The Role of the Media in the Process of Political Socialization: A Study on University Students[*]

Ahmet Tarık Türkmenoğlu

Abstract: This study focuses on the role of the media in the process of political socialization. In this context, the relationship between the media and political socialization in the context of college students will be discussed. The study discusses the media in a way that includes both traditional and social media. In the study conducted with the quantitative method, the data were obtained using the questionnaire technique. In this regard, questionnaires were used on 675 college students who were selected as a sample through personal interviews. In the study, the scale developed by the researcher was used within the framework of the basic problem of the study. As a result of the reliability analysis conducted for the scale, the Cronbach's alpha value was determined to be 0.933. As a result of the factor analysis, the scale, which consists of 35 items, was summarized into 6 factors, and it was found that these factors explained 60.195% of the total variance. As a result of the other analyzes conducted in the study, a significant relationship was found between the media factor and both the following of political content and the political actions of the participants. Moreover, vis-à-vis individuals' politicalness, the most profound impact of the media was found to be one of reinforcement, rather than one of change, on the espoused political ideas.

Keywords: Media, society, politics, political socialization.

Öz: Bu çalışma siyasal toplumsallaşma sürecinde medyanın rolüne odaklanmaktadır. Bu kapsamda araştırmada medya ve siyasal toplumsallaşma arasındaki ilişkinin üniversite öğrencileri özelinde tartışılması amaçlanmıştır. Çalışmada medya, hem geleneksel hem de sosyal medyayı kapsayacak şekilde ele alınmaktadır. Nicel yöntemle hazırlanan çalışmada veriler anket tekniği kullanılarak elde edilmiş, bu kapsamda yüz yüze görüşme yoluyla örneklem olarak seçilen 675 üniversite öğrencisine anketler uygulanmıştır. Çalışmada araştırmanın temel problematiği çerçevesinde araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen ölçek uygulanmıştır. Ölçek için uygulanan güvenilirlik analizi sonucunda Cronbach's Alpha değeri 0,933 olarak tespit edilmiştir. 35 maddeden oluşan ölçek gerçekleştirilen faktör analizi sonucunda 6 faktör altında toplanmış ve söz konusu faktörlerin toplam varyansın %60,195'ini açıkladığı tespit edilmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında gerçekleştirilen diğer analizler sonucunda medya faktörü eli hem siyasal içerik takibi hem de katılımcıların gerçekleştirdikleri siyasal eylemler arasında anlamlı bir ilişki tespit edilmiştir. Diğer yandan bireyin siyasallığına ilişkin olarak, medyanın en çok sahip olunan siyasal düşüncelerin pekiştirilmesi yönünde bir etkiye sahip olduğu görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Medya, toplum, siyaset, siyasal toplumsallaşma.

@ Assist. Prof. Dr., Necmettin Erbakan University. aturkmenoglu@erbakan.edu.tr

ID https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6791-4163

Introduction

One of the most important aspects of human being who is a social being is her/his politicalness. In fact, politicalness is recognized only as a human characteristic. Among all living beings, only human beings have the characteristic of being both political and social existence. The effort to understand the relationship between man and society in the context of politicization of man and politicalness thereof and political socialization as a type of socialization (Akın, 2009, pp. 2-43) is defined as the process in which individuals emerge as a political being via learning political values, beliefs, and attitudes, while transmitting them from generation to generation (see Gimpel et al., 2003, p. 13; Kalaycıoğlu, 1984, p. 145). In this process, the effect of the political system on individuals' norms and values is realized through mediators such as family, school, circles of friends, and the media (Kotze, 1986, p. 418; Beck, 1977, p. 134). Although the media was not considered an influential factor in the political socialization process among these mediators until the 1970s, recent studies have shown that the media will be an essential element in political socialization (Tokgöz, 1978, p. 83). The rapid spread of the media, especially recently, which provides individuals with a range of images, thoughts, and evaluations to use in determining their own patterns of behavior (McQuail & Windahl, 2005, p. 125), the rapid increase in the rate of media use in modern societies, the fact that the media has become the most important means of spending time for many people, the fact that they spend most of their time following the media, that they can obtain all kinds of information through the media, and that in return the media can provide many products and information from politics to economics, from culture to art, in a very short time, has increased the importance of the media in this regard.

Looking at the media from the perspective of political socialization, it becomes conceivable that the media, which constitutes an indispensable component of democratic political systems, enables individuals to acquire a certain political orientation by performing functions such as providing the flow of political information, revealing political interest, and transforming it into political participation altogether. In this process, individuals who receive the political information provided by the media take a step towards the political socialization process by learning the political values, norms, and beliefs thanks to this information. Thus, the role of the media is to provide individuals with certain values, norms, and behaviors regarding politics and to ensure that they are learned and adopted eventually.

In this regard, many studies have been presented on the role of the media in the process of political socialization. First looking at the studies conducted in Turkey, it is seen that the number of studies that independently address this issue is quite

small. It could also be seen that some of the studies under consideration deal with the media among the general political socialization agents, some of them examine the topic in the social media, while some of them deal with the clusters outside the youth in terms of sample size, and some of them examine the topic only theoretically (see Akın, 2019; Metin, 2014; Özbey, 2014; Yolçu, 2017, Turam, 1994, Tokgöz, 1978). This study differs from other studies in that it investigates the role of media in the process of political socialization among university youth and applies the scale created by the researcher to measure the subject independently. In this study, designed with a quantitative design, a questionnaire was applied to a sample group consisting of college students, and the data obtained were analyzed using the SPSS statistical program. The study includes a literature review on political socialization, the findings obtained from the research results, and the evaluation of these findings.

