of whether Republicans hate Latinos. Key among the explored how media reporters covered the MAS controversy. Findings showed that media outlets largely framed the conflict in terms of suppressing history and an attack on the freedom of access to knowledge. The growing concern from media reports between 2011 and 2013 was called by students, community, and educators to promote a culturally and socially relevant curriculum that is focused on the perspectives of Latino communities (Cantú, 2020). Denying Hispanic students such a right was framed as racial marginalization based on the insights collected from educational groups and the local population. Reporting for Cronkite News, Khan (2012) cited a local Hispanic teacher comparing the ban to “an attack on people of color” (p. 37). Otero and Cammarota (2011) also reported participant observations during protests in the light of the MAS ban initiated to educate minority students about their culture. The findings show that in the wake of the MAS controversy, media reporters appeared to paint a scenario that portrayed Republican politicians as being anti-Hispanic with ulterior motives of introducing repressive measures about ethnic studies via HB 2281.

Monteiro (2011) assessed the ban on ethnic studies in Arizona based on previous news events between the years 2010 and 2011, immediately after the MAS ban. Insights from the assessment of how media reporters portrayed the MAS controversy showed that a major concern among the Latinx or Hispanic community was the growing risk of erasing the minority community values and culture. Specifically, media people perceived that the ramification of HB 2281 for Arizona's Latino/a population becomes evident as a racially motivated political decision. Monteiro (2011) reported that journalists expressed growing concerns that multiculturalism in Arizona's public-school system was growingly becoming under attack, with

calls for a culturally appropriate curriculum that promoted a sense of belonging and inclusion among minority students. Additionally, in some media outlets the MAS ban controversy was compared to the political failure to support Hispanic contribution to US history with growing concerns whether Republicans despise Latinos/, as Mexican American labor organizer Dolores Huerta asserts.

Gershon (2017) reported on news stories about the proposed termination of an ethnic studies program under a new state law that was enacted to assist in resolving a race-discrimination lawsuit against Tucson public schools. Moreover, Gershon (2017) showed that media people were of the view that the MAS program was often criticized by political opponents, most notably state Superintendent Tom Horne, who claimed that it incited bigotry and called for its termination. However, through their media outlets and news publications most journalists were of the view that when the Mexican American studies program began in 1997, it was intended to pacify families who had sued the district alleging systemic segregation and racial injustice (Gershon, 2017). Instead, some news people perceived that the MAS background slowly grew to become a school program that polarized the education system and brought Arizona back into the national limelight on race and immigration concerns (Gershon, 2017; Herreras, 2011).

Some news outlets such as the New York Times and CNN painted a picture that Latinx students and the Hispanic community who supported the MAS program believed that lessons obtained from its curriculum empowered students to learn about their history through a multicultural lens and assist them in analyzing public services for evidence of discrimination (Gazzar, 2017). Some journalists reported that the Hispanic community considered the MAS ban as being unjustly maligned. As a result, the media people reported on the resulting multiple

public demonstrations in Tucson about potential cultural and ethnic discrimination (Doharty et al., 2020). Despite the heated debate, media outlets reported lack of consensus at the time regarding whether the MAS ban would eliminate all components of MAS ethnic studies in kindergarten through 12th grade (Duarte, 2011). ABC News highlighted that the MAS curriculum, based on views expressed by Tucson Unified School District attorney Rob Ross, stemmed directly from the district's 1978 lawsuit settlement (Doharty et al., 2020). According to the ABC News article at the time, Ross and other district administrators believed lawmakers who voted for the prohibition were ignorant of the historical lessons and connection between the MAS courses and the racial segregation issue (Doharty et al., 2020).

Concerning HB 2281 and "belonging," news reports by the Fox News Channel documented that the concerns raised by the MAS ban regarded whether teaching history following Horne and Schlesinger's individualist ideal of unity was an unwelcome addition to school curricula. In terms of academic learning, Depenbrock (2017) demonstrated that ethnic studies and culturally responsive instruction contributed to students' independent growth in critical thinking. Assessing views by some media outlets such as USA Today and HuffPost, Depenbrock (2017) concluded that most journalists or editorial teams held divergent viewpoints about the ethnic studies topic portraying possible disagreements between those who were in support of, and those against, the MAS ban. Additionally, some media houses reported that prohibiting ethnic studies programs significantly impaired the growth of already marginalized communities such as the Hispanic or Latinx students. Even so, media people who covered the controversy emphasized that fostering regional or national pride and awareness of the nation's history ought to have been considered to unite diverse ethnic/cultural populations in Arizona

(Depenbrock, 2017). Such an approach could help address minority concerns about racial, cultural, and historical discrimination when supporting ethnic studies.

Resistance Against Oppression

Literature shows that studies about the MAS controversy have widely demonstrated that Arizona has had a long history, both in government and in schools, of enforcing laws strongly opposed to anti-immigrants and foreign languages (Gershon, 2017; Herreras, 2012; Horne, 2012; Huicochea, 2011; Jensen, 2013; Lang, 2013). Lang (2013) cited news reports in *The New Yorker* with journalists recalling the 1988 Literacy program for children, also known as Arizona Proposal 203 (which was eventually reversed by independent courts), that reduced access to language for government corporations and restricted the form of instruction that educators of the ethnic studies had to provide. Another article in the *Time* highlights that news people held a perception that despite poor linguistic skills, both Arizona policy cases illustrate divisive attitudes among politicians towards immigration (Herreras, 2012). Media reporters further considered Arizona HB 2281 to be an extension of Arizona's long history of suppressing the study of foreign language (Lang, 2013). Thus, media outlets like *The New Yorker* and the *Time* considered Arizona HB 2281 as Horne's approval of MAS ban on accepted criminal justice, followed by HB 2281, following the excitement of TUSD and the MAS Department. The debate started after the debate on the popular feminist Dolores Huerta by the Tucson High School Senior Council in 2007.

Media reports by journalists in the *U.S. News & World Report* appeared to frame the MAS controversy in the light of oppressive political narratives (Herreras, 2012). News reporters largely perceived that Horne (2012) supported the abolition of bilingualism in Arizona, dispatched an exposed message, mainly on the home page of the Arizona Education Department,

claiming that the TUSD Division of Ethnic Studies claims that children are too marginalized, and that the US is run by a white, colonial, patriarchal system that seeks to exploit individuals (Huicochea, 2012). However, in another news article in the HuffPost *What Arizona's Ban on Ethnic Studies Says* about America, the news media seemed to counter Horne's open message narrative that educators were teaching wrong things about history and literature. Countering Horne's argument, the followers emphasized that programs in the field of ethnic studies are often meant to be socially important throughout the modern education structure focused on German and white culture, to aid children to recognize themselves in the education system as well as to realize the importance of schooling (Herrerias, 2012).

Gershon (2017) observes that media people seemed to frame the controversy on misperceptions advanced by Horne who concentrated on students like people who must never separate from a particular culture or grammar, but who saw them as if they were in post-race America. But the Tucson high school students who experienced the current political atmosphere of racist anti-immigration did not share Horne's opinion. Jensen (2013) also indicates that in an article appearing in The Washington Post, *Arizona's ban of critical race theory in schools*, the journalist described the Mexico-American curriculum as a benefit to Hispanic students, but its ban amounted to oppression and suppression. According to Jensen (2013), some media people believed that the existing education system perceived the MAS ban as another form of oppression against minorities.

MAS and Student Performance

Explored literature further showed that media outlets and journalists framed the issue of MAS ban in the light of students' academic performance and engagement in school (Cabrera et al., 2014; Cammarota, 2016; Cabrera et al., 2014; Davila, 2012; Gershon, 2017; Huicochea,

2011a; Salinas, 2011; Winkler-Morey, 2010). Although some journalists framed their news articles to depict that ethnic studies were successful at increasing student academic achievement, most of the media reports were based on qualitative or descriptive studies (Cabrera, 2012; Department of Accountability and Research, 2011a, 2011b; Romero, 2008; Romero et al., 2009; Save Ethnic Studies, 2011). Huicochea (2011a) reported descriptive findings of ethnic studies in the *Arizona Daily Star* and observed that media outlets were of the view that while MAS was beneficial in raising academic achievement, the gains were modest, compared to the effect of extracurricular activities. Prior research found no significant effect of MAS on Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) exam scores when comparing MAS students to all other high school students in the state using a form of multivariate analysis (Franciosi, 2009). However, it may be argued that learners from districts other than TUSD are not a suitable comparison group.

Although the MAS program has been the subject of heated arguments, Cabrera et al. (2014) cited an Article in *The New York Times* (*Arizona: Most of Law on Ethnic Studies Is Upheld*) where journalists expressed that a critical topic has been overlooked by the political class such as the importance of MAS in improving student achievement. Cabrera et al. (2014) reported on an opinion article in *The New York Times* (*Mexico-American Studies Rejected in Tucson*) where the journalists reviewed the subject of ethnic studies by exploring previous logistic regression data findings based on administrative data from TUSD (2008–2011). The study attempted to determine the association between taking MAS classes, passing AIMS (Arizona state standardized assessments), and high school graduation. The opinion article painted a picture where MAS curriculum was alluded to be strongly associated with an increased risk of occurrence of both outcomes. Interestingly, advocates and opponents of MAS all agree

that student accomplishment should be a central focus of public education, albeit with conflicting justifications. For instance, the current state superintendent asserts that student accomplishment is critical because Arizonans deserve a return on their educational investments and a well-educated populace is critical to the state's economic growth.

Media reporters perceived that the TUSD report supported the uptake of the MAS curriculum considering that it had improved the academic performance among Latinx students in Tucson. In an article on the *ABC News (Can Ethnic Studies Improve Student Achievement? Researcher Says Yes)* journalists reported that the TUSD report had indicates that 2.5 percent of MAS students dropped out of university compared to 56 percent of Latino students in the region (Gershon, 2017). The study reveals that 66% of MAS graduates, a higher proportion of Latino graduates are drawn from public colleges (Cabrera et al., 2014)). However, some media people reported that the report was inconclusive among foreign language and political groups thereby paving the way for Tom Horne's media interview with the Arizona government and education to clarify the concerns. Low enrollment, along with Arizona's public education network, of Mexican American Higher Education students provides the basis for my research, as opposed to normal students. The study of the government policy controversy in Arizona is the product of my input on how legislation impacts educational outcomes for Mexican American students.

Davila (2012) examined media reports that explored political history across national academies and beyond the conflicts surrounding Mexicans as well as ethnic lessons in Arizona's essay "To avoid suggestion across race: what Arizona's fight toward ethnic studies could offer academics." Media houses such as *Politico* and *The Washington Post* displayed a narrative on how the electoral system in the United States represents the racial analysis and legitimate discriminatory views. In the wake of the MAS ban, some journalists highlighted the intolerable

logic of racist analysis that is commonly used to nullify the study of social justice among ethnic minorities. Davila (2012) perceived that media outlets advocated growing consensus regarding student performance and implementation of MAS studies in the curriculum.

An article in the *PEN America (Educational Gag Orders: Legislative Restrictions on the Ethnic Studies)* reported by Camarota (2016) painted a picture where journalists seem to have advocated the need for MAS curriculum as an approach to improving academic performance. Understanding history among young racial minority groups following the implementation of Social Justice Education Project (SJEP) enabled minority students to be more involved in the classroom and develop positive attitude towards learning. Although the interest of SJEP students in Tucson was given to the security of ethnic studies, SJEP students had established their national awareness or understanding since the SJEP house carried out ethnic studies. However, the ban on ethnic studies closed all the ethnic and SJEP classes in the Tucson Consolidated School System. Cammarota's (2016) thesis explores the tradition of youth participatory action research (YPAR), which started a way of learning that helped to set young SJEPs in motion. Thus, media reports by news outlets like the *PEN America* highlighted the necessity to make a radical shift in schools and society about ethnic minority studies and students' academic outcomes. For example, key lessons on the importance of ethnic studies of community and the disparity in programs funded by YPAR may be drawn from African American studies (Cammarota, 2016).

