

*Perspective***Political socialization and the impact of media on kids and adults**

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DESCRIPTION

This study makes extensive use of attitude-related psychological studies. Public opinion is frequently viewed in political science and communications studies as being influenced by the media. Additionally, behavioral genetics and political socialization are sometimes used to explain public opinion. There are several theories and a lot of evidence that explain how people's opinions form and change throughout time. Political socialization is the process by which people acquire and frequently internalize a political lens that frames their perceptions of how power is structured and how the world is organized. These perceptions, in turn, shape and define people's definitions of who they are and how they should behave in the political and economic institutions in which they live." Political socialization is also the process by which people acquire the beliefs and values that influence their political stance and ideology "study of the mechanisms through which adolescents and adults of all ages develop their political cognition, attitudes, and behaviors. It implies to a process of learning through which standards and conduct appropriate for a functioning political system are passed from one generation to the next. Individuals are initiated into the political culture and form their orientations toward political objects through the performance of this function. State, media, and schools all play a significant role in this process.

Childhood is when political socialization starts. However, more recent research designs have more properly evaluated the strong influence of the media in the process of political socialization. Some research says that family and school teachers are the most influential variables in socializing children. At the United States, both young children and teenagers watch more television and use digital media every week than they do in school. Teenagers watch media for forty-

eight hours per week on average, compared to thirty-one hours per week for young children. High school students place the media considerably more blame than their friends, family, or teachers for the material that shapes their thoughts and attitudes regarding race, war, economics, and patriotism. Additionally, studies have shown that kids who use media more frequently than their peers accept and comprehend American ideals like free speech better. This might be the case given that the majority of material that kids consume is geared toward adults. Further, since children's brains are "primed for learning" and more prone to accept messages and representations of the world at face value, the messages have a greater impact.

In maturity, both fictional and factual media sources continue to play a part in political socializing. Adults are increasingly exposed to news and political information that is woven into entertainment; the most prevalent source of political knowledge is fictitious entertainment (mainly television). The knowledge gleaned from entertainment is ultimately transformed into the standards and ideals by which people are judged. Although political indoctrination through the media is a lifelong process, people's fundamental values typically remain the same after adolescence. Most people base their media exposure decisions on the values they already have, and they use information from the media to support those views. According to studies, two-thirds of newspaper readers are unaware of their paper's stance on particular issues, and the majority of media items are rapidly forgotten. Studies on the public's perception of the Bush administration's energy policy reveal that people pay more attention to and from opinions about topics that are heavily covered in the media. This indicates how public opinion is influenced by how much a topic is covered in the media. More specifically, prolonged exposure to television has resulted in "mainstreaming," where people's perceptions of politics and society match how television portrays them.

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