Studies on Political Socialization and Media

Researchers dealing with political socialization have mentioned the effect of several factors at the social and cultural levels in this process and have evaluated the media as a crucial factor among them (Balcı, 2007, p. 171). At this point, Dawson and Prewitt (1969, p. 194) note that many messages, political events, and evaluations that are effective in the political adjustment process are conveyed through the media. They emphasize that with technological advances in mass media and the weakening of traditional social structures such as the extended family and local communities, the media is becoming increasingly important as a political orientation tool. Turam (1994, p. 36) is of the opinion that the media is an essential and effective political socialization tool that influences individuals throughout their lives stating that the influence of the media is very strong on that score, while in this regard, highlighting that its impact is more keenly felt than school, hence with considerable potential to guide individuals' political approaches and orientations. Balcı et al. (2013, p. 72) take this assessment even further, noting that educational institutions have left the socialization and education function of individuals in modern societies to the mass media. Again, Tokgöz (1978, p. 80) considers the media as a window that allows us to see and perceive our external political environment, emphasizing that information about the political world reaches individuals through the media as second-hand facts. The media is also seen as an extremely effective tool in determining individuals' expectations of life. The life profiles drawn in the media appear as ideal for the individual, and the motive that reveals the necessary effort to achieve this ideal is also created by the media - through advertisements, movies, series, etc. This situation is reflected in people's dress (Kalaycıoğlu, 1984, p. 179) and in various everyday behaviors as well as in political issues. For example, ideal

political personalities in TV series with political content may appear as ideal political human profiles for individuals, and the political attitudes of individuals may fit into these idealized human profiles.

According to Beck (1977, p. 135), who was the first to assess the impact of the media on political socialization based on its political content, the media has significant political content in many ways, from newspaper news to television and radio programs. Even entertainment programs have subtle political messages, and these messages can have a significant impact on political views.

Moreover, the media's role in political socialization can also be judged by how audiences receive these messages. From this point of view, Beck, referring to the findings of Klapper (1960), states that according to these findings, individuals respond very selectively to media messages, and therefore the media cannot have an independent effect on individuals' political views (1997, p. 135). Similarly, Chaffe et al. (1970, p. 647) note that in their analyzes of political socialization factors, they view the media as a secondary source at best. Accordingly, the media are often not viewed as a causal factor in the development of political perceptions and behavior, but rather their effect is to support processes initiated by primary mediators. However, Chaffe et al.'s (1970) own study of 1291 elementary and high school students concluded that young people's political views are largely media-based and that they believe the media are more effective than family, teachers, and friend groups. According to the researchers, this effect of the media is a result of the media's coverage of public events. On the other hand, young people who follow entertainment content may learn some things about political issues from that content, even if they do not show a particular interest, even if they do not follow public events. In another study by Chaffe et al. (1977), they pointed out that media use habits are determined by the family, at least from adolescence to adulthood. According to them, however, individuals' media exposure begins at a very early age, and the media are seen as a source for learning political tendencies.

In Mascola's 1972 study with 636 high school and college students, it was concluded that 71.7% of the participants preferred the media as a source of political information, and 55% considered the media to be the most influential political source. According to this study, as the age of the participants increases, the rate of preference for the media as a source of information also increases. One of the most important findings of the study is that the media has a greater influence on young people than their families. According to the study, the influence of the media increases, while the influence of the family and teachers decreases. Kotze (1986), who examined the issue as a cross-cultural study using Africa as an

example, conducted a study with 1200 students consisting of white, black, Indian, and other non-white participants. According to this study, both newspapers and television have a high proportion of political content. All groups in the sample are exposed to this content, which gives them all opportunities for political learning. However, the research found that television has a higher level of reliability than other mass media (in the case of the research in question, i.e., radio and newspaper). According to the researcher, this high reliability of television shows that it plays an important role in the political socialization process.

Garramone and Atkin (1986), in a study of a group of 280 college students, examined the media in relation to television news, radio news, newspaper news, and magazine content in the process of political socialization. The study concluded that radio and television broadcasts are more related to general political information than printed publications. According to the research findings, news media do not create an information gap between students with high political interest and students who are less interested in politics; on the contrary, they have a balancing function by further promoting the political orientation of the uninterested students.

Mackey's (2008) study of 426 participants concerned the political socialization process through television news political messages and treated the effects of television news formats on young adults' levels of political knowledge, political cynicism, and political affiliation. The researcher's findings showed that depending upon the television channel they watch, there are differentiations between the participants in terms of political knowledge. Accordingly, CNBC and CNN viewers were found to have more political knowledge than MSNBC and Fox News Channel viewers among the channels studied by the researcher.