Salinas (2011) conducted a study to explore how media outlets framed MAS controversy in the light of educational achievement of minority Hispanic students. In this thesis the researcher explored main media outlets like *CNN*, *The Washington Post*, and *The New York Times* to understand ways that educating minority history and culture, specifically the Mexican

American Studies program, had affected learners in Arizona. Findings showed that media outlets appeared to allude that the Arizona ethnic studies curriculum was abandoned for fear of inciting minority students against other groups (Salinas, 2011). While the MAS program and its abolition are central to a variety of warlike conflicts, it has not yet been discussed whether the MAS groups are improving student performance (Salinas, 2011). Data from 2008 to 2011 from Tucson Unified School was studied in this systematic analysis. A linear regression model was used to determine the correlation between taking MAS lessons and completing Arizona AIMS (Arizona Guidelines Method) university graduate programs. The results indicate that the MAS process is closely related to the increased capacity for equal results (Scott, 2011).

In the *Black Scholar*, Winkler-Morey (2010) analyzes HB2281 and the implications for the ban on TUSD Mexican American/Raza Studies program through the lens of an epistemology of ignorance. Winkler-Morey (2010) reported that journalists and article editors started with an assessment of ethnic studies and their contribution to student engagement and performance. Key considerations made by journalists focused on summarizing the four parts of education HB2281 ban from the Arizona curriculum and the penalty of 10% state withholding of district funding. A key concern raised is the need to defend academic freedom and ethnic studies to avoid potential elimination of important historical lessons related to Hispanic culture and values (Winkler-Morey, 2010). Although the state of Arizona's investigation found no breaches of A.R.S. 15-112 (Cappellucci et al., 2011 as cited in Cabrera, 2012), John Huppenthal, Arizona School Superintendent, found TUSD out of compliance. Cabrera (2012) ends his article with two conclusions based on how news media outlets and journalists reported the MAS controversy:

- Despite evidence of the MAS program significantly improving students' academic performance, some journalists perceived those epistemologies of ignorance prohibited sound educational practice (Cabrera et al., 2012, p. 132).
- Some editorial teams and opinion articles framed the MAS controversy as an avenue through which minority students were denied opportunity to participate in critical history studies. Thus, students were unable to continue exploring racial oppression that had resulted in systemic racism with the Latino/a students as a marginalized population (p. 132).

Race and Prejudice

Explored literature also indicated that scholars to date have analyzed the media coverage of the MAS controversy in the light of race and prejudice (Acosta, 2014; Ames, 2012; Banks, 2012; Brown, 2013; Cuevas, 2011; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Herreras, 2011; O'Leary & Andrea, 2011). For example, Brown (2013) explored media reports on how race affects the structure of incentives beyond the distinction of black and white races. In a news coverage about the controversy in NBC News (*Update on TUSD Mexican American Studies Program*) the journalists appeared to allude that in Arizona, persuasive proof of welfare services might have been used to advance anti-Hispanic prejudices that hinders integration of ethnic studies in curriculum. Although these policies are not in line with HB2281, the news outlets provided a historical reference on how cultural discourse frames Hispanics in the U.S. In addition to this historical prism, the speaker discusses various conversation analyzes, such as experiences, background papers, and newspaper headlines.

Brown (2013) evaluated articles in the HuffPost (*Arizona Republican Still Wants 2010 Law to Ban All Ethnic Studies*) and in CNN (*Race war in Arizona: Reflections on the ethnic studies*

ban) where media personnel appeared to agree that the MAS ban violated democracy and introduced censorship along racial lines. There have been numerous political effects on health discourse, organization, and democratic processes in the legal and ethnic mechanisms of anti-immigration organizations. Politicians endorsing draconian welfare systems in demonstrating their place on the debilitating nations of the Hispanic population "anti-immigrant organizations restricted the impact of privileges claims by legitimate, recorded Hispanic Americans as well as American citizens of Mexican origin by conjugated organic the Arizona political conversation" (Brown, 2013, p. 309).

Acosta (2014) reported articles in the *Fox News Channel* and *The New York Times* and revealed that media reporters appeared illustrate the resilience of the learners involved in the attacks on MAS in Tucson by explaining the various perspectives associated with MAS by presenting the ideas of various people. The media portrayal of the MAS controversy described the opinions and issues of young people, such as the protesters' trainees, mostly during the 2012-2013 school session and the proposed Sunday news. While reflecting more on prohibition issues for learners, journalists emphasized in their reports that ethnic studies that supported students to learn their language and history were essential to learners and that one's struggle for the re-emergence of MAS for a better future had an impact on teaching methods, teaching methods, and interactions with friends and others. In investigating the refusal (TUSD) that this had prohibited multiple books on MAS, Ames (2012) is engaged in an ongoing activity. The paper uses truths to assess TUSD's claims on both the new prohibition and shows that many of its innovative library services can discover novels. The Ames also estimates the availability of classmates' novels in several educational institutions where racial research was already taught when the courses were suspended. The essay seems to alter the images of a conflict that might have complemented the

confrontations between some of the Tunisian and pro-ethnic research activist groups by rejecting the results that documents that educate Mexican American students were already forbidden.

In a much more respectful manner, journalists in media outlets such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Los Angeles Times*, and the *New York Post* emphasized that MAS ban increased racial disparities. As a counterpart of the Hispanic culture, he denounces the disunity of procedural amendments that have stopped legislative hearings from holding a civil discussion (Cuevas, 2011). To appear, for the most part, neutral on the issue, it is evident that the interests of the TUSD stakeholders should be considered. TUSD is defined as selecting the strongest desires of learners to promote ethnic studies by beginning conversations with the option of enrolling within the curriculum (Cuevas, 2011). Delgado and Stefancic (2012) clarified that some media outlets called out the misdeeds of Arizona officials through TUSD as an attempt to eliminate Mexican science. Individuals who co-authored a couple of the banned papers say that possibly the requisite steps inside TUSD appeared to be directed at preventing Hispanic students from participating in former, politically biased disparities created against undocumented students in Arizona.

Banks (2012) reported an article in the *Tampa Bay Times* (*National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies returns to San Anto*) highlighting media concerns that MAS ban was an act of government prejudice in the same way that mixed-race populations have been overlooked in the tradition. Herreras (2011) created a headline covering the release of a film on "Precious Knowledge." Media personalities might have had an intent to explain the desires of minority learners to improve on their cultural and ethnic background without being exposed to racial profiling (Herreras, 2011). The research contains the content of the film in which the makers record the students performing Chicano language, culture, and policy lessons in the war

fought by officials for experiments that charge teachers to the learners of right-winged philosophies (Herreras, 2011). The segment illustrates the circumstances under which the film was made, as well as the goal of countering the ongoing attack on racial testing carried out by Latin American secondary school students. O'Leary and Romero (2011) described the film as a way to defend the interests of young Latinos. The film presents an insider's perspective on the fight by student leaders to save their classes. It presents the idea that students can mobilize rapidly through various social media platforms (such as text messages, Facebook), optimism, and megaphones. The film presents the transformative impact of the MAS program on students who have turned out to be more engaged, informed, and active in their communities. They can use the various social media platforms to present their ideas on why or why not the MAS program should be implemented.

At the time, the media reports portrayed a perception that considering the claims of the TUSD policymakers as well as the current observations, the implications of the analysis remained mostly unclear regarding the Mexican studies curriculum. Whereas the number of Hispanic new graduates in the city has grown, it is not even the Mexican research program that has the biggest influence, but the people who run the curriculum who seem to have a strong interest in students (Huicochea, 2011). Throughout the article on why racial research books have been banned by TUSD, Herreras (2011) uses an interventionist background to discuss the ban of racial examination books as well as the implications of the controversies that have arisen from the initiative. The author defines the law that repealed the proposal as oppressive and improperly written in such a way that ethnicity, color, and bigotry are considered unconstitutional (Herreras, 2011).

Knowledge Gap

Despite the various themes that have been identified and discussed by past scholars, insights from the extracted studies show that what is absent from the prose is scrutiny regarding the way the Spanish language media frames the ethnic studies ban with the local Hispanic/Latino communities. Ruiz (2021) found that Spanish media plays an important role in representing the Hispanic/Latino identity by serving as their voice. An examination into Spanish media coverage, the framing of the news headlines and their stories about the cultural pieces of training' prohibition, and the representation of the Hispanic/Latino identity by the media may add to a comprehensive lens of study by analyzing the discourse of this phenomenon. Thus, does the portrayal in the local Spanish media serve as a platform for the local communities' perspective on the ethnic studies ban, as Ruiz (2021) suggests? Arizona is compromised by two large populaces with relatively large Spanish-speaking communities and two well-known Spanish print media sponsored by the central English print media in both cities. Are the phenomena being examined at play in both population centers, or are there differences in how the MAS ban is being framed?

Conclusion

The current literature review chapter has identified and discussed key issues that scholars have identified concerning the MAS controversy. Findings show that the topic continues to attract research interest among educational researchers and practitioners. Theoretical frameworks like CRT, agenda-setting and framing theories have been used to understand the discourses the media uses when framing the MAS controversy issues. Key among the issues by which the MAS controversy is perceived relates to exploring the history of ethnic studies in Arizona, the development of MAS program, and the reasons why there was increased opposition by most Republican politicians to ban this curriculum in Tucson schools. The literature has also identified

that there has been debate by opponents of the ban that MAS controversy relates to attack on cultural values, freedom of expression, and history of minority ethnic groups. Moreover, there has been substantial coverage of various resistances from educators, students, and the community against the MAS ban due to perceptions that the approach seeks to further oppress minorities from practicing their culture, in addition to advancing racism and prejudice. Scholars have also observed the MAS controversy in the light of student performance, where proponents allude that it helps increase minority student engagement in school, create a sense of belonging, reduce high dropout cases, improve test scores, and facilitate student transition to colleges. However, the gap in knowledge shows that despite growing research interest in the MAS controversy, little is known regarding how the local and regional Spanish media framed this ethnic studies controversy. There was a need to undertake this study to understand how Hispanic /Latino groups represent themselves via the Spanish media in the wake of the MAS controversy. The next chapter presents the research methods used to collect relevant data to answer the formulated research aim and questions.

Chapter 3: Methodological Process

The purpose of this critical discourse analysis was to explore how the local Spanish media covered the issue of the ethnic studies ban in Arizona in 2010, with a specific focus on the Tucson school district. The current methodology chapter details present the methods and strategies used to collect relevant data for the study. The chapter details the research tradition used in this study and the rationale for its use, focusing on interpretivism philosophy. Further, the research design is discussed with a specific focus on critical discourse analysis. The sources of data are further discussed in addition to the data analysis process. Potential ethical issues associated with this study are also identified before concluding the chapter.

Research Philosophy

Ontology and epistemology form the primary research tradition in social sciences (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). While ontology focuses on establishing reality, epistemology entails exploring how this reality is created (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). In the current study, interpretivism philosophy formed the basis upon which this study was anchored. Saunders et al. (2019) postulated that interpretivism enables a researcher to explore individuals' beliefs and motivations to gain an understanding of social phenomena and culture. Unlike positivism which argues that knowledge is independent of the participants, interpretivism alludes that knowledge is socially constructed when a researcher and participants dialogue to explore the meanings that humans attach to their actions (Blaikie, 2020).

In the current study, however, there were no human participants, and the researcher did not collect any primary data. Instead, the researcher explored the topic by collecting in-depth insights from a corpus of media texts/reports where various journalists captured Spanish community sentiments about the MAS controversy. This approach assumed that by capturing

media reports about key educational stakeholders who were vocal about the MAS controversy (i.e., educators, policymakers, students, parents, and the community), it could be possible to shed light on how the Spanish community perceived the ban on ethnic studies. Specifically, by exploring the direct quotes depicted by the media from various education stakeholders, it was possible to get first-hand insights into how Hispanic /Latino groups represent themselves via the Spanish media.

