

The Role of Television Media in Forming the Public Opinion of Modern Audiences

Tursunova Nafisa Tashtemirovna

Senior Lecturer, Department Of "Uzbek Language and Literature", Uzbekistan

Received: 26 April 2026; **Accepted:** 22 May 2026; **Published:** 12 June 2026

Abstract: The article examines the specifics of television mass media's influence on the formation of public opinion and the mass consciousness of the audience. It analyzes the psychological and communicative mechanisms of television influence, as well as the main manipulative technologies used in news content. Particular attention is paid to theories of media influence, including the concepts of "pseudo-environment," "establishment of the agenda," and "framing." Based on examples from domestic and foreign media practices, the methods of emotional and informational impact of television news on viewers are investigated. It also examines the transformation of television's role in the context of digitalization and competition with internet platforms. It emphasizes the importance of audience media literacy and critical thinking in countering the manipulative strategies of modern media.

Keywords: Television, mass media, audience, public opinion, mass consciousness, manipulation, media influence, television news, media psychology, framing, agenda-setting, media literacy, digital communications, information influence, media linguistics.

Introduction: At all times, mass media have played a significant role. It was the media that informed the population about the events taking place in the world, acting as the mouthpiece of public opinion and expressing the interests of society, exercising control over the actions of the authorities, and so on. Today, the media is a powerful tool for shaping mass consciousness and manipulating it. It is not so much the news itself that matters, but how well it is presented. The media audience's reaction and assessment of the news event covered depend on the form in which the information is presented to them.

In every professional news that a media outlet offers to an audience, there is basic information, and there is information that has an emotional coloring, as well as the ability to completely change its meaning and message using keywords.

This has become particularly noticeable in recent years—as the number of diverse media outlets increases and new types emerge. And this influence is becoming more extensive and diverse. Despite the fact that in recent years the World Wide Web has taken a

leading position as the most synthetic mass media outlet, television continues to remain one of the most popular media types. Its complexity is expressed in the impact on both vision and hearing, involving movement effects, demonstrations of dynamic real pictures, and reports that simulate the presence of television viewers at the scene of the event. All of this affects the audience's memorization of information transmitted via TV.

Regular television audience research is conducted to identify ratings and preferences, as well as to establish interaction with viewers. Various processes are being observed - an increase in television viewing time and a decrease in the average daily television audience, i.e., coverage, which is driven not only by the development of the television industry but also by the behavior of the viewer themselves. [1;56]

When analyzing the influence of television media on audience opinion, it is important to rely on modern media theories. In particular, American researcher Walter Lippman emphasized that mass media form a so-called "pseudo-environment" in the public

consciousness. In his opinion, a person perceives the surrounding reality not directly, but through media. This indicates that the audience's perceptions of reality largely depend on the information constructs created by the media. Television, however, strengthens this process through the combination of visual and auditory impact. From this perspective, television serves not only as a means of disseminating information but also as a socio-psychological mechanism of influence. In particular, elements such as information selection, frame composition, background music, and the speaker's intonation form a certain emotional attitude in the audience toward what is happening. This aspect is of particular interest from the perspective of medialinguistics and media psychology.

According to the results of researchers, television as a means of modern media communication has a psychological impact on such areas of the psyche as:

- 1) needs-motivational (knowledge, beliefs, value orientations, inclinations, desires);
- 2) intellectual-cognitive (sensations, perceptions, representations, imagination, memory, and thinking);
- 3) emotional-volitional (emotions, feelings, moods, volitional processes);
- 4) communicative-behavioral (the nature and characteristics of communication, interaction, relationships, and interpersonal perception). [2;2]

Additionally, the mass media possess principles for manipulating public opinion, aimed at programming the majority of viewers for "correct information perception" and government-friendly behavior.

There are several main methods of audience manipulation used by media outlets when creating news: [3;55]

1) The method of distracting attention. If we take the events that occurred several years ago, we can recall the fact of how and in what volumes the media, especially domestic television channels, reported on the pandemic crisis. Almost all messages in the news feed were related to the spread of COVID-19, and in news programs, talk shows, etc., this topic was touched upon in one way or another. For example, news segments were dedicated to the production of medical masks and disinfectants, the work of call centers and hospitals, and daily summaries of those infected or deceased by the coronavirus were presented. And, of course, daily briefings were held where well-known doctors spoke about the pandemic and the fight against it. That is, the tendency for the positive side of the balance to prevail over the negative side was clearly visible here.

This was especially noticeable when, at the very

beginning of the pandemic, journalists from the "Poytaxt" news editorial office of the "TOSHKENT" TV channel conducted their own investigation, visiting several pharmacies in various districts of Tashkent and checking for medical masks. As a result, after three hours of filming with a hidden camera, masks in limited quantities were found only in one pharmacy. A few days after the release of this story, another story about the production of masks and other medical products and their supply to city pharmacies was released on the screens.

2) Postponing major decisions. Here, one can take as an example the renewal of laws, the tax system, the increase in pensions and wages, the rise in prices for goods and utilities—that is, all those important life events that a person always learns about through the media. If, for example, a person learns from the news that an increase in income tax is inevitable, their reaction will be negative. However, if he is subsequently informed that the tax increase will take place only in two years, this news will be perceived by him in a completely different way, without a pronounced protest.