In his study titled "News Use and Political Socialization among Young Jordanians," one of the recent studies on this topic, Martin (2011) examined the relationship between Jordanian youths' news use and their attitudes toward the Jordanian and U.S. governments. The study identified three main points about the political socialization process of young people in Jordan as a developing Arab country. First, the fact that the media in a developing country mainly covers events that related to other countries limits the socialization function of individuals toward the local regime. In this regard, according to Martin, the Jordanian media, which mainly report foreign news, mostly socialize citizens toward foreign individuals, groups, or administrations rather than domestic institutions in the political socialization process. The second situation is related to the importance of interpersonal communication in news content. In Arab societies where social and family ties are strong, how orally the news is communicated is important. The third point that emerged from

the research is that there is an important relationship between the consumption of news on satellite television and political attitudes. Martin attributes this to the fact that satellite television has focused too much on interpretation since the rapid rise of television channels such as Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya.

Moeller and Vreese (2013), who in another recent study sought to determine how and to what extent the media influences the political socialization of adolescent, argued in their large-scale and long-term study conducted across Europe that the influence of the media changes depending on the content to which individuals are exposed. According to the study, exposure to entertainment content in the media decreases trust in politics and reduces young people's political participation. On the contrary, news content increases political participation. However, according to their results, this is only the case for participants over the age of 21. When comparing the effects of the media on political participation among adults and adolescents, they also concluded that the effects are more pronounced among older individuals. According to the researchers, although adolescence appears to be the period when political learning begins, the effects of the media has become stronger over the course of life. This is because it is assumed that adolescence is the time when the effects of the media is strongest, since this is the time when one is most exposed to the media, but the situation is just the opposite. The researchers explain this situation in two ways. First, the effects of the media use only become apparent over time. According to them, this means that the total time spent with the media, rather than the frequency of media use, promotes political participation. The other explanation is that other socialization agents (parents, school, etc.) are less effective in adulthood, and the media has become a crucial resource in this process compared to other sources.

In his study entitled "The Effects of Media on Political Life", Turam (1994, p. 492) also addresses the points highlighted by Beck (1977, p. 135) and Chaffe (1970). According to the results of his research, Turam (1994) emphasized that what programs that exert the real impact upon the audience are, in truth, - rather than political programs and directing productions transmitted not least so as to mold public opinion - movies, commercials, series, and entertainment programs, along with, to some extent, news; in this regard, Turam particularly foregrounded entertainment programs. According to his lights, individuals are most affected by the programs watched for fun since. Because in this kind of watching, people follow these programs without thinking much, without devoting careful attention, thus absent a protective shield in the cognitive processes of the mind.

Akın's (2009) doctoral thesis on "Youth in the Process of Political Socialization [*Siyasal Toplumsallaşma Sürecinde Gençlik*]" is one of the most important studies

conducted in Turkey. In the study, participants were also asked questions about the media as a means of political socialization. In the findings obtained, in general, a meaningful relationship was found between political views and the preferred mass media to follow political issues. Thus, according to the research, there is a significant difference between participants' political identities and their newspaper preferences. Akın (2009, p. 149) ascribes this fact to "The Uses and Gratifications Theory". According to this approach, "based on their political, cultural, or religious standpoints, people follow mass media that they deem close to their own views". Accordingly, Akın interpreted the aforementioned point as follows: By way of their conscious choices of sources to access information or news, students, in a sense, feed them back into and thereby reinforce the political identity they have developed in the course of their political socialization.

In another doctoral level study in Turkey, Metin (2014) studied 1195 college students entitling it "The Effect of Social Media on Political Socialization: The Example of College Students [Sosyal Medyanın Siyasal Toplumsallaşmaya Etkisi: Üniversite Öğrencileri Örneği]." In this study, it was concluded that social media has a limited impact on the political socialization process. The study also concluded that most of the individuals who participated in the study did not adopt certain political attitudes through social media or that their political attitudes had not changed. In a similar vein with the findings of Akın's 2009 study, it was found that individuals follow political content that is consistent with their previous political attitudes. The effect of this situation is the reinforcement of existing political thoughts and attitudes.

Özbey (2014), who conducted another study in Turkey and examined the political socialization process in the Ottoman Empire using the Children's Guide magazine published between 1897-1900 during the reign of Abdulhamid the Second, found that the magazines he examined contained messages that overlapped with the ideology of the Abdulhamid II era, thus he found that periodicals were effective in the political socialization of children.

Yolçu's (2017) study on reliance on political socialization tools and their impact on political participation levels is one of the recent studies in Turkey. In this study, according to Yolçu, "it is assumed that in line with the trust people have in the society they live in and in the means of political socialization, the level of political participation is low or high; that different socio-demographic characteristics cause different levels of political interest and participation." According to the results of the research conducted in two different neighborhoods of Kocaeli province, it was found that the new communication technologies are used more intensively than the traditional media in Yahya Kaptan district, which has a higher income and education

level. It was found that Fatih district, the other neighborhood, uses traditional media more intensively. The reliability level of news was lower in Yahya Kaptan district compared to the other districts. One of the most important findings of the research is that the participants still regard the traditional media more reliable than the social media. On the other hand, the fact that participants do not use social media very effectively as a tool for political participation is among the important findings of the research.