As such, the use of interpretivist philosophy was informed by the fact that reality is actively generated by the actions of persons in the world, indicating that knowledge is always evolving in response to individual human experiences (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021). As such, the axiology of this study sought to comprehend the discourses the Spanish employed in framing the Mexican American ethnic studies controversy, what these discourses say about the value of MAS studies, and how they support or impede the goal of ethnic studies being a form of educational self-determination. Reality and knowledge are based on habits and beliefs that are socially constructed in the world (Creswell & Poth, 2021). To understand Spanish media coverage of the ban on ethnic studies in Arizona, there is a need to explore this issue through the lens of those who have lived the experience. Thus, the epistemological position applied in this study held that education stakeholders' responses captured in the media were treated as a direct reflection of the concrete social reality of the world.

Research Design

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was used as the research design in this study. Institutions use discourses as a vehicle to seek power over the accessibility to others and over what counts as the truth. This practice of using discourse occurs in everyday micro-social practices and macro contexts. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) addresses both the micro-social

practices and the large settings that enlighten these daily performances. CDA is directly designed to unearth the dominant discourses within texts so that society can understand how power is used via manuscripts, and eventually, practice that information to dislocate authority kindred by producing counter-narratives (Fairclough, 2001, Van Dijk, 1993b, & Wodak, 2001).

Fairclough (2001) and Van Dijk (1993b) contend the CDA is distinctively effective in examining the conducts in which common disparities are justified and reproduced in the typical broadcasting and in this study, the media.

According to Sari et al. (2018), the use of critical discourse analysis in media studies goes beyond the individual meaning of words. Instead, a researcher looks at the overall meanings that are conveyed by language in context (Sari et al., 2018). Moreover, Li et al. (2018) added that context in media studies denotes the political, cultural, social, and historical background of the discourse. Understanding the context of discourse is key to comprehending the underlying meanings that the media expresses through language. Media discourse is frequently viewed as the language used in specific social contexts, and as such, language serves as a means of eliciting social change or accomplishing a goal (Anwar et al., 2020).

In this study, the use of discourse analysis was meant to help the research explore written or spoken language about MAS controversy concerning its social context. That is, the discourse was key to understanding how the Spanish language is used in real-life situations emerging from the ban of Mexican American studies in Tucson, Arizona. According to Anwar et al. (2020), when conducting discourse analysis, research might focus on various aspects to understand the phenomenon under study including the following:

- The effect and purposes of different types of language,
- Cultural conventions and rules in communication,

- How assumptions, beliefs, and values are communicated,
- How language use relates to its historical, political, and social context.

Different linguistic approaches that focus only on the rules of language use, discourse analysis emphasizes the contextual meaning of language (Sriwimon & Zilli, 2017). In this study, the use of discourse analysis was key to helping the researcher focus on the social aspects of Spanish media communication and the ways Latino/a or Spanish community use language to achieve specific effects during the MAS controversy (e.g., to create doubt, question political narratives, to evoke emotions, or to manage conflict related to ethnic studies ban). Samaie and Malmir (2017) reported that instead of focusing on smaller units of language such as phrases, words, or sounds, discourse analysis is applied to explore larger chunks of language. These chunks of language may include entire texts, news headings or titles, conversations, or a collection of texts. Therefore, discourse analysis captures the entire meaning of a conversation in media reports. In this study, discourse analysis remains unique in that it posits that social reality is socially constructed, or that the Spanish community experience of the MAS controversy in Arizona is understood from a subjective standpoint.

Research Approach

Research approaches can be inductive, deductive, or abductive. While a deductive approach is aimed at testing theory, an inductive approach is concerned with the generation of new theories emerging from the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2019). A deductive approach largely begins with a hypothesis, while an inductive approach will commonly use research questions to narrow the scope of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2019). Creswell et al. (2017) observed that for deductive approaches the emphasis is generally on causality implying that the approach is mostly used in quantitative studies. By contrast, inductive approaches are usually focused on exploring

new phenomena or looking at previously researched phenomena from a different perspective to identify new themes (Creswell et al., 2017). Therefore, the inductive approach is closely applied in qualitative studies.

An inductive approach, therefore, was used in this study to make sense of the discourses the Spanish media used during the MAS controversy. The choice of inductive approach was informed by the research design based on CDA. A specific inductive approach that is commonly applied in social research sciences relates to inductive analysis postulated by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 to understand text. The inductive logic relates to a qualitative method for examining a specific phenomenon or process and developing new theories based on the collection and analysis of real-world data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). That is, using inductive approach facilitates a researcher, to begin with, a completely open mind about a topic without any preconceived ideas of what will be discovered (Sari et al., 2018). That is, the aim is to generate a new theory based on the collected data without preconceived themes about the topic.

In the current study, the purpose of using an inductive approach was to achieve the following: (a) to condense raw textual data from various Spanish media into a brief, summary format; (b) to build clear themes or main issues generated from the raw data, and (c) create a framework of the underlying structure of processes or experiences visible in the raw data. The inductive approach aligns with the discourse analysis which helps a researcher to deduce meaning from the various words in a corpus or volume of data. For example, this collection of information could include transcripts of media reports drawn from local and regional Spanish print media, internet news articles, radio, television, and documentary headlines about the MAS ban controversy. Samaie and Malmir (2017) observed that while some types of discourse

analysis concentrate on the details of language (such as syntax and sounds), other discourses concentrate on how language is generally used to achieve its goals.

As Liasidou (2008) elaborated, “discourse analysis provides a general framework to problem-oriented social research” (p. 487). The use of the inductive approach was important in interpreting how Spanish media uses various discourses to frame the MAS controversy which has remained one of the major social problems in the education sector across Arizona. In this study, an inductive approach was used to assess the logic of media framing of various issues emerging from the ban on Mexican American studies. In this light, it was possible to assess how the Spanish language is used within the Latino/a community to express differing viewpoints on ethnic studies and would look at how the topic should or should not be addressed or resolved, and whether the discourses used by Spanish media support or impede the goal of ethnic studies being a form of educational self-determination.

Research Setting and Target Population

The setting of this study was limited to Tucson, Arizona. The target population was focused on various education stakeholders affected by the ban on ethnic studies in Arizona, with a specific focus on MAS courses. Tucson is a city in and the county seat of Pima County, Arizona, United States (Noriega, 2017). In terms of student enrolment, the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) is the third largest in Arizona (Department of Accountability and Research, 2011a). As previously discussed, the MAS program offers various courses on the Mexican curriculum to students in elementary, middle, and high schools. Some of the important content offered in the MAS program include student support, teacher professional development, curricular content, and parent and community involvement (Noriega, 2017).

At its inception, the MAS program was reported to be important in aiding Chicana/o and Latina/o learners in graduating, pursuing higher education, and scoring higher on standardized tests (Noriega, 2017). Before the ban, the MAS program served about 2,000 learners each year and was offered at five high schools, as well as certain middle and elementary schools (Romero et al., 2009; Save Ethnic Studies, 2011). Following the ban, there were student protests, community dissents, political rhetoric, and legal battles with opinions divided on whether to support or lift the MAS ban. As such, the MAS controversy attracted the interest of multiple education stakeholders including students, teachers, policymakers, activist groups, political leaders, and the Tucson community. In this study, therefore, the target population was these education interest groups in Tucson. Through media publications and news reports, it could be possible to explore how Hispanic /Latino groups represent themselves via the Spanish media during the MAS controversy. While the research setting is Tucson, Arizona, the MAS controversy made national headlines and therefore derive from sources throughout the country.

Sources of Data

Media publications and news reports on the MAS controversy formed the main source of data for this study. As such, there were no primary data sources such as surveys, interviews, or focus group discussions. Instead, all the collected data for the current discourse analysis was limited to secondary publications drawn from various Spanish news media. To assist the largely English-speaking audience of this dissertation, Spanish news articles were translated into English. Specific media considered for this study included reports published in newspapers (both online and print), television news, radio news, tabloids, and internet media sites. Relevant media stories were extracted from various media publications including the following: *La Voz*, *Vision Hispana*, *La Opinión*, *Hoy Los Angeles*, *Huffington Post*, *Mundo Hispanico*, and *El Observador*.

Additional media sources included Univision, BBC Mundo, The Arizona Republic, Yuma Sun, Estrella TV, CNN en Español, Nogales International, and Arizona Daily Star. The data collection strategy will be described in the subsequent section.

By using various media publications, it was possible to identify important themes and issues identified by the Latino/a community concerning the MAS controversy. The goal of discourse analysis of the extracted media reports was to learn more about the functions of language (that is, what it is used for) by the Spanish media, and how meaning was produced in various situations, which include the historical, political, cultural, and social contexts of the MAS controversy. For example, a key focus during the MAS controversy was related to politicians' speeches. To conduct a discourse analysis of the speeches, it would be important to place them in context, which would entail looking at the politician's views and background about ethnic studies, the reasons for giving the speech, the audience's context or history, and the country's political and social history concerning support for school programs tailored to facilitate ethnic studies.

Over the years, researchers have used media news publications to explore various issues affecting the Spanish / Latino/a communities. For example, Nuñez and Palmer (2016) conducted CDA using media to understand how media uses headlines and phrases to set agenda. Media reports were important in helping understand that despite the dual language program's stated goal of providing all students with the opportunity to become bilinguals, Spanish/ Latino/a students have more opportunities for language development. Schubert (2017) used media reports to construct Donald Trump's campaign rhetoric about the Latino/a population and found that the commonly used media frames included moral evaluation, misrepresentation, and mythopoesis. Johnson (2021) also conducted a discourse analysis of how Latino/a youths were characterized in

the media during MAS protests. The researcher found that the media portrayed Latino/a youths as hateful, victims, and as puppets (Johnson, 2021). These findings show that news media may serve as a credible source to understand how the Spanish/ Latina/o community is portrayed, thereby the motivation to use secondary data in exploring the formulated research objectives.

Data Collection

To collect relevant data for this study, a desktop search was done to identify various media reports on the MAS controversy. The search was conducted online on the internet and in the University of Arizona's library. To optimize the search results, various Spanish keywords were used on different online media databases. These Spanish keywords related to the following phrases, including "Mexican American studies ban", "HB 2281 ethnic studies", "Tucson ethnic studies protests", "Tucson ethnic studies censorship", and "ethnic curriculum in Arizona", and "books ban in Tucson, Arizona." Additional phrases also included "MAS studies controversy", "Raza studies ban in Tucson", "Arizona's HB 2281 and ethnic studies", "MAS curriculum audit in Arizona", and "court cases and Mexican American studies ban". The inclusion criteria focused on exploring media publications on the MAS ban in Tucson, between January 2010 and May 2022. The search mostly included media headlines published in the Spanish language, although some English publications were also included. All relevant articles on the MAS controversy were used for subsequent data analysis (n=30).

Discourse Data Analysis

Sari et al. (2018) reported that there are two main approaches to discourse analysis. These approaches include: (1) the language-in-use (i.e., *socially situated talk and text*) approach, and (2) the socio-political approaches (i.e., the *Critical Discourse Analysis*). Language-in-use techniques include finer elements of language utilized in speech, such as sentence patterns

(grammar) and phonology (Fairclough, 2013; Li et al., 2018, van Dijk, 2009). Socio-political approaches to discourse analysis look beyond the technicalities of language and instead focus on the influence that language has in a social or political context (Anwar et al., 2020; Fairclough, 2013; van Dijk, 2009). Using a language-in-use framework to analyze discourse entails identifying major characteristics of language used in discourse and analyzing how such features are used in a specific social context (Anwar et al., 2020; Fairclough, 2013; van Dijk, 2009).

