

MEDIA AS CREATORS OF PUBLIC OPINION IN THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

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Abstract

The mass media play a notable role in the society – they report important information about the world, culture, politics as well as present the image of socialization. The media is also an intermediary in forming an important public opinion. This critical ability is often manipulated and is misused in exercising the interests of the powers that be. The mass media have a potential to set media topics via communication channels which further on induce forum. Editorial offices do not have the ability to deform the minds of the masses one hundred percent, but they can mediate selected information to the receivers which has the effect of slightly modifying their opinion.

Keywords: The media, Functions of the media, Agenda setting, Media reality, Public opinion

1 Introduction

The process of selection proceeds through several layers of gatekeeping. A number of factors affects the selectors (gatekeepers): organizational influence, ideology of the editor, dominant news values in the editorial office, economic and owners influence, globalization and/or tabloidization factor. (Lincényi, Tamene, 2013) This selection of information or topics designed for production is carried out on the first level. The mass media modify the messages prior to mediating them to the percipients. On the second level they edit the messages in various ways such as priming (selection of information within the message), framing (emphasizing the information in the message) and/or labelling. To a lesser or greater extent all the distributed journalistic messages in the media carry ideology, attitude or needs of a particular editorial office. Equally important aspect is that particular editorial offices not only modify the majority of the messages but at the same time withhold and/or marginalize a number of messages from the public. The presented messages in the media are representative of the signs of media reality, though they are distant from the reality. It is therefore imperative for the society to understand the ingerence of media on public opinion.

2 Description of the approach, work methodology, materials for research, assumptions, experiments, etc.

The media is an integral component of today's globalized and mass society, relate to each of us. The mass media have great power, before which they have respect for the opinion leaders – politicians, managers, businessmen, scientists, celebrities, etc. The mediocracy decide what we will read in print and online media, what we will watch in auditory media, or what we will watch in the audiovisual media, which mediocracy is models the public opinion. The media raise issues us forward that we will in the next few hours or days to consider and discuss with the people in the circle of loved ones. Individual editors are determine significant media society-wide issues, which is become global issues in some cases. Media among others play the role of watchdog. The individual editors often take simple citizens in causal issues before state bureaucracy, imperfect legislation and against injustice in different areas of our society.

The mass media are apparently acting as protectors of the public, and the majority party are share with beneficiaries message. The problem is that the current recipient of the media is dependent on passive reception of messages, he has no way of verifying the authenticity and veracity assessment of mediated messages. Especially people without university education believe the message of the media as a valid termination. These recipients believe in media reality, and they not realize that everything resolves in the media is not always true. If they perceive this particular, they will be difficult to isolate the social reality of the media reality.

Efficiency of the media lies in its ability Establish, or a full picture of the public opinion by ideas of media managers. The force of public opinion lies in the fact that people determines the boundaries what they have to think at home, at work or in a close circle, thus Forum indirectly involved in the creating of ideas, opinions and attitudes of people. These facts are aware mighty world and therefore powerful abusing the media for their personal needs and interests. The media provide a media agenda, political agenda and social agenda.

3 Description of achieved results

As reported by Denis McQuail (1999, p. 21), media are a potential means of influence, control and promotion of innovation in the company, a source of information vital to the functioning of most social institutions and basic instrument of transmission. According to Dieter Prokop (2005, p.9) media have served "*in the Roman Empire imperial interests by means of propaganda culture of Apollon decried Dionysian cult, and they fought against the enemies of the rulers, against the rival despots like the Democrats.*"

Ignacio Ramonet (2003, p. 56) speaks of entanglement between the dominant media and political power to the extent that citizens are questioning the fact that the fourth power still performs its critical functions. Even Marshall McLuhan (2008, p. 31, 159) was convinced that the media have the power to impose our own perception of its premise and earlier media described as a weapon (1991, p. 24). Zygmund Bauman (2001, p. 97) says *“that today’s world of professional speakers and entertainers media holds tremendous power and strength, expanding far beyond its once very limited control of the territory and the land they originally operated as only professional politicians.”*