Apart from these works, of course, there are other theoretical and empirical studies on the subject. For example, "The Role and Importance of Mass Communication Tools in Political Socialization [Siyasal Toplumsallaşmada Kitle Haberleşme Araçlarının Rolü ve Önemi]" by Tokgöz (1978), Political Socialization as a Creator of Political Culture and the Functions of Media in the Process of Political Socialization [Siyasal Kültür Yaratıcısı Olarak Siyasal Toplumsallaşma ve Siyasal Toplumsallaşma Sürecinde Medyanın İşlevleri] by Balcı (2007), and Türköz's (2016) "The Role of Mass Media and Social Media in the Process of Political Socialization [Siyasal Toplumsallaşma Sürecinde Kitle İletişim Araçları ve Sosyal Medyanın Rolü]" are studies conducted in Turkey on this topic. Furthermore, as for the studies conducted abroad, "Television News and Political Socialization" by Atkin and Gantz (1978), "The News Media in Children's Political Socialization" by Conway et al. (1981), and "The Political Socialization Effects of The Daily Show and The Colbert Report in High School Aged Adolescents" by Epstein (2007) are other studies that can be mentioned in addition to these studies.

Methodology

This study used a quantitative method to determine the role of the media in the process of political socialization. The data of the study was collected through a questionnaire and analyzed using the statistical program SPSS.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The media, which is one of the most important actors in the democratic system, helps individuals remain in a particular political environment by performing functions such as providing information about political issues, increasing political interest, and ensuring political participation. Individuals form an image of the political system, learn the values, norms, and beliefs that belong to that system, determine their own position in the political system, and thus enter the political socialization process thanks to the political information they have received through the media. The role of the media here is to transmit certain beliefs and values and contribute

to their adoption. This study aims to show whether the media is effective in the process of political socialization and if so, how this effect comes about with the results of field research.

On the other hand, especially in the last century, the rapid development of mass media, the rapid increase in the number of people using these tools, the fact that people have started to spend more time in front of these tools, the fact that they can easily get all kinds of information through these tools, and in turn, the ability of mass media to deliver all kinds of political-social and cultural products and information to large masses in a very short time, has increased the importance of media in this regard. This present research is of particular importance, of added value in (i) discussing the impact of the media on college youth in the process of political socialization, (ii) showing the relationship between the two, and (iii) making a modest contribution to the literature on this topic.

Research Sample

The research was conducted with the students of Selçuk University and Necmettin Erbakan University. Only undergraduate students were considered in the selection of the sample, and care was taken to ensure a balanced distribution of the selected sample in terms of demographic characteristics. The fact that the sample was selected from college students was based on the following three-fold premise: (a) First, college students can more consciously absorb political messages from the media. (b) Second, college students are more self-willed in their media preferences during this period compared to elementary and high school students. (c) Last but not least, college students are usually separated from their families, and other relevant actors may, therefore, gain more more importance in their political socialization processes. In the study, which used the random sampling technique, the questionnaires were distributed through face-to-face interviews with 675 people between February and June 2017. 613 questionnaires were analyzed after removing the missing or incorrect questionnaires.

Characteristics of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this research consists of a total of five parts. The first part of the questionnaire consists of likert-type questions about media usage habits, which are discussed in terms of both frequency of use and content followed. The second part consists of an 11-question scale to measure the role of media on individuals' political attitudes and activities, and a 39-item scale to determine the factors of the political socialization process in general. The fourth part of the questionnaire consists of likert-type questions to determine the individual's

politicalness and questions to measure the possible impact of the media on a theoretical basis. The last part contains questions to determine the demographic characteristics of the individuals. Sources from the literature were used for some of the expressions and demographic questions in the scale created as part of the research in order to determine political socialization factors (see Akın, 2009; Mascola, 1972; Wekkin & Whistler, 2007/2008).

Before the questionnaire was put into general practice, it was pretested on 75 participants. As a result of the pretest, the questions that did not work in the questionnaire were re-evaluated and the questionnaire was revised and given its final form. At the same time, as a corollary of this pretest, the scale items prepared to determine the political socialization factor were subjected to reliability analysis and it was decided to apply the scale after the results showed a high reliability level Cronbach's alpha: 0.933. In addition, the questionnaire was filled out face to face and the participants were given the necessary information and explanations before they started answering the questions.

Research questions

1. What is the level of interest of the participants in the topical political issues?

2. What is the political content in the media that participants are most interested in?

3. What kind of political impact does the media have on participants?

4. What factors play a role in the process of political socialization?

5. What is the position of the media among the factors involved in the political socialization process?

Research Findings

Results on Political Attitudes and Behaviors

Table 1.

Participants' Political Behaviors

	N	Min.	Max.	x̄	Sd
I participate in political discussions or conversations within the family	613	1	5	3,59	1,20
I follow Turkey's political agenda through the media	608	1	5	3,56	1,17
I follow the world's political agenda through the media	607	1	5	3,54	1,19
I participate in political discussions or conversations among my circle of friends	611	1	5	3,41	1,17
I turn to the relevant government agencies to find solutions to my environment or personal problems	611	1	5	2,60	1,33
I participate in the activities of non-governmental organizations (voluntary aid organizations, etc.)	602	1	5	2,41	1,22
I participate in signature gathering campaigns for government demands	609	1	5	2,29	1,31
I have political discussions with my teachers at school and talk about political issues with them	607	1	5	2,28	1,23
I transfer the political agenda in the media to my daily life	604	1	5	2,20	1,12
I attend political rallies and meetings	606	1	5	2,15	1,24
I plan my life according to political developments.	609	1	5	2,14	1,12
I share the political agenda in the media on social media	605	1	5	2,02	1,13
I participate in the activities of political parties	608	1	5	1,94	1,14
I write comments on the news I read on news sites on the Internet	608	1	5	1,76	1,04
I participate in protest actions	610	1	5	1,61	,98