In this study, the socio-political approach to data analysis was used since the focus was on understanding how media frames social, historical, political, and cultural issues like the MAS controversy. CDA is drawn from Michel Foucault's early work on power, which focuses on power structures through the analysis of normalized power (Foucault, 1978). Normalized power is deeply ingrained and elusive. Anwar et al. (2020), Fairclough (2013), van Dijk (2009) noted that normalized power allows individuals in society to function inside their communities and within the underlying rules of society as expected in a particular social situation, and as it relates to Framing Theory, the primary analysis will center around racial power. However, repressive power, which is the authority that is deliberately claimed, is a more visible sort of power. Considering CDA, the language used by the media is powerful, and if societal structures and power dynamics in society are to be understood, then there is a need to look to language for answers. In elaboration, analyzing the use of language can help understand the social context, especially how Hispanic /Latino groups represent themselves via the Spanish media.

A 6-step process recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used to conduct the discourse analysis to identify key patterns and themes emerging from media reports. Step 1 entailed reading through all the data from various media and making initial notes or highlighting relevant sentences related to the topic. Step 2 entailed coding information collected from the

media reports and news articles on the MAS controversy. Similar terms, words, or phrases were selected and utilized to establish initial codes that later characterized the primary insights of the media reports. Step 3 involved pattern identification, which was aided by the codes produced in Step 2. That is, piles of similar codes (or words, phrases, and sentences with similar meaning) were then collated and grouped to form single themes. In this study, themes were patterns of language (such as specific words or sentences related to MAS controversy) that emerge repeatedly in the Spanish media data, and that tell something about the discourse. Step 4 centered on assessing identified themes to ensure that relevant data aligned with interview extracts using quotes and direct responses from participants. The concepts were aligned and arranged in Step 5 to address the research questions. Finally, Step 6 involved summarizing the findings using actual interview quotes, extracts, or participant responses, to address the research goal and research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Collected Data

An online search on various media databases and library resources turned up 109 news articles relevant to the current study. All the media articles were published in Spanish and the collected data was then translated verbatim to English to ensure the original content was retained, thereby ensuring the translation was trustworthy. Data collected included 7 newspaper print publications from the library, 98 online newspapers, 2 television reports, and 2 radio reports. Most of the collected media publications (i.e., 38) were published in 2010, 15 were published in 2011, and 14 in 2012. Another 6 media reports were published in the year 2013, while 4 and 3 media reports were published in 2014 and 2015, respectively. Moreover, 5 media reports on the MAS controversy were published in 2016, 9 were published in 2017, and another 7 were published in 2018. Findings from the identified literature showed that the Spanish media

used various discourses during the MAS controversy. The main discourses identified related to the following 5 issues:

- MAS ban being racially motivated,
- Unconstitutional suppression and attack on freedom of expression
- Knowing cultural roots, culture, and traditions
- Hindering minority student learning and performance,
- National uprising, protests to boost ethnic studies nationally,

The emergence of Discourse Themes

The discourses that were identified during the data analysis process emerged through open coding and thematic analysis. As discussed in Chapter 3, a 6-step thematic analysis process postulated by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used. Initial codes were generated by identifying key phrases, keywords, and sentences with similar meanings across the entire corpus of the data collected. Through open coding, it was possible to break down voluminous media data into small and manageable meaningful subsets. The process of generating initial codes was determined by the research question. Codes refer to similar words, phrases, and terms used by the local Spanish media. The codes with similar meanings were grouped to form the initial themes or discourses. For instance, keywords such as “oppression and racism”, “racial sentiment”, “advance political agenda”, and “racially and politically” motivated were grouped to create a discourse of *MAS ban being racially motivated*.

Once the keywords or phrases above had been identified in one media article, the researcher then systematically searched the corpus of all media texts from 109 media reports to find all instances where similar phrases, terms, or words had been used by other Spanish media reports. Each time a term, word, or phrase was found in the media headline or main body texts, a

copy of it was made and its immediate context explored. In the process, the emergence of the relevant discourses discussed in this study was identified by physically sorting the data into piles of similar codes with the same meaning. Themes are generally broader than codes. Combining several codes with similar meanings gives a single theme that informed the discourses identified in this study. Several codes with similar meanings were then combined to form a single theme helping to identify the discourses that the Spanish media used during the MAS controversy. A total of 12 discourses were identified from the thematic analysis process on the 109 news articles identified from online and internet searches.

Potential Ethical Issues

As pointed out previously, the current study did not recruit any human participants into the study. As such, there are no potential ethical issues related to privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, or seeking institutional review board approval. All media data used in this study are publicly available and accessible information and does not draw substantial ethical issues on the protection of human participants from physical, emotional, or psychological harm. Instead, the only ethical issues that may emerge include an accurate representation of collected data to depict the exact views of various stakeholders regarding the MAS controversy. To achieve this, the research remains objective while analyzing and reporting all data from various media sources to avoid subjective views that could affect findings. Such an approach reduced bias in the findings while ensuring objective analysis throughout the study.

Researcher Positionality

As a researcher, I had a primary task of undertaking all needed steps to complete the proposed dissertation project. Based on my experience in social sciences research having undergraduate and master's projects in media studies as a profession, I am qualified to initiate

and execute this study in line with the university's academic standards. Specifically, I am versed with education research and qualitative research frameworks based on my past graduate programs. Moreover, I possess relevant information in managing media analysis and how journalists frame day to day issues in the public eye through their stories, thereby part of the motivation to undertake this study.

With background knowledge on media studies and journalism, I have a personal interest in ensuring media is committed to highlighting the plight of ethnic minorities. Underwriting these considerations, it may be noted that as a researcher I possess background knowledge key to the completion of this study. However, despite these insights, I have personal views about media framing of MAS controversy in Arizona and across the United States. Specifically, I hold the view that non-Spanish media is less likely to reflect challenges that ethnic minorities experience in the political, social, and economic wellbeing. Media may potential misrepresent facts on the ground due to potential partisan views about various societal issues. The problem has been exacerbated by lack of scholarly and practitioner research on the topic, further necessitating the need for the current study by collecting the views expressed by minority focused news outlets such as the Spanish media. Therefore, my attachment and subjective opinion of the topic might inadvertently impact the findings due to personal bias.

To manage my misperceptions from affecting the findings, I used reflexivity, bracketing, and ensure the trustworthiness of the findings (Gregory, 2019; McNarry et al., 2018). Through bracketing, it was possible to reduce potential bias by remaining objective during data collection, analysis, and interpretation of secondary data collected from Spanish media articles. Bracketing also entails documenting key concerns that a researcher questions, comments, and observes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Moreover, I kept a journal to help me with bracketing detailing, what

will be done and why. That is, I attentive to what was taking place in the reported newspaper during the study, while ensuring I remained aware of my own biases, agendas, attachments, and projections. Therefore, I was in a position of constantly evaluating my views about Spanish media framing of the MAS controversy. Since all the data was collected from secondary resources publicly available on the internet, there was no any ethical issues related to power interplays between the researcher and participants.

Conclusion

The current chapter has presented the research methods that were used to identify sources of data used to answer the research questions. Interpretivist philosophy forms the basis of this study to establish the reality of the discourses the Spanish media uses to frame the MAS controversy. In addition, the CDA has been presented as the research design with the rationale of using it to understand the study problem. Also, the inductive approach and its application to develop theory related to local media coverage of the ethnic studies ban in Arizona have been detailed. The research setting, participants, sources of data, data collection, and data analysis process have been discussed in addition to the ethical issues related to the study. The next chapter presents the key themes identified from the collected media reports on the MAS controversy.

Chapter 4: Data Findings

The purpose of this critical discourse analysis was to explore how the local Spanish media covered the MAS controversy. A secondary search was conducted to identify relevant media publications on MAS controversy from various local Spanish media. The current chapter presents the main themes identified from the extracted media publications. The chapter outlines all the discourses in line with the formulated research questions to understand how the Spanish media framed the MAS controversy, elaborate on what the discourses show about the value of ethnic studies, and discover whether the discourses support or impede ethnic studies as a form of educational self-determination.

Discourses Employed by Spanish Media

The current section presents the main discourses that are presented by the Spanish media regarding the MAS controversy. The chapter seeks to answer the primary research aim on how the local Spanish media covered the issue of the ethnic studies ban in Arizona in 2010, with a specific focus on the Tucson school district. The discourses are presented in line with the formulated research questions. What are the discourses the Spanish media employed in framing the MAS controversy (Research Question 1); what the discourses employed by the Spanish language media say about the value of Mexican American ethnic studies (Research Question 2); and whether the identified discourses in the Spanish media support or impede the goal of ethnic studies being a form of educational self-determination (Research Question 3).

Research Question 1: Discourses the Spanish media employs in framing the MAS Controversy

Research Question 1 was formulated to explore the following: *What are the discourses the Spanish media employ in framing the Mexican American Studies controversy?* Five main

issues were identified to help understand the discourses the Spanish media employed during the MAS controversy. The five discourses include the following: (1) MAS ban was racially motivated; (2) defend ethnic studies and student rights; (3) unconstitutional suppression and attack on freedom of expression; (4) hinder culture and ethnic diversity; and (5) persecution, apartheid, and suppressed history. These discourses are further presented below.

MAS Ban Was Racially Motivated

Both before, during, and after the MAS ban, the Spanish media framed the ethnic studies controversy in the light of racial suppression. Seven studies reported that banning Mexican American studies in Arizona schools was racist. A 2012 Spanish article published in *CNN Espanol* by Paula Daza reported the following: *Tucson schools suspend study programs on Mexico* (Daza, 2012). Part of the report quoted Tucson teachers who challenged the constitutionality of the new law and defended the MAS studies, arguing that the program was not different than African American or Native American programs (Daza, 2012). One MAS program teacher was quoted saying “banning the studies was motivated by racism and fears by its supporters to continue with the suppression of historical facts about Hispanics” (Daza, 2012, p. 2). In contrast, Daza did not include voices of people who were opponents of the program in the coverage. Reporting for the *Cronkite News*, Por Jackie López quoted Dolores Huerta, a farmworker civil rights activist, expressing concerns that:

It is very important that we have ethnic studies by law in all our schools, so we can eliminate racism, that we can say (it is) a poison, a disease that we have in this country and that has to be cured. — (López, 2017)

López (2017) added that the MAS ban resulted because the then superintendent of education Tom Horne, found out about Huerta's comments and sent his right-hand man, a Latina

educator Margaret García-Dugan, to give a talk with those same students to show that the activist's statements were not justified. However, Garcia-Dugan refused to answer questions from the audience and the students covered their mouths with tape and left the room in protest. The youth were part of MAS's Mexican American Studies program.

Similar sentiments were reported in the articles published in *Latin Times* by Jaweed Kaleem and in the *El Segundo* in the Agencia EFE. The headlines of the *Latin Times* reported that *A federal judge ruled that Arizona cannot ban Mexican American studies in public schools* (Kaleem, 2018), while *El Segundo* reported that *Banning Mexican American studies in Arizona schools are racist* (EFE, 2017). In both media reports, the main concern was related to the court ruling about the MAS controversy being racially motivated. For example, Jaweed reported for the *Latin Times* that a federal judge in Arizona found that state legislation prohibiting Mexican American studies lessons in Tucson schools, which had been in effect since January 2012, was enacted for racial and political motives and is thus unconstitutional (Kaleem, 2018). Further, the *El Segundo* (2017) reported that the judge based his decision on statements made by Superintendent Huppenthal, including one in which he equated the teachings of Mexican American studies programs to Hitler's beliefs. According to the *El Segundo*, the judge concluded the following about Superintendent Huppenthal:

Several of his comments convey animosity toward Mexican Americans in general. The court is satisfied that the decision regarding the MAS (Mexican American Studies) program was motivated by a desire to advance a political agenda by capitalizing on fears based on race. — (El Segundo, 2017).

In 2011, Bob Avakian reported in the *Revolucion* that:

The attack on ethnic studies represents another brick in the wall of *officially sanctioned American white supremacy and chauvinism* while promoting its spread across the country. Arizona has become an ugly battleground, a staging ground, for a new Jim Crow, resurrecting official second-class status for the 30% of Arizonans who are Latino. (Avakian, 2011)

The findings show that the Spanish media largely framed the MAS controversy in light of racial concerns. A key concern was that the supporters of the MAS ban sought to capitalize on racial and ethnic fears to drive the agenda.