Mass media of Agenda-theory (McCombs, M., 2009) through communication channels raise media topics, from which subsequently induces forum. Editorial although not distort thinking masses on 100 %, but recipients can mediate-selecting information, which then partially modify their opinion. Authors McCombs and Shaw in 1972 to provide the first systematic study that showed that deployment of media influence on the political agenda. The research consisted of examining attitudes among undecided voters in the university town of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, during the presidential election campaign in 1968 – Humphrey vs. Nixon, which showed an almost perfect correlation between the five most subscriptions peacemaking media and five strongest themes reminded undecided voters. (Jirák, J., Köpplová, B., 2007, p. 182)

Rogers and Dearing (1988) a Dearing and Rogers (1996) also pointed out (Perse, 2001, p. 101), bringing about the research topics is a causal relationship between media and audience agenda.

Production of any reports in the media is associated with the editor, the leading issue, Editor, or rapporteur, who decides what message gets in and what message end up in the trash. The process of selection of information is usually designated by the term gatekeeping (guarding the gate). The term comes from the research of social psychologist Kurt Lewin, 1947 (McQuail, 2007, p. 241) oriented decision-making processes in the family grocery shopping. Lewin can be noticed that the information must go through certain channels containing the entrance (Gate Area), where under the influence of various favourable and unfavourable forces decisions.

This idea caught in the early fifties of the 20th century American sociologist David M. White, who was doing research on the selection of events to report. He tried to find out, how journalists decide in selecting. The interpretation for his research then used metaphorical term gatekeeping. White found that messages are eliminated from the process for content reasons and also due to organizational reasons, as the media was not enough space. Conversely, the easiest passage information Gateway had a human interest stories and political news. (Trampota, 2006, p. 38)

The process of selection proceeds through several layers of gatekeeping. A number of factors affect the selectors (gatekeepers): organizational influence, ideology of the editor, dominant news values in the editorial office, economic and owners influence, globalization and/or tabloidization factor. This selection of information or topics designed for production is carried out on the first level.

According to Joshua Meyrowitz (2006, p. 97), all the media act as filters that exclude some elements of reality. *“He claims that each of the different types of a media filter.”*

The mass media modify the messages prior to mediating them to the percipients. On the second level they edit the messages in various ways such as priming (selection of information within the message), (Trampota, 2006, str. 124) framing (emphasizing the information in the message) and/or labeling (Watson, J., Hill, A., 1984, str. 95). To a lesser or greater extent all the distributed journalistic messages in the media carry ideology, attitude or needs of a particular editorial office. Equally important aspect is that particular editorial offices not only modify the majority of the messages but at the same time withhold and/or marginalize a number of messages from the public. The presented messages in the media are representative of the signs of media reality, though they are distant from the reality. It is therefore imperative for the society to understand the ingercence of media on public opinion.

In our opinion, on the process of decision-making act the internal and external factors. For internal factors Gatekeeper consider personal beliefs we consider personal beliefs Gatekeeper, views its surroundings, editorial ideology itself, or established rules, reporting values for the media. Among the external factors we include economic (cost of production reports), title (the interests of the owner), lobbying (advertising, others), the effects of globalization and tabloid etc.

4 Conclusion

The mass public media play a significant role in providing recipients with the social reality in the current society. The power of the public media is in creating of the media, political and public agenda. In the observed print media, there is the presence of significantly different political subjects, which confirms already valid doctrine about the way of providing topics. (Lincényi, 2013) The editorial offices not only often modify mediated messages, but they simply hide a lot of information from the public. There is also the differentiated form of the consequent presentation of these preferred political subjects by means of positive, negative or neutral journalist reports. These results also confirm the known theories that published news reports more or less contain an ideology, attitude or needs of the particular public medium and of its owners. The presented facts show that the published contents of public media are distant from the social reality, which is actually risky when forming the reasoning of the public and their opinion, especially in regard to the political agenda.

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