Considering the data derived from the scale created as part of the research so as for the determination of political socialization factors, it was observed that the participants showed stronger inclinations toward the political actions performed individually. The exceptions are "participation in political discussions and conversations within the family" ($\bar{x}$ 3.59) and participation in political discussions and conversations in the group of friends ($\bar{x}$ 3.41), which are considered non-individual political actions with a high average value. Apart from these, the statements "I follow Turkey's political agenda through the media" ($\bar{x}$ 3.56) and "I follow the world's political agenda through the media" ($\bar{x}$ 3.54) are among the highest average values of the scale. The lowest mean scores have the statements "I participate in protest actions" with a mean of 1.61, "I write comments on the news I read on news sites on the Internet" with a mean of 1.76, and "I participate in the activities of political parties" with a mean of 1.94. From these results, it appears that young people studying at college do not prefer to participate in collective or visible political actions. One of the most important indicators of this is the fact that students there prefer to participate in political discussions and conversations, which could be attributed to fact that they perceive the atmosphere in their family or friend circles as friendly, while their participation rate in these discussions and conversations with their teachers at school is lower ($\bar{x}$ 2.28). These findings are consistent with Akman Özdemir's (2018) findings that young people are more likely not to share their political views with state officials.

Results on Media Usage Habits

Table 2.

Percentage of Participants Following Mass Media

	N	Min.	Max.	$\bar{x}$	Sd
Social media	609	1	5	4,31	1,173
Internet	595	1	5	4,09	1,142
Television	607	1	5	2,37	1,274
Newspaper	600	1	5	2,16	1,301
Radio	607	1	5	1,75	1,170
Magazine	580	1	5	1,70	,996

Most important group of questions in studies about the media undoubtedly consists of questions about participants' habits of using mass media. For this reason, the study asked participants questions about their use of television, newspapers, radio, magazines, the Internet, and social media tools. As can be seen from the data obtained, young people studying at college use social media ($\bar{x}$ 4.31) and the Internet

(x̄ 4.09) the most. These two media are followed by television with an average score of 2.37. Newspaper is another tool that is close to television with an average score of 2.16. Radio and magazine are the two tools with the lowest average. In this sense, what can be seen is that young people who study at college mainly use social media and the Internet as mass media. Although television comes after these two media, it can be said that young people use this tool to a very low extent, considering its prevalence in society. These results support the view that the new media have taken away the power from the traditional media[1]. New media is relatively more at the center of discussions than traditional media, in terms of both usage advantage and social impact. Especially in the aftermath of recent movements such as the Arab Spring and the Gezi events, new media have taken a more central position in media discussions (see Wolfsfeld et al. 2013; Smidi & Shahin, 2017; Bruns et al., 2013; Kırık, 2012).

Table 3.

Types of Political Content Followed

	N	Min.	Max.	x̄	Sd
Political news	608	1	5	2,98	1,37
Political posts on social media	609	1	5	2,58	1,32
Political talk shows	612	1	5	2,42	1,23
Political documentaries	608	1	5	2,33	1,27
Political columns in newspapers and on the Internet	609	1	5	2,32	1,27
Political movies	606	1	5	2,31	1,29
Political themed TV series	610	1	5	2,15	1,24
Political websites (e.g. party websites, etc.)	611	1	5	2,00	1,28
Political ads	610	1	5	1,85	1,08

As part of the research, in addition to the content types that are generally followed in the mass media, another question group was formed on political contents, which represents a more specific area of the topic. It was found that among the content within this question group, political news is the most followed with an average of

---

1   This change in media use habits can also be seen in the research of Toruk (2008), İnce and Koçak (2017). This change in media use habits is also evident in the research of Toruk (2008), İnce and Koçak (2017). While television was the most used mass medium in Toruk's study of college students' media use habits in 2008, İnce and Koçak's study of college students in 2017 found that the Internet was the most used mass medium and television had fallen to second place.

2.98. Political posts on social media come a close second with an average of 2.58. Political discussion shows are another type of political content that is followed the most ($\bar{x}$ 2.42). Political documentaries ($\bar{x}$ 2.33), political columns ($\bar{x}$ 2.32), and political movies ($\bar{x}$ 2.31) are also considered other types of content with close average scores, while political ads have the lowest average score among these types of content ($\bar{x}$ 1.85). The fact that commercials have such a low value can be attributed to the fact that they are mostly aired only during political campaign periods. Evaluating the data in the table in general, it can be said that college youth have an average level of interest in political content. Besides, these research results also reflect that the media occupies a prominent place in the consumption of political information given that the participants mostly follow political news. Even though media contents, such as entertaining ones, contain political messages, news provides much of the political information (Garramone & Atkin, 1986, p. 77).

Table 4.