Defend Ethnic Studies and Student Rights

The Spanish media also reported growing efforts by students, teachers, and activists to depend on ethnic studies and Mexican American students' right to learn about their history. Bloomberg (2017) reported for the *EL Financiero* regarding the *Fight over Mexican American studies in public schools*. In the report, Bloomberg (2017) quoted Curtis Acosta, a former literature teacher in Tucson, raising concerns that “the traditional way of doing things has failed our community for generations. Maybe it's time to try something else and defend our ethnic studies.

In the *Comunicas*, Martínez (2012) uses the following headline: *New Law in Arizona denies children the right to study other ethnic races*. Martínez (2012) further reported that six human rights experts from the United Nations Organization had expressed concern about the MAS ban since they consider that everyone should have the opportunity to learn about their own cultural and linguistic heritage. As a way of repudiating human rights violations, legislators from the US city of San Francisco overwhelmingly approved a boycott against the state of Arizona after the ban (Martínez, 2012). The author gave space to the critics of MAS to contextualize the

need to defend ethnic studies, by quoting concerns raised by Tony Diaz, Texas author and professor, as follows:

For me the ban of Mexican American studies in Arizona opened our eyes to the discrimination and how important it is to embrace our history and culture. We realized there was nothing to ban in Texas, so we needed to start one (Martínez, 2012).

In the *Observatorio*, García-Bullé (2019), used the following headline: *The importance of historical knowledge to avoid human tragedies*. The article elaborated that local Tucson teachers had filed a court case to defend ethnic studies and asked the court to lift the 2010 MAS ban (García-Bullé, 2019). In *Socialismo*, Alaniz (2011) used the following headline: *Defending Ethnic Studies: conversations with Rodolfo Acuña and Roberto Rodríguez*. Rodolfo Acuña, who teaches Chicano Studies, believed that the MAS ban was an “attack on people of color— ethnic studies is a way to motivate students of color and poor students to learn.” Roberto Rodríguez, who teaches Mexican American Studies at the University of Arizona, also agreed that “teaching about historical events is an important motivation for reading or writing among students and ethnic studies should be supported” (García-Bullé, 2019).

For *Noticias Internacionales Independientes*, Titul (2010) reported the following: *Fifteen Arrested in Tucson Protesting Arizona Law Banning Ethnic Studies*. Titul (2010) quoted Isabel Garcia, co-chair of the Tucson-based Coalition for Human Rights and legal advocate for Pima County, Arizona, as saying the following about student protests following the MAS ban in 2010:

These students are here because they have to fight. They cannot legalize discrimination. They cannot legalize racism. They cannot legalize the removal of knowledge and classes that they feel are important to them. And they are very clear about what is happening in the State of Arizona. So, they're fighting these whole police state

and this toxic racist environment that we're putting them in as the State of Arizona. Therefore, these students are very safe. They will not back down. — (Titul, 2010)

The current section shows growing concerns via media lenses that the MAS ban was largely influenced by possible racial biases against ethnic studies. Insights drawn from media reports and quotations from various MAS scholars and practitioners tend to show that MAS ban was informed by prejudice against Spanish studies. The next section further details another discourse used in the media to frame the MAS controversy based on unconstitutional censorship.

Unconstitutional Censorship and Attack on Freedom of Expression

Local Spanish media further framed the MAS controversy in the realm of unconstitutional censorship. The EFE reported the following for *La Opinion: Documentary tackles nullification of ethnic studies in Arizona* (EFE, 2012). In the documentary, Fernando James Orozco, a Fairmont State University graduate in sociology and film, perceived that “I truly believe that what they did in Tucson is unconstitutional and will be resolved in court. In the documentary, the producers detailed how Horne supported HB2281 (ARS 15-112), which was passed in 2010. The documentary highlighted that the “Horne formula” was to accuse Hispanics of some evil and make unconstitutional censorship of Spanish ethnic studies (La Opinion, 2012).

Similar claims like the documentary created by Orozco were made by Valenzuela (2017) in his publication in the *Statesman* alluding to the following: *Ban on Mexican American Studies in Arizona Overturned as unconstitutional*. Valenzuela (2017) reported that Yolanda Sotelo, a teacher from the discontinued program, believed that “the school district supervisors did not know the books that have been censored. And yet they are ready to ban the books we use in the classroom through unconstitutional means” (Valenzuela, 2017, p.5). Millán (2017) reported for

the *Televisa* about the following: *Law that ended Mexican-American studies in Arizona was declared unconstitutional*. Millán (2017) noted that judge Wallace Tashima had declared unconstitutional a state law approved in 2010 as unconstitutional. Bob Avakian also reported in the *Revolucion* that *Arizona's ban on ethnic studies was inhumane and illegitimate* (Avakian, 2010).

The unconditionality of the MAS ban was also noted by other Spanish news reporters. For example, Franklin (2010) reported in the *Calendar Eji* about the following: *Arizona passes unconstitutional law banning ethnic studies programs from public schools*. HB 2281 was formally invalidated as unconstitutional in 2017, nearly a decade following its passage, and after the law had already denied hundreds of students the opportunity to study within a culturally diverse setting (Franklin, 2010). For the *AZ Central*, Kiefer (2017) reported: that the *Arizona law outlawing Mexican-American studies was ruled unconstitutional*. In the report, Kiefer (2017) noted that a U.S. District Court judge had ruled that the MAS ban was unconstitutional. Similar observations were made by Simon (2017) when reporting for *Remezcla*, noting that Arizona's MAS Ban was racially motivated and unconstitutionally infringed on the rights of Hispanic students. Another unconstitutional concern that emerges from the media discourses relates to censorship and attack on freedom of expression

Spanish media in Arizona also used the discourse of censorship and attack on freedom of expression to frame the MAS controversy. Reporting for the *El Diario*, Canavan (2012) used the following headline: *Censoring Education in Arizona*. The article quoted views expressed by Roberto Rodríguez, who teaches Mexican American Studies at the University of Arizona, who believed that “there is no doubt that the law is the work of people who feel threatened by those who identify themselves as Hispanic Americans and who want to understand that identification

from a perspective that is not based on the dominant narrative” (p. 1). Canavan (2012) also noted that there is a strong tradition of freedom of expression and Hispanic educators in Tucson could not entertain the government dictate what to think, read or say. Díaz (2022) reported for the *Hola News* about the following: *Creator of Librotraficante regrets new war against texts about minorities*. Díaz lamented that:

Extremists are endangering the education system, they are passing laws to kill the American dream of a better education for our young Latinos. The right of expression is in danger. We must fight to preserve our history, which is an important part of overcoming and empowering our communities and unfortunately, we are seeing that there are people who do not want to see this and are trying to avoid it. — Díaz (2022)

Excelsior California (2010) reported for the *Excelsior* that *HB 2281: Educators decry Arizona's ethnic studies ban as an outrage*. According to the editorial report, local school and college officials criticized the passage of the MAS ban law in Arizona outlawing ethnic studies in public schools, calling it an attack on free speech and minorities. David Rodríguez, a professor of Chicano studies at California State University, shared concerns that “this law stifles freedom of expression, stifles critical information and expression from a community that has experienced discrimination of all kinds” (Excelsior California, 2010, p. 2). Immediately after the MAS ban, Notimex (2010) reported for *W-Radio* about the following: *Teachers sue to stop a law that prohibits ethnic studies classes in Arizona*. In their request, the teachers complained that a suspension order is issued against the MAS because the statute censored freedom of expression and equal protection. Gabriel Buelna, the producer, expressed concerns that “ironically, the authorities in Tucson prohibit Hispanic students from learning about themselves and deny them the ability to explore their culture” (Notimex, 2010, p. 2).

Hinder Hispanic Culture and Ethnic Diversity

Local Spanish media also considered the MAS ban in the light of the discourse focused on hindering Hispanic culture and ethnic diversity. EFE (2018) reported in the AZ Central about the following: *After a court decision, Mexican American Studies face a new obstacle*. The report expressed concerns from teachers and rights groups that the MAS ban could make it difficult to re-introduce ethnic studies in Tucson. EFE (2017) also reported in the AZ Central on the following: *Lawsuit begins against Arizona law that closed Mexican American studies*. *AZ Central*. Jessica Torres Alcaraz, the representative of the UNIDOS group, told EFE that “this law caused a lot of damage to our community, preventing young Latinos from learning about their roots” (EFE, 2017, p. 1). EFE (2017) reported that the plaintiffs asked the court to strike down state law HB2281, passed in Arizona in 2010, reinstate and expand MAS programs, and ask the state to issue a public statement acknowledging the racial trauma caused by this legislation to Hispanic culture and ethnicity.

Caballero (2017) reported in the *Campaña de Paz* about the following: *Arizona bill would ban discussion of social justice and solidarity in schools*. The article quoted Brendan Mahoney, a member of the Phoenix Human Relations Commission, as having expressed his concerns about the MAS ban noting that "I wonder when social justice, the idea that people should work for the good of others, became such a dire threat" (Caballero, 2017). Caballero (2017) further clarified concerns expressed by Mahoney noting that "One might wonder how an elected official could sponsor something deeply anti-American. But reading between the lines, it's obvious that the bill targets groups our Legislature would prefer didn't exist: Black Lives Matter, LGBT, undocumented, Dreamers." Rangel (2012) reported in the *El Diario* about the following: *They organize a caravan of 'book traffic' from Houston to Arizona*. The article reports about Díaz, a

professor at the central campus of Houston Community College, in his efforts to save banned Hispanic books. According to Díaz, the MAS ban:

Is it an offense to the Latino community in Arizona and to students who want to steal part of their identity and deny them the opportunity to learn about their culture? How is it possible that this is happening in the United States? I thought we had already fixed this in the 1960s. We cannot allow these racist laws to affect the education of Hispanic students. It is not possible that Hispanic authors who have won important prizes in the world of literature cannot be within the reach of Hispanic students. I don't understand what the Arizona government is afraid of. (Rangel, 2012, p.2)

Rodriguez (2010) reported about the following in the *Expansion MX* noting that the *Arizona governor signed a law limiting ethnic studies classes*. The article quoted Kat Rodríguez, representative of the Arizona Human Rights Coalition, expressing her views about the MAS ban likening it to "a new blow to the diversity of communities in Arizona, it is very sad that the governor has signed this law" (Rodriguez, 2010, p. 1). Reporting for *Letras Libres*, Medina (2012) used the following headline: Upstream education in Arizona. In the article, Medina (2012) indicated that after the MAS ban, the citizenship and cultural background of Latinos in Arizona were not only questioned, but legislators have made racial discrimination and the illegality of Latino literature and history into law. According to Medina (2012), Arizona had become a symbol of what extreme conservatism can achieve. During the question and answer session, Medina (2012) reported Noam Chomsky as having expressed his regret that "considering laws like HB 2281, where are we going to find hope and inspiration as educators in cultural diversity?"

