INTRODUCTION

• Despite improvements in the American health care system over the past few decades, there are large racial/ethnic disparities persisting in attitudes toward health care spending.

• Because blacks and other minority groups on average, earn a lower household income than whites, there are differences in their access to health care.

• Understanding and researching attitudes toward health care spending is crucial for political actions in the United States with new policies such as The Affordable Health Care Act, also known as ‘Obamacare’.

• 53% of American disapprove and 41% approve The Affordable Health Care Act.

• Polls indicate, however, that race has a large impact on how this policy is perceived.

• 33% White Americans approve The Affordable Health Care Act . 75% African Americans approve The Affordable Health Care Act.

• While more Americans do disapprove than approve of the health care law, opinions are more evenly divided over the role of the government in providing health care coverage.

• Overall, 47% say it is the federal government’s responsibility to make sure all Americans have coverage, while 52% say this is not the government’s responsibility.

• Previous research has been done to evaluate health care issues amongst different racial groups to see how income levels correlate with health.

• This research hopes to examine how race affects attitudes toward national health care spending and find which factors contribute to the significant difference present in these attitudes.

Hypothesis: Whites are less likely than other ethnic minority groups (African Americans, Hispanics, and others) to think that too little is being spent on national health care.

DATA

This study relies on data from the General Social Survey (GSS). 2012. This survey took place in all regions of the United States. Data was collected in 2012 via computer-assisted personal interviews, face to face interviews, and phone interviews. These interviews were done in English and Spanish. A total of 4,820 participants were chosen at random. These individuals were all non-institutionalized, English and Spanish speaking persons 18 years or older living in the United States. The GSS has a 70% response rate and contains a standard ‘core’ of demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal questions, plus topics of special interest. Many questions have remained unchanged since 1972 in order to track trends over decades of time. This research took a look at how the combination of income levels, education, age, and gender can impact how different races support health care expenditures. Studies in the past have looked at distrust in health care services and opinions on access to health care, but very few have discussed how different races view the overall health care spending in the nation. Because the dependent variable (national health care spending) was dichotomous, this study utilized logistic regression to carry out its multivariate analysis. Results were found using SPSS statistical software.

RESULTS

Figure 1: Impact of Race on Belief that Too Little is Being Spent on Health Care

Figure 2 Impact of Race and other Demographic Characteristics on Belief that Too Little is Spent on Health Care: Logistic Regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>-.732***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>-.677***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Control Variables:

| Age Group  | -.012*** |
| Female     | .388***  |
| Northeast  | .013     |
| Education Level | -.066** |

N= 2385

Hypothesis: Whites are less likely than other ethnic minority groups (African Americans, Hispanics, and others) to think that too little is being spent on national health care.

CONCLUSIONS

• The cross tabulation analysis reported in Figure 1 indicates that Blacks are most likely to report that too little is being spent on health care (76.7%) and Whites are least likely (59%) to hold this opinion.

• The results of multivariate analysis expose other factors between race and attitude on health care spending.

• Figure 2 shows that Whites and others are less likely than Blacks to think that too little is being spent on health care.

• The data also indicates that as respondents aged, the less likely they are to think that too little was being spent on health care.

• Women are more likely than men to think that too little is being spent.

• People with higher levels of education are less likely to think that too little is being spent on national health care.

• From these findings, whites appear the least likely to think that too little is being spent on national health care and Blacks are most likely to hold this opinion.

• Through the evidence found by this study and looking at previous research, it is found that blacks and other races are more likely than whites to think that too little is being spent on national health care.

• It can be theorized that social conflict theory has played a role in the differences of attitude on health care spending between races.

• Karl Marx’s Social Conflict theory can be explained by socioeconomic differences amongst social classes and the amount of resources available to them.

• For decades, blacks and new immigrant groups have faced numerous challenges in the United States economically and socially, thus it can be argued that the social gap between blacks and whites have shifted the way each group thinks about a social issue.