Participants' Preferences for the Media Following

	N	Min.	Max.	$\bar{x}$	Sd
I follow media that are close to my own opinion	610	1	5	3,37	1,28
I follow media that are not close to my own opinion	610	1	5	3,33	1,13
I follow the same media as my family	610	1	5	2,63	1,19
I follow the media that my friends follow	611	1	5	2,24	1,052
I follow the media that my teachers follow	613	1	5	2,20	1,15

The questions asked about which media the participants prefer when consuming media were asked on the axis of their own thoughts or the thoughts of their close environment. In this context, it can be seen that young people at college mostly prefer the media that are close to their own views ($\bar{x}$ 3.37). This result is in line with the findings of Akın (2009, p. 149) in his research on this topic. As Akın stated, when people follow mass media, they tend to prefer media that are close to their own political, cultural, or religious references. As Akın further stated, it is possible to explain this situation with the Uses and Gratifications Theory within media theories. However, when examining the research results, it can be seen that the proportion of participants who follow media that are not close to their own views ($\bar{x}$ 3.33) is very close to the proportion of those who follow media that are close to their own views. This situation shows that university students not only follow media that are close to their own views, but also consider media that are not close to their own views. Accordingly, it can be noted that youth in university do not consume media coverage in a one-sided manner.

Table 5.

How Participants Read Media Messages

	N	Min.	Max.	x̄	Sd
I discuss messages from the media that are not close to my opinion.	611	1	5	3,46	1,19
I discuss messages from the media that are close to my opinion.	611	1	5	3,43	1,17
I read messages from the media that are not close to my opinion oppositely.	610	1	5	2,90	1,25
I read messages from the media that are close to my opinion oppositely.	607	1	5	2,81	1,17
I accept messages from the media that are close to my opinion as it is.	610	1	5	2,03	1,02
I accept messages from the media that are not close to my opinion as it is.	610	1	5	1,87	,99

In formulating the questions in the table, the present paper drew upon one of the most prominent representatives of the British school of cultural studies, Stuart Hall's (2006) classifications of reading regarding individuals' media consumption and reception into three categories: negotiated code, oppositional code, and dominant/hegemonic code. According to the results, young people at college mostly read media messages in the "negotiated code" position. In this regard, the options "I discuss messages from the media that are not close to my opinion" (x̄ 3.46) and "I discuss messages from the media that are close to my opinion" (x̄ 3.43) appear to have remarkably close averages. According to this result, young people in universities do not adopt the "dominant code" position in their reading of not only the media that is close to their own opinion but also the media that is not close to their own opinion. Additionally, looking at the values of the oppositional position reading in the data provided in the above table (x̄ 2.81 for the media close to their own opinion, x̄ 2.90 for the media not close to their own opinion), one could notice that it is higher than the dominant position reading, and therefore the the dominant position reading, which means to perceive the messages in the media as presented and fictionalized, is not the valid case for the college youth. The findings on these reading positions, which are the focus of the 'reception analysis', are consistent with some studies on this topic, while differing from others. For example, Kula Demir's (2007) study on the reception of the series Valley of the Wolves - Ambush found that young people read television messages mostly in a "dominant code".

Tablo 6.

Participants' Attitudes Toward Media Messages

How do you behave when the information in the media does not match your previous information?	N	Percent	Valid Percent	Total Percent
I reject information from the media	35	5,7	5,9	5,9
I reject my previous knowledge	13	2,1	2,2	8,0
I question my previous knowledge	148	24,1	24,7	32,8
I question information from the media	402	65,6	67,2	100,0
Total	598	97,6	100,0	
Unanswered	15	2,4		
Total	613	613	100,0	

While individuals receive media messages, they undoubtedly evaluate them along with their previous information. The occurrence of situations where media messages and prior information do not match is a natural result of this process. To measure participants' attitudes toward media messages in such a situation, they were asked the question, "What do you do when the information in the media does not match your previous information?" Looking at the participants' responses to this question, one finds that 67.2% chose the option "I question the information from the media" and 24.7% chose the option "I question the previous information." The percentage of those who say that they reject the information from the media is 5.9%, and the percentage of those who say that they reject their previous information is 2.2%. According to this result, it can be said that participants trust their prior knowledge more. However, one of the most important conclusions that can be drawn from the data in the table is that messages from the media is not directly rejected. Although young people studying at college seem to trust their prior knowledge more, the fact that they questioned messages from the media shows that they are not indifferent to these messages. This situation can be interpreted to mean that the messages from the media are viewed by young people as messages that can be evaluated. This supports the view that the media play a functional role in the acquisition of political information (Garramone & Atkin, 1986; Conway et al. 1981).

Table 7.

Participants' Level of Interest in Political Issues on the Agenda

	N	Min.	Max.	x̄	Sd
Interest in Political Issues on the Agenda	542	1	10	6,29	2,45

In the scale designed to determine college students' interest in issues on the political agenda with a more general approach, participants were asked to rate their interest in political issues and developments between 1 (very uninterested) and 10 (very interested). As can be seen in Table 7, the average of responses to this question was 6.29. According to this result, in political issues and developments, young people studying at college are more interested than average. This result is also in line with the findings of Bayram's (2017) study on young people's attitudes toward issues on the political agenda. In the aforementioned study, Bayram (2017) found that young people have a high interest in issues on political agenda. It is clear that this result also gives an indication of the political interest level of the participants. So, according to the table, it can be arguably said that the participants' interest level in politics is higher than the average.

Table 8.