Persecution, Apartheid War, and War Against History

In some Spanish media, there were concerns that the MAS ban amounted to acts of persecution, apartheid war, and war against history. In the *El Herald*, the Associated Press reported the following: *Controversy in Arizona over the cancellation of an educational program for Hispanics* (Associated Press, 2017). Jim Quinn, attorney for the plaintiffs, asserted that “the students believe that the course is important to reflect the history of Mexican-Americans and that the ban is too broad and violates freedom of expression” (Associated Press, 2017, p. 1). In the *Aldia News*, Ortega (2017) reported the following: *Ethnic studies programs eliminated in Arizona*. Ortega (2017) quoted José Feliciano, a MAS student, expressing his concerns about the MAS ban, noting that “when the 4-1 vote that ended ethnic studies was announced, I could not hide my sadness and indignation. It is like TUSD does not want to help us, we have done it with respect but they have not taken us seriously” (Ortega, 2017, p. 2)

In *El Mundo*, Scarpellini (2010) captured the MAS controversy using the following headline: *Arizona charges Hispanics again after banning Chicano studies*. The report captured teachers expressing that the feeling of persecution of Hispanics in Arizona continues to grow, especially after Governor Jan Brewer signed a law to ban Chicano studies in Tucson schools. The move eliminated a program that was offered for 14 years for students of Latino origin (Scarpellini, 2010). Besides, the news of the MAS ban was framed as a feeling of a jug of cold water among the activists and the Hispanic community in general (Scarpellini, 2010). In *Rebelión*, Omar (2012) reported the event of the MAS ban using the following heading: *The Arizona apartheid war against Mexican American Studies*. In the report, Republican politicians who supported the law were blamed for having been acutely aware of efforts to dismantle the

department by what appear to be apartheid forces, including the TUSD school board (Omar, 2012).

In the *CY Latino*, Paulino (2017) reported the ban as follows: *Denying our Hispanic history*. The report noted that it was quite amusing how Huppenthal would accuse teachers of using the MAS program to teach Mexican American students that they are oppressed. While stating comments like the following on an online blog using the names Thucydides and Falcon9, “There are no Spanish radio stations, there are no Spanish billboards, there are no Spanish television stations, and there are no Spanish newspapers. This is America speak English” (Paulino, 2017, p. 1). In addition, Paulino (2017) noted that Huppenthal offered an exception, however, “I don't mind that they sell Mexican food as long as the menus are mostly in English” (p. 1). A major concern was that persecuted communities have their language and history taken away, raising disappointing concerns about debates on whether ethnic studies should be taught (Paulino, 2017).

Notimex (2010) reported on *W-Radio* that, ethnic studies allow a generation of students and their parents to have a piece of their history and an understanding of their parents' sacrifice. Similar remarks were made in *El Latino Online* observing that the law focused to prevent teachers from teaching diverse perspectives on history and literature. “Politicians have consistently ignored the unprecedented success of the (ethnic studies) program and want to discard Hispanic history” (p. 4). In his article, Díaz (2022) noted that since the MAS ban, the Latinx community faces a new and renewed wave to try to “erase” its history. Díaz lamented that “extremist groups are using new tactics to veto these books. They have the same goal as ten years ago, but their methods have changed and that is why our struggle must also change” (p. 1).

In the *El Diario*, José de la Isla (2011) reported the following: *After revoking it, will they remember?* José de la Isla (2011) quoted Díaz stating that:

The only good thing that has come out of these attacks to erase our history is the coming together of different minority groups, Latinos, African Americans, and the LGBTQ community. We are not going to allow anyone to be discriminated against or attacked. No one can erase our history, it is part of our essence, of who we are, and we are going to defend it. (José de la Isla, 2011, p. 1)

The current section has presented media findings related to the discourses that the Spanish media employed in framing the Mexican American Studies controversy. Key discourses identified related to concerns that the MAS ban was racially motivated, rising concerns on the need to defend ethnic studies and student rights, possible unconstitutional suppression, and attack on freedom of expression, attempts to hinder culture and ethnic diversity, and unfounded efforts based on suppressing history. The next section presents findings related to aspects that the identified discourses elaborate about the value of Mexican American ethnic studies.

Research Question 2: The Value of Mexican American Ethnic Studies

Research Question 2 was formulated to explore the following: *What do the discourses employed by the Spanish language media say about the value of Mexican American ethnic studies?* Findings show that the discourses show that Mexican American ethnic studies are important in helping the Hispanic community know about their history and cultural roots, enhancing student learning and academic performance, and community unity through popular uprising upholding their rights. First, while reporting about the Lawsuit against Arizona law that closed Mexican American studies EFE (2017) cited that ethnic studies have been important in helping the Hispanic community to learn about their roots.

The Spanish language media discourses also indicate the beneficial role that MAS programs have on student learning and academic performance. For example, Bloomberg (2017) reported that in the fight over Mexican American studies in public schools, the student protests show the popularity of the MAS programs and the growing national interest to have culturally sensitive pedagogy. The curriculum needs to be based on the idea that students learn best when they are taught in a way that is relevant to their own lives. EFE (2015) also added that the MAS program is important because it taught Hispanic students about historical events related to the Mexican American experience, such as its indigenous roots and the Mexican Revolution.

Millán (2017) showed that discourse of defending the MAS program in the Spanish media is of value because it ensured students who enrolled in the program increased their school performance in other subjects, such as math or English, and that they were a determining factor in increasing the number of Latino students graduating from high school. Insights in Excelsior California (2010) also allude that the Tucson Unified School District has been nationally recognized for its unique Chicano Studies program, offered to students from kindergarten through 12th grade. During ethnic studies classes, special classes like math or science, are promoted at the district level and constantly enrich the core curriculum and allow students to pursue specific areas of interest.

Medina (2012) documented the significance of ethnic studies noting that contrary to arguments for eliminating the Ethnic Studies program (also known as Raza Studies) from high school in Tucson, this program has motivated and inspired students. As the documentary “Precious Knowledge” demonstrates, the mobilization of the students against Law 2281 is testimony to their commitment to the program, and the security it has given them to defend their rights and their identity (Medina, 2012). Several high school students even stormed the Tucson

City Council meeting that would eliminate the program. As part of these mobilizations against the HB 2281 legislation, the group “libro traficantes” ([HTTP:// librotraficante.com/](http://librotraficante.com/)), brought “wet books” to underground libraries in the southwestern United States; an act of faith against the anti-Latino sentiment that exists in Arizona (Medina, 2012).

While exploring the value of Mexican American Studies, Avakian (2011) shared that more than 63% of students in the school district are Latino. There is a high enthusiasm among learners to participate in ethnic studies. The program has been academically effective. In this age of standardized testing, students who have participated in our ethnic studies classes, regardless of their ethnicity, outperform other students on state standardized tests (Avakian, 2011). Yet our state legislators continue to scrutinize and attack us. Martinez, who teaches history, observed that “one of the things the Mexican American program teaches students is summed up in the African proverb: Until lions have their historians, hunting tales will always glorify the hunter” (p. 4). Millán (2017) added that it should be noted that learning about history, including the brutal oppression of Black, Latino, Native Americans, and other peoples in the United States, is good for all students, including white students.

The ethnic studies programs that exist today have their origins in the 1960s (Díaz, 2022). While in that period national liberation and anti-imperialist struggles were developing and a revolutionary current was emerging, a powerful expression was the militant student strikes demanding classes, departments, and schools of ethnic studies (Díaz, 2022). Ethnic studies programs established a foothold where students from oppressed nationalities especially could learn their history for the first time and be a part of it (Caballero, 2017). Ethnic studies programs have done much to bring to light the truth about the history of enslavement in America, racial issues, and marginalization (Díaz, 2022). These are basic historical facts, they are not something

secondary and tangential but realities that constitute a central element of the foundations of the United States and its development (Millán, 2017). In light of the Arizona authorities' ban on ethnic studies, in the name of opposing "racial resentment," what does that tell us about who fears the objective study of historical truths and wants to shut down critical thinking in schools? What does that teach about those who propagate and promote ignorance? Ethnic studies are important, and they help address these issues (Medina, 2012).

Havey (2018) observed that the importance of the movement in Tucson defending the plural nature of public education for all minorities in the city cannot be discounted. Students who participated in Tucson's ethnic studies program achieved higher graduation rates and higher standardized test scores than students who did not participate (Havey, 2018). However, one of the lessons of this research is that without attention to the diversity of subgroups that constitute "the great Chicano identity," lack of ethnic studies will continue to reproduce the same problems of the Chicano movement concerning minorities in terms of education and learning on matters like gender, race, indigenism and Afro-descendants (Havey, 2018). Jimenez (2017) reported that English teachers at Tucson High School noticed a disturbing trend before ethnic studies were introduced. These trends included the dropout rate for Latino students being higher than that of their other peers. After calling a meeting with fellow teachers from the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD), they designed a new curriculum based on MAS studies which made classes more engaging for students, in addition to improved test scores, and reduced dropout rates (Jimenez, 2017). These observations further show the positive values of ethnic studies. In the next section, further analysis of Spanish media is presented to understand how the identified discourses possibly support or impede the goal of ethnic studies being a form of educational self-determination

Research Question 3: Discourses Support the Goal of Ethnic Studies

Research Question 3 was created to explore the following: *Do the identified discourses in the Spanish media support or impede the goal of ethnic studies being a form of educational self-determination?* Findings show that the discourses in the Spanish media support the goals of ethnic studies as opposed to impeding this goal. Due to the media's role during the MAS controversy, there has been growing support for ethnic studies both in Arizona and nationally. Insights from an article from *Latino Impact* (2017) reported that American educators were optimistic about the court decision back ethnic studies. The president of the National Association for Ethnic Studies (NAES), Julia Jordan Zachery, observed that “if we see it from an educational point of view, the 2017 legal decision was extremely important because it establishes that you cannot discriminate against ethnic studies just for wanting to do so” (Latino Impact, 2017, p. 1).

Jimenez (2017) observed that media has been essential in ensuring ethnic studies succeed through awareness creation. The approach has a great impact at the national level, it establishes a clear precedent that no one can use their power to discriminate, to promote racism. Jimenez (2017) reported observations by Jordan Zachery, a professor of African American studies at Providence College in Rhode Island, that the growing awareness creation in the media about ethnic studies helps “tear down some of the barriers currently facing ethnic studies nationally” (p., 2).

In *Univision Noticias*, an article by Diaz (2017) indicated that the ongoing debate about ethnic studies is a victory for teachers and students. Diaz (2017) captured views by Anna O'Leary, director of the Mexican American Studies program at the University, that the court ruling in 2017 against the MAS ban “confirms the suspicions that teachers, schools, those of us who know about teaching Mexican studies had that these actions were based on racism in Arizona. Prescott College Education Professor Anita Fernandez also stated that the ruling “sets a precedent not

only in Tucson but throughout the country, especially in states considering introducing laws like HB 2281” (Diaz, 2017, p. 6). Fernández told *Univision Noticias* that awareness about MAS programs continues to be a “victory for teachers and students throughout the country” (p. 5).

Discourses in the Spanish media have also been observed to help boost ethnic studies. EFE (2014) emphasized growing academic calls for the inclusion of ethnic studies in the American school curriculum. For example, academic and activist organizations continue to hold conferences to promote the inclusion in the US school system of ethnic studies courses, with an emphasis on the history and contributions of Latin Americans, African Americans, Native Americans, and Asians (EFE, 2014). Lack of ethnic studies in all schools in the country often results in outbreaks of intolerance, of ignorance, between ethnic groups. Armando Vázquez Ramos, professor of Chicano Studies at California State University Long Beach, informed EFE (2014) that "education in the US is Eurocentric" and that "minority children do not see heroes like them in books and That's why they feel less" (p. 2). *El Nuevo Diario* (2018) reported that growing support for MAS programs is a monumental victory that will serve to protect other ethnic studies programs at the national level. As a result of the 2017 court ruling, there is a clear precedent that no one can use their power to discriminate against ethnic studies (*El Nuevo Diario*, 2018).

Gonzalez (2020) also noted that after years of media reporting and awareness creation about MAS, there was a national uprising that led to the growth of more ethnic studies. Gonzalez (2020) reported that On April 26, 2011, nine students chained themselves to chairs at one of the TUSD board meetings in an act of civil disobedience to protest the banning of Mexican American Studies. Holding microphones, they sat inside the TUSD boardroom and chanted,

“When Our education is under attack, what do we do?”

“Fight back!”