3) Excessive kindness. This method works on emotions, influences the subconscious, and you no longer think about what the product is made of or what its benefits are. Buy it! Try it! Love! – The media uses a patronizing tone, implying that they know more than a dull consumer. This, of course, can be seen during the screening of promotional videos that have begun to be broadcast on domestic television channels. Also, in the mornings of the day—during the peak hours when housewives are in front of screens—a real auction of inexpensive jewelry is held live on the "ZARGARSHOP" program, with the impact occurring through a reduction in both the price and the quantity of goods available.

In the news, this method of influence changes, but its main features—the main idea of "we know more"—remain unchanged. This method is often used by program hosts during conversations about any critical situations or economic problems. The media are trying to convey to the audience that they do not understand the problem, that there is no reason to worry, and that all issues will be resolved.

4) Playing with feelings, not with reason. News and emotions always go hand in hand. And there's nothing good in that.

When we see demonstrators in a news program's photo or video with behind-the-scenes translations, it is difficult to determine what or whom the protesters are opposing. Or, for example, the same photograph shown from different angles can evoke opposite

emotions, ranging from hatred to fear. That's what the media is after. [2;55]

Furthermore, it is advisable to refer to the theory of "agenda-setting" in the article. According to this theory, media determines not what the audience should think, but what they should think about. The constant coverage of certain topics in television news forms an impression in viewers about their special significance. Thus, during the pandemic, the regular coverage of the coronavirus topic focused public attention specifically on this problem.

In the modern digital environment, the competition between television and the internet also requires separate analysis. While television was previously considered the primary source of information for the audience, today social networks and digital platforms are significantly changing society's media consumption habits. This is especially noticeable among the youth audience, who prefer to receive information in a concise, prompt, and interactive format. This, in turn, affects the content policy of traditional television channels.

When researching media influence, it is also important to consider the "framing" theory. According to it, the same event presented in different contexts and interpretations is perceived by the audience in different ways. For example, when covering military conflicts, the use of lexical units such as "defense," "aggression," "victim," "hero" determines the ideological orientation of the information message. As a result, the audience develops a certain attitude toward the events taking place.

It should also be noted that the manipulative capabilities of television are making the problem of media literacy more relevant. In the modern information society, fostering critical thinking skills in the audience is becoming one of the most critical tasks. The ability to analyze media products, compare information sources, and identify manipulative technologies is an important factor in ensuring the information security of society. A clear example is the coverage of military events between Russia and Ukraine, and recently, the military actions in Israel. Unfortunately, there is a tendency that not all media representatives—and not all types—observe one rule that has always been unshakable, starting from their student days: "A journalist must be objective." However, today we can observe a trend of sharp decline in objectivity – journalists clearly demonstrate commitment to one side or another, and they are not necessarily correspondents of the country where the hostilities are taking place. This, of course, has an impact on the minds of the audience and forms a clear

opinion of what is happening in the world, leaving them no opportunity to think for themselves and draw their own conclusions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be noted that indeed media, especially audiovisual media, have a great influence on shaping the opinion and interests of their audience, but in recent years, one can also observe a trend of declining audience numbers for both state and private television channels, which is explained by the development of the internet as mentioned above. This is especially noticeable for young audiences, who choose the content and information they need themselves.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that television continues to remain one of the most influential tools for shaping public opinion. However, in the context of digital transformation, its forms of influence, the nature of interaction with the audience, and content strategies are changing. In this regard, the comprehensive study of television from the perspectives of media psychology, media linguistics, political communication, and digital journalism represents an urgent scientific task.

REFERENCES

1. Корнилова Е.Е., Ревенко А.А. Трансформация предпочтений зрителей в условиях интенсивного развития интернет-технологий и политизации телевидения//Челябинский гуманитарий, 2020, № 2 (51). <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/transformatsiya-predpochteniy-zriteley-v-usloviyah-intensivnogo-razvitiya-internet-tehnologiy-i-politizatsii-televideniya>
2. Муха А., Федосеева Н. Новостной журналистский контент отечественных СМИ: проблемы манипулирования аудиторией/ Знак: проблемное поле медиаобразования, 2022, № 4 (46). <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/novostnoy-zhurnalistskiy-kontent-otechestvennyh-smi-problema-manipulirovaniya-mneniem-auditorii>
3. Строев Е.Н., Гончарова Л.Г, Тихонова Ю.Е. Влияние телевидения на сознание массовой аудитории// <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/vliyanie-televideniya-na-soznanie-massovoy-auditorii>
4. Walter Lippman. Public Opinion / Institute of the Public Opinion Foundation, 2004. – 384 p.
5. Сергей Кара-Мурза. Манипуляция сознанием. – Москва: Академический проект, 2015. – 528 с.
6. Почепцов Г.Г. Теория коммуникации. – Москва: Рефл-бук, Киев: Ваклер, 2001. – 656 с.

- 7.** Назаров М.М. Массовая коммуникация и общество: Введение в теорию и исследования. – Москва: Либроком, 2010. – 360 с.
- 8.** Засурский Я.Н. Система средств массовой информации России. – Москва: Аспект Пресс, 2011. – 259 с.
- 9.** Пронина Е.Е. Психология журналистского творчества. – Москва: Издательство МГУ, 2006. – 320 с.
- 10.** Шариков А.В. Телевидение и аудитория: социологический анализ. – Москва: Академический проект, 2012. – 287 с.