Difference in the Level of Interest in Political Issues on the Agenda by Gender

	Gender	N	x̄	Sd	t	Sig. (2 tailed)
Interest in Political Issues on the Agenda	Male	291	6,52	2,52	2,333	,020
	Female	251	6,03	2,33		

There is a significant difference between genders in college students' interest level on current issues (t = 2.333; sd = 540; p = .020 < 0.05). Looking at the mean scores of males and females for the level of interest in political issues, we find that males have a mean score of 6.52 and females have a mean score of 6.03. According to these data, it can be said that men have more interest in political issues on the agenda than women. These findings are in line with the results of the survey conducted by Akın (2009, p. 158) among the students of Selçuk University. Akın evaluates this emerging situation as a consequence of the continuity of a male-dominated political culture. From this point of view, it could be analyzed be that the political culture widespread in society is learned and adopted in the same way by college youth in the process of political socialization.

Table 9.

Difference in political content following by gender

	Gender	N	x̄	Sd	t	Sig. (2 tailed)
Political content following	Male	330	2,38	,966	1,329	,184
	Female	282	2,27	,957		

The results of the t-test for the relationship between following political content and gender showed that there was no significant difference in the following of political content by gender ($t = 1.329$; $sd = 610$; $p > 0.05$).

Table 10.

Habits of Social Media Use

	N	Min.	Max.	x̄	Sd
To follow last-minute developments	609	1	5	3,50	1,26
To follow posts of people whose opinions are important to me	612	1	5	3,46	1,25
To view other people's profiles and photos	612	1	5	3,13	1,21
To get information about a topic from others	613	1	5	3,00	1,20
To follow posts from political parties or people	609	1	5	2,62	1,43
To share/post YouTube and similar links	612	1	5	2,53	1,33
To share news links to current events	612	1	5	2,19	1,24
To report location and status	611	1	5	2,09	1,28
To stream or watch live broadcasts on Instagram	611	1	5	1,73	1,04

It can be seen that the option "follow last-minute developments" has the highest average of 3.50 when asked about participants' social media activities. This is followed by the option "follow the posts of people whose opinions are important to me" with a notably close average of 3.46. "View other people's profiles and photos" is another activity with a high average (x̄ 3.13). Apart from these options, the results in the table show that social media is used to get information from others about a topic (x̄ 3.00). It is one of the most important findings of the study that political parties and people are followed through social media (x̄ 2.62). According to this, university students use social media chiefly "to follow last-minute developments" and " to follow the posts of people whose opinions are important." These results are consistent with the findings of studies conducted on this topic. In these studies, following news and developments ranks first among the reasons for using social media (Çömlekçi & Başol, 2014; Becan, 2018). On the other hand, current researches show that opinion leaders actively participate in

social media platforms (Dubois et al., 2020). According to this result, it can be said that messages in traditional media can be reevaluated through social media. The people whose opinions are given importance here show themselves as opinion leaders. Therefore, according to the "two-step flow theory", social media is an area that can more easily bring opinion leaders[2], who are intermediary elements, together with their audiences, and, also, according to this theory, the role of opinion leaders in increasing or decreasing the impact of messages in traditional media becomes functional again through social media.

Findings on the Role of the Media in the Politicization of the Individual.

Table 11.

The Impact of the Media on Political Thought and Behavior

	N	Min.	Max.	x̄	Sd
The media reinforce my political opinions.	610	1	5	2,85	1,26
The media encourage me to follow political parties.	609	1	5	2,47	1,25
The media encourage me to participate in the activities of non-governmental organizations.	608	1	5	2,39	1,25
The media influence political opinions in my family.	613	1	5	2,36	1,31
The media encourage me to vote.	604	1	5	2,34	1,27
The media change my political opinions.	611	1	5	2,25	1,12
The media encourage me to attend party meetings and rallies.	607	1	5	2,14	1,18
The media encourages me to participate in political activities.	610	1	5	2,04	1,11
The media is effective in determining which party I will vote for.	608	1	5	1,96	1,14
The media encourage me to become a member of political parties.	605	1	5	1,89	1,05
I make my political decisions by looking at political information in the media.	610	1	5	1,81	1,02

Looking at the table presenting figures in respect of the questions - prepared by taking into consideration some parameters related to politicalness - in connection to

---

2   According to this theory, the information from the media does not reach the target people directly. Here, the information from the media first reaches the people whom we can call opinion leaders, and then it is passed on to other people through these people (Tekinalp & Uzun, 2013, p. 93).

the role of the media on that score, one could witness that the judgment "The media reinforce my political opinions" has the highest average of 2.85. The judgment "The media encourage me to follow political parties" is the second judgment with the highest average of 2.47. Close to these averages are the judgment "The media encourage me to participate in the activities of non-governmental organizations" with an average of 2.39, the judgment "The media influence political opinions in my family" with an average of 2.36, and the judgment "The media encourage me to vote" with an average of 2.34. One of the other important judgments, "the media change my political opinions" has a lower average of 2.25. "I make my political decisions by looking at the political information in the media" ($\bar{x}$ 1.81), "the media encourage me to become a member of political parties" ($\bar{x}$ 1.89), "the media is effective in determining which party I will vote for" (1.96) are the three judgments with the lowest average.