These students were members of a grassroots, radical youth collective called United Non-Discriminatory Individuals Demanding Our Studies (UNIDOS) (Gonzalez, 2020). However, student demonstrations did not end in Arizona. Their efforts were covered by national media in California and Texas, and their perseverance sparked a nationwide movement for ethnic studies (Gonzalez, 2020). Gonzalez quoted Anita Fernández, a scholar activist from Arizona's Prescott College, at length:

The whole wave of ethnic studies that we are seeing right now...they were inspired by the program in Tucson. Even though the community here has been devoid of having that opportunity, what has grown in all these other places was influenced by the banning of the program here. It highlighted the importance of ethnic studies (Gonzalez, 2020, p. 4).

The fight for ethnic studies is far from over, even though the burgeoning movement has spread across the country. The media analysis of the MAS controversy and events occurring at the Tucson School District's Mexican American Program provided a glimpse into what could be a future education system that responds to students from minority ethnic communities and their experiences. However, the media coverage also highlighted the unexpected effects and outcomes of removing this valuable knowledge from minority students, and why ethnic studies need to be retained in schools.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

The purpose of this critical discourse analysis was to explore how the Spanish media covered the MAS controversy. In the current discussion chapter, the focus is to detail key findings obtained from the identified media publications. The discussion is presented in the light of the formulated research questions, and theoretical framework, and compared to past literature to identify areas of convergence or divergence. Subsequent sections then identify the limitations of the current study and provide recommendations for future research. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings.

Discussion of Key Findings

Research Question 1 was created to identify the following: *What are the discourses the Spanish media employ in framing the Mexican American ethnic studies controversy?* Findings showed that Spanish media used various discourses to help understand how the Hispanic/ Latinx community in Arizona described their experience during the MAS controversy. Important discourses observed from the Spanish media included racial influence behind the MAS ban, growing local pressure to defend ethnic studies and student rights to learn their culture, values, and history, and growing concerns that banning ethnic studies was unconstitutional suppression of information. Additional discourses were identified related to concerns about censorship and attack on freedom of expression, malicious activities to hinder culture and ethnic diversity, and growing rhetoric about community persecution and efforts to suppress history.

Obtained findings echo observations from past studies about the MAS controversy. For example, the findings reflect observations by Bebout used this reporting to establish facts upon which he built his arguments about MAS in the light of racial, cultural, and historical issues. Bebout (2017) quoted a New York Times piece about the racial motivations underlying the MAS

controversy. Lacy (2011) also claimed that the MAS ban was mostly motivated by racial profiling of the minority Hispanic community. These observations show that the Hispanic/ Latinx community's Spanish print media interpreted the MAS controversy in terms of racial segregation. In the Spanish print media's view, the Hispanic/ Latinx community perceives the MAS controversy as a racially motivated problem to silence the sharing of their culture, values, and traditions with future generations.

In efforts to ensure their culture and values are preserved, the Hispanic/ Latinx community advocate for the uptake and inclusion of ethnic studies in the educational curriculum (Daza, 2012). Any political measures to curtail ethnic studies in schools (such as through ARS 15-112) are largely considered an attack on freedom of expression, censorship, and unconstitutional suppression of their history (Daza, 2012). In voicing their concerns, the Spanish media plays a key role in reflecting the same discourses to create awareness about the potential influence that banning ethnic studies could have on the academic performance and learning of Hispanic students (Valenzuela, 2017). Calls to include ethnic studies in the curriculum seeks to address concerns about culturally relevant curriculum besides the currently applied pedagogy that is Eurocentric (Bell & Busey, 2021). Through ethnic studies, Hispanic students can access culturally responsive pedagogy that considers their multicultural background and diversity.

Research Question 2 focused on exploring the following: *What do the discourses employed by the Spanish language media say about the value of Mexican American ethnic studies?* Findings from the literature showed that discourses used in the literature help advance the values of Hispanic culture. The discourses demonstrate that Mexican American ethnic studies are vital in informing the Hispanic population about their history and cultural roots, improving student learning and academic performance, and upholding their rights through community

solidarity through popular revolt. The media depiction of the value of MAS programs may be understood in the light of the agenda-setting theory. That is, the Spanish media largely used headlines and content to sway public opinion about ethnic studies.

In line with agenda-setting theory, the Spanish media has a direct influence on their audience by projecting what they should believe about ethnic studies. In elaboration, the news story on the importance of the MAS program on student performance, classroom attendance, and the graduation rate was reported frequently and prominently. As a result, the audience was largely swayed to believe that its ban targeted the rights of students, and the freedom of the Hispanic population to advance their history to future generations. In the context of this study, agenda-setting by Spanish media showed its ability to influence crucial subjects about the value of ethnic studies.

The subsequent focus was on increased student demonstrations and legal cases intended to lift the introduced ban in 2010 (McCombs & Reynolds, 2002). Agenda-setting research describes how the media seeks to convince viewers and creates a hierarchy of news relevance and shows what is at stake if educational stakeholders fail to embrace relevant measures. As earlier noted, Rösler (2017) found that issues with higher influence tend to receive more media attention. The agenda-setting process is heavily influenced and driven by the media's perception of matters such as freedom of expression, constitutional rights, racism, and censorship. Rather than merely transmitting every story to an audience, the Hispanic media shaped and filtered what the public needs to see. For example, the media prioritized and devoted more time to sensational issues like racism, political persecution, the unconstitutionality of the ban, and historical suppression, while devoting less emphasis on concerns by the critics who opposed MAS studies on the ground that it promoted indoctrination among Hispanic students.

Thus, the more attention a topic receives in the media, the more likely the public will consider it important (Aruguete, 2017). That is, mass media may not focus on informing the public about both sides of the problem or what to think or feel about a topic or subject; rather, they provide the audience with stories or situations on which the audience should ponder more (Rösler, 2017). In this case, the Spanish media was more inclined in advancing issues relevant to the Spanish population concerning ethnic studies. Most of the captured quotes in media reports were anchored on civil rights activists like Dolores Huerta, human rights advocates like Isabel Garcia, or MAS program teachers like Roberto Rodríguez whose views are likely to align with those of the Hispanic/Latinx community. Such an approach may contribute to response bias or social desirability bias where the media might present unbalanced views about a topic of public concern.

Research Question 3 was created to help understand the following: *Do the identified discourses in the Spanish media support or impede the goal of ethnic studies being a form of educational self-determination?* The findings suggest that the discourses in the Spanish media promote rather than hinder ethnic studies' goals. Because of the media's role in the MAS debate, ethnic studies have gained popularity in Arizona and around the country. Following the court ruling, the Spanish-language media greatly reported that ethnic study educators were hopeful that the court judgment would support the inclusion of the MAS program in the curriculum. In this study, the framing theory helps understand how the media discourses further advance and support ethnic studies. That is, through framing the media packages and distributing positive stories to the audience related to the phenomenon under consideration. According to this theory, the media highlights certain events before contextualizing them to encourage perceived

viewpoints (Fairhurst & Sarr, 2019). In this way, the media has a selective effect on how people see reality in and around them.

The use of frames such as knowing cultural roots, hindering minority student learning and performance, victory through resistance and protests, boosting ethnic studies nationally, valuing culture, and national uprising to support MAS protests are heuristics that influence the audience to assimilate information rapidly. The frames serve to create discourses that communicate to the audience what stands to be lost if the MAS ban is not lifted, and what the Spanish audience is likely to achieve if the ban is lifted. The frames used by the media also provide approaches that may be used to achieve desired outcomes including mass protests, student demonstrations, national debate about ethnic studies, and legal battles. Therefore, it may be noted that the framing theory postulates that the way events are presented to an audience influences the processing decisions made by individuals. In this study, the Spanish Media used discourses that largely aided support the goal of ethnic studies and the need to include them in the school curriculum as a form of educational self-determination for Hispanic/Latinx students.

Overall, these discourses stood in stark contrast to even a cursory view of the English language coverage of the controversy. Documented in Cabrera and Chang's forthcoming book *Banned!* they dive extensively into the media coverage of the MAS controversy to contextualize their analysis. They found that much of the coverage by Alexis Huicochea at the *Arizona Daily Star* covered the controversy as if there were two equally valid sides arguing about the future of MAS. This was an endemic issue within much of the English language media coverage with Mari Herreras at the *Tucson Weekly* being a notable exception. In fact, a great deal of the English language coverage actually took the polar opposite view – that MAS was actually racist and that student activists were nothing more than petulant children. A key actor in these attacks was an

op-ed writer for the *Arizona Republic*, Doug. MAS Eachern wrote numerous pieces overtly attacking the MAS program claiming it was both racist and Marxist. This coverage was a foundation that led to the passage of HB2281 (see it cited extensively in Horne's 2007 *Open Letter*), and it demonstrates the power in media framing an issue.

In contrast, the Spanish-language news coverage gave credence to racism driving the banning, showed a deep concern for constitutional and human rights, and ultimately found a lot of value in promoting academic self-determination. In other words, the Spanish language media coverage of the MAS controversy aligned with the underlying purposes of Ethnic Studies in general, and Mexican American Studies in particular. This is important because it not only helps us add new knowledge to the academic literature regarding the discourses the Spanish media employed in framing the MAS controversy but also understand what the discourses say about the value of ethnic studies as a form of educational self-determination for Hispanic students and community.

Implications for Research, Theory, and Practice

The findings of this study have important implications for research, theory, and practice. Potential implications drawn from this study may be achieved at levels of educational advocates, transformative pedagogy, teacher autonomy and innovativeness, neoliberal pedagogy and educators' civil protection, access to equal learning opportunities, and addressing politically contentious issues in the education sector. First, at the level of education it is important to consider what findings of this study have elaborated concerning issues at stake in the Ethnic Studies debate. Insights of this study showed that the Spanish language media did not simply regurgitate the rightwing talking points or do the "two sides" approach to this controversy. However, it is still unclear regarding the precise role the Spanish language media played in

agenda setting for the controversy. Following the MAS ban, Tom Horne again becomes state superintendent of public instruction, and he decides to come after TUSD's Culturally Relevant Courses (CRC) that replaced the Mexican American studies. Thus, in such a politically contentious fight, educational advocates need to be aware about the following rationales exploited by Horne and Huppenthal in their sustained efforts to eliminate ethnic studies.

The rationales for promoting the programmatic elimination of MAS are connected to associating race consciousness with racism, red scare tactics, misappropriations of Martin Luther King Jr.'s statements, all in the form of euphemisms to create a red herring for their overall logic, which is to inspire a general fear among America's general populace and foundational in-group, which is comprised of people of Anglo-Saxon descent. Student outcomes and responses are limited to those of their instructors and curriculums 'programing' taking the focus off of what really matters—the upward mobility of majority minority schools whose academic growth every year. As Huppenthal (2011) proclaims “substantially lags behind other TUSD schools and Arizona peers” and is “unacceptable” (p. 2) despite the positive academic changes MAS was proving to promote in TUSD. Findings from this study show that the reasoning presented in public statements made by Horne and Huppenthal and the frames for discussion of the MAS program were designed to appeal to mainstream audiences as a decoy from alternative motives of maintaining current power structures, with Latinx people being relegated to lower socio-economic statuses in comparison to White counterparts in education. In this light, it becomes evident that there are sustained efforts to ensure complete elimination of all ethnic studies in any form either as CRC or MAS necessitating a more proactive role by the Spanish language media going into the future to create awareness about such sustained attacks on ethnic studies in Arizona.

Second, in terms of research and theory, the Spanish language media seemed to be engaging in more counter-hegemonic agenda setting. Many discourse and media studies highlight how mass media reinforce dominant norms. In this study, the opposite was discovered in this instance. Such findings are important in that the Spanish language media tends to show strong advocacy for objective reporting of minority perceptions about their ethnic values. In elaboration, it appears that the local Spanish media tends to present obscured narratives and unheard voices of minority Latinx community against the background noise evident in mass media. While Horne and Huppenthal tend to support the generalization of Eurocentric education curriculum (which has misconstrued and silenced the truth and history of marginalized communities), the Spanish language media gives minority Hispanic community a platform to voice and develop ideas and discourse to challenge dominant assumptions, beliefs and established patterns of behavior by emphasizing the importance of their ethnic studies; first as MAS and later as CRC despite sustained attacks on both by Horne and Huppenthal.

Through her work, Santa Ana (2010) offered insights into the paradoxes frequently used in American political discourse referencing people of Latinx descent, “[e]ver since the declaration of Independence, America has manifested a schizophrenic personality on the question of race. She has been torn between selves—a self in which she has proudly professed democracy and a self in which she has sadly practiced the antithesis of democracy. . . . Indeed, segregation and discrimination are strange paradoxes in a nation founded on the principle that all men are created equal” (p. 127). The Arizona state representatives including Horne and Huppenthal seems to employ this very same contradictory tactic in eliminating a structure they see as threatening the norm of tolerance by bringing attention to unjust in-group political practices. Intertextuality and idea analysis are utilised to provide greater transparency into the

goals of authoritarian and rhetorically dishonest politicians, which allows for the verification of the statements made to eliminate ethnic studies. As such, the Spanish language media needs to continue propagating its counter-hegemony in its future unfolding of MAS debate in an attempt to critique or dismantle hegemonic power, which appears to persist even after the court ruling that allowed some form of culturally responsive or relevant teaching that does not promote anti-western civilization and segregation as argued by Horne and Huppenthal.

Third, the findings also have potential implications for the civil liberties of teachers. The specific concern relates to court rulings after the MAS ban that raises possible concerns that neoliberal pedagogy might negatively affect the teachers' civil protection. In elaboration, following the MAS ban in 2010, a group of two students and ten teachers launched a legal suit in 2012 regarding the discriminatory and unconstitutional provisions of H.B. 2281. The challenge was filed in federal court. Exceptionally, Wallace Tashima, the federal district judge who presided over the case ruled against the teachers' rights to exercise their freedom of expression in the classroom. In the ruling, the judge concluded that the plaintiff teachers had failed to demonstrate that they have a protected First Amendment right to speak within the classroom (Gershon, 2017; Jensen, 2013; Lang, 2013). These assertions imply that ideas that teachers convey in the classroom as part of their official duties are considered to be "official speech." Thus, this means that teachers have no claim of the property of the words they utter in the classroom because they are considered to be "official speech." Such a decision has implications for teachers' practice as they find themselves in both precarious and unsettling situations when delivering the curriculum. That is, teachers' speeches are not protected by the Constitution while they are on the job because they are the representative of the school, and the school is considered to "own" the teacher's speech. In this case, anything teachers say (especially as applies to the

controversial ethnic studies topic) could be used against them if it does not conform to the interests of the institution that speaks through their teaching profession. As such, there are possible concerns that neoliberal pedagogy might deprive the teacher of civil protections because it views educators as a representative of an enterprise than as a subject who is governed by the law.

Fourth, the findings also raise potential implications for equal educational and learning opportunities for ethnic minorities like Latinx and African American students. From the MAS ban controversy, it is not yet entirely clear what the ultimate ramifications of the court decision could be concerning the reinstatement of the ethnic minority study programs. However, it does indicate that the ethnic studies curriculum could be preserved as a means of providing a remedy for ongoing discrimination. Even so, the state of Arizona continues with its retaliation with objections to the possibility of the program's reinstatement. In response to the termination of the program, student protests and walkouts were organized, and activists and authors engaged in what Tony Diaz referred to as book smuggling or "librotraficante". These engagements raised potential questions about equal educational activities as applies to contents and material students should be exposed to (Banks, 2012; Brown, 2013; Cuevas, 2011). There is a need for the development of critical pedagogy to encourage students to investigate instances of social and historical injustice and motivate them to contemplate how things may be different without undermining their access to knowledge.

Fifth, the findings of this study raise concerns about how to approach and navigate politically contentious issues in the education curriculum. The most significant contribution of politically contentious issues to a pedagogy that seeks to challenge neoliberal advances in education is the potential of education stakeholders such as teachers, students, parents, and

educators to begin to think autonomously. Through the process of independent inquiry in the community and listening to the voice of the other who believes differently from the dominant racial group, a higher capacity to advocate for "the other" is developed. In the neoliberal project, personal identification and economic freedom are accorded great importance, and a perspective of autonomy and personal identity helps to separate individuals. Moreover, it is a personal identity built on economic competitiveness and elitism, both of which are important to the neoliberal worldview, and where 'wellbeing' is viewed solely in terms of economic success. Therefore, the community of philosophical inquiry is a space where self-regulation can be experienced, and experimented with, and other methods of living can be practiced. Importantly, the process transforms politically divergent views into a space of tolerance for varied opinions from persons with ethnic and culturally diverse backgrounds. Therefore, there is a need for a societal-wide engagement in ethnic studies to develop a framework of how to advance and promote the needs of minority groups through ethnic studies, without rousing political fears of student indoctrination.

Lastly, further critical discourse analysis of the complete data set revealed that as discourse associated with discussions of diversity in the English media becomes more rigid, formalized, and prevalent in the text samples, institutional questioning and direct calls for social action become less frequent. Furthermore, over time, the discourse in the English media is less likely to engage in reflecting racism or social injustice. The discourse in the English media is more likely to engage in a factual description of the ethnic studies ban, interviewing both sides of the controversy, or just playing both sides of the controversy at best. Combined, the detailed linguistic analysis and the broader reading of the collected English, suggest that the "discourse of social justice" is intertwined with counter discourses of neutral position or nuanced approach.

As noted previously, the Spanish media serves as a voice combatting the powers of social injustice. Although there are more than likely a few examples of the English media highlighting racism and social injustice while reporting on the ethnic studies ban in Arizona, the need for the Spanish media tend to provide a less nuanced approach and much more direct approach to social justice to their discourse is critical for the Latino/ Spanish speaking community, who is directly impacted by such racist policies as the ethnic studies ban, to understand the negative implications of said controversial ban.

As evident in my findings, Latino news organizations tend to identify with the communities they serve, our interviews reveal, and their journalists often see themselves as champions for those communities. The historical role of Spanish-language media in the U.S. has been to advocate for the rights of marginalized Latino communities, and as a recent Pew Center study (2019) showed, “residents of higher-proportion Hispanic areas are more willing to have journalists express their views.” But it is an important corroboration at a time of widespread mistrust in news media and a time when mainstream U.S. media’s traditional ideal of neutrality is being scrutinized and debated.

As an example, Retis (2019) summarizes that María Bastidas, digital content director at *Mundo Hispánico* explains the advocacy role by highlighting that the connection from Latino news outlets to the community is a byproduct from the staff itself. The Latino media staff can identify with the Latino community because most of the staff are immigrants themselves. Moreover, Latino Media outlets are upfront on their non-neutral stance when covering social injustice issues such as the ethnic studies ban (Retis, 2019; Negron, 2014). In the view of Selymar Colón, editor-in-chief of Univision News Digital, the power of the Univision brand is the relationship, the intimacy the trust earned that Univision has with the community. Several

Latino journalists and editors Retis (2019) interviewed point to the mainstream media's coverage of Latino stories as a contrast. English mainstream coverage is often stereotyped and biased rather than neutral, they say. CRT activists need to look to the plethora of Latino media outlets, which promote social justice and activism.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) advocates interdisciplinarity in research, forging bonds among rather than divisions in research paradigms. We must consider our parts in doing more with the knowledge we produce. Although the controversy of the Ethnic Studies ban has gone from a boiling point to a simmer, the implications of racism and social injustice from said racist educational policies are ever present. The fact that Tom Horne is running again provides great relevance to the importance and need of the Spanish media and the discourses it provides to our Latino/ Spanish speaking communities.

We can use the results of this study to combat the negative and racist ideologies that such politicians like Tom Horne campaign and promise to implement via the Spanish media. The importance of the discourse of the Spanish media and how they frame racist policies is key to address the social injustices said ideologies bring forth. Therefore, as a CRT activist, there are certain outlets that should be targeted to educate and reach out to the Latino/ Spanish speaking communities. Such representation matters when it comes to the corporate media. Based on my findings these Latino media outlets are but not limited to Univision, Telemundo, El Herald, Aldia News, El Mundo, Rebelión, CY Latino, Notimex, El Diario, La Opinión and La Estrella to name a few. Latino social activists should continue to look at and use said Spanish media outlets in our continued quest for social justice.

Limitations

There are potential limitations that might affect the interpretation of the current findings. These limitations include data sources, sampling, and data saturation. First, all insights used in this study were drawn from a secondary analysis of publications from various Spanish media. The study did not consider English newspapers on MAS controversy, potentially leaving out some information that could have supplemented current findings. Second, findings from the Spanish literature focused on quoted reports focusing on plaintiffs, students, teachers, and activists who were against the MAS ban. As such, the findings do not include views shared by proponents of the MAS ban. The identified sources of data, therefore, might contribute to social desirability bias where responses from students, teachers, or education activists could share ideas in a manner that will be viewed favorably by others. Third, the use of CDA may affect the methodological rigor of the current research. The approach easily allows researchers to uncover the findings they expect or want to find. As a result, the findings may lack an in-depth evaluation of the problem under study.

Recommendations for Future Research

The identified research shortcomings in this study form the basis for future research recommendations. First, current findings may be improved in the future by supplementing data from other sources besides the internet media reports. Since the current topic is still at its nascent stages and inadequately explored, there is a need to consider primary data using interviews, surveys, and focus group discussions. Primary data are drawn from media editors, journalists, educators, students, and education activists could further help shed more light on the obtained findings on the discourses the Spanish media used to frame the MAS controversy. Second, future researchers may consider triangulating sources of information to include both Spanish and

English news publications. Comparing media reports from the two languages could help understand the MAS controversy regarding whether the discourses the media uses are similar or contradictory. Lastly, future studies may enhance the rigor of current findings by triangulating sources of information. Capturing diverse opinions and views about how the Spanish media framed MAS could help address the subjective bias that may be related to media reporting. Using a validated survey instrument could help identify the main discourses used by the Spanish media while addressing potential issues of validity and reliability to achieve internal consistency.

Conclusion

The purpose of this critical discourse analysis was to explore how the local Spanish media covered the issue of the ethnic studies ban in Arizona in 2010, with a specific focus on the Tucson school district. Insights from past literature show that while discourse analysis has been conducted in English newspaper publications on topics like racial ideologies, immigration, and violence, similar research is largely lacking in Spanish media publications. Specifically, there is a paucity of research on how Hispanic /Latinx groups represent themselves via the Spanish media in the wake of the MAS controversy. To address this knowledge gap, a critical discourse analysis was conducted aimed to explore how the local Spanish media covered the issue of the ethnic studies ban in Arizona in 2010. Secondary resources on the MAS controversy were identified from the internet and the library.

Findings from the analyzed media publications showed that the Spanish media employed various discourses in framing the Mexican American ethnic studies controversy. These discourses included frames like the MAS ban being racially motivated, the need to defend ethnic studies and student rights, concerns about unconstitutional suppression of Hispanic studies, and censorship of the freedom of expression. Additional discourses included concerns about the

MAS ban hindering culture and ethnic diversity, feelings of persecution, apartheid, and potential efforts attempted at suppressing Hispanic history. The discourses employed by the Spanish language media largely emphasize the value of Mexican American ethnic studies. Through the discourses, the media projects an image that ethnic studies enable students to know about their cultural roots, values, and history.

Moreover, the discourses show that ethnic studies enhance student engagement in school, reduce dropouts, and contribute to examination scores. Importantly, the identified discourses in the Spanish media support the goal of ethnic studies being a form of educational self-determination. Through student protests and public demonstrations, the media helped create awareness about ethnic studies, with the movement attracting national interest from other states. The discourses helped shed light on the MAS ban and its detrimental impact on hindering minority students from learning effectively and improving their academic performance. In addition, resisting against MAS ban was considered necessary to help boost ethnic studies in Arizona, and to enable students to continue learning their traditions and values.

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