When the data in the table are evaluated, it could be said that the judgments about the media are generally at an average level. Individuals are of the view that the media is most effective in reinforcing their political thoughts. This effect of the media is higher than the effect thereof on changing political thoughts. The results are in line with the research findings of Akın (2009) and Metin (2016). Akın (2009) concluded in his research that people follow political content that is consistent with their previous political attitudes. The effect of this situation is to reinforce existing political thoughts and attitudes. As regards the findings of Metin's (2016) research particularly concerned with social media, limited is the impact of social media on socialization. However, when the existing effects are examined, these effects appear as reinforcement of previously acquired attitudes.

Table 12.

The Difference in the Level of Influence of the Media on Reinforcement of Political Thoughts by Gender

	Gender	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd	t	Sig. (2 tailed)
Media reinforces my political thoughts	Male	329	2,81	1,319	-,722	,334
	Female	281	2,89	1,192		

In the t-test results conducted to determine if the effect of media on reinforcing political thoughts showed significant differentiation by gender, it was found that males had a mean score of 2.81, and females had a mean score of 2.89, and there was no difference by gender in the effect of media on reinforcing political thoughts (t= - .722 sd = 606.060; p > 0.05).

Table 13.

The Difference in the Level of Media's Influence on the Change of Political Thoughts by Gender

	Gender	N	x̄	Sd	T	Sig. (2 tailed)
The media changes my political thoughts	Male	330	2,21	1,107	1,038	,300
	Female	281	2,30	1,137		

The results of the t-test, which was designed to determine whether the influence of the media on changing political views differs significantly by gender, show that the average is 2.21 for males and 2.30 for females. Looking at the results of the analysis in the table, one could find that the effect of the media on the change of political thought is not significantly different according to gender (t= 1.038 sd = 609; p > 0.05).

Table 14.

The Difference in the Level of the Media's Influence on the Reinforcement of Political Thoughts According to Political Identity

Political Identity	N	x̄	Sd	F	Sig.	Significant Difference (Tukey HSD)
Conservative	112	3,04	1,233			
Nationalist	157	2,91	1,192	2,314	,025	
Democrat	40	2,92	1,047			
Islamist	70	2,78	1,284			Socialist
Socialist	28	3,67	1,306			Islamist, Ataturkist
Liberal	15	2,86	1,245			
Ataturkist	84	2,70	1,268			Socialist
Social democrat	26	2,69	1,319			

As a result of the ANOVA analysis between political identity and the degree of influence of the media on the reinforcement of political thought, it was found that there is a significant differentiation between these variables. According to the data in the table, the Socialists have the highest average with x̄=3.67, whereas the Ataturkists have the lowest average with x̄=2.70, as well as the Islamists with x̄=2.78. According to these results, the Socialists differed significantly from the Islamists and Ataturkists in terms of the reinforcing effect of the media (F=2.314; p= .025). This result could be considered together with the participants' media-following

habits. It can be said that those who define themselves as Islamists, Ataturkists, and Socialists have a more rigid attitude toward their worldview than other types of political identity. It could be arguably stated that these strict attitudes are significant determinants of media-preferences of such individuals, which happens to be one that is close to their own views.

Table 15.

The Difference in the Degree of Influence of the Media on the Change of Political Thoughts by Political Identity

	Sum of squares	Sd	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	3,897	7	,557	,438	,879
In groups	666,674	524	1,272		
Total	670,571	531			

According to the results of ANOVA analysis between political identity and the degree of media influence on the change of political thoughts, there was no significant difference between these variables (F=.438; p=879). Accordingly, it could be seen that the degree of media influence on the change of political thoughts does not change according to the characteristics of political identities and no political identity stands out in this regard.

Table 16.

Difference in the Following of Political Content by Political Identity

Political Identity	N	x̄	Sd	F	Sig.	Significant Difference (Tukey HSD)
Conservative	112	2,49	1,012	2,841	,006	
Nationalist	158	2,40	0,968			Socialist
Democrat	40	2,16	0,736			Socialist
Islamist	70	2,19	0,895			Socialist
Socialist	28	3,01	0,924			Nationalist, Democrat, Islamist, Ataturkist
Liberal	15	2,20	1,010			
Ataturkist	84	2,31	0,967			
Social democrat	26	2,38	0,925			

The result of ANOVA analysis between the variable "Political Content" and the variable "Political Identity" showed that there is a significant difference between these variables. According to the data in the table, the highest average values are found for socialists ($\bar{x}$ 3.01) and conservatives ($\bar{x}$ 2.49). The lowest average values are found for Democrats ($\bar{x}$2.16) and Islamists ($\bar{x}$2.19). Thus, Socialists differ significantly from Nationalists, Democrats, Islamists and Ataturkists in the relationship between political identity and the political content following.

Results on the Factors Involved in the Process of Political Socialization

The scale used to determine the factors involved in the process of political socialization was pretested on a group of 75 people. As a result of that pretest, a reliability analysis was conducted for the items, and the Cronbach's alpha value was found to be high at 0.941. As a result of factor analysis, "political shares, discussions, and comments in social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)", "political TV series and movies", "political views and thoughts of my close environment", "political speech and opinion in the classroom" were removed from the scale, and the scale was subjected to reliability analysis again. As a result of the analysis, the Cronbach's Alpha value was again at a high level of 0.933. The following table presents descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) for each of the items in the prepared scale.

Table 17.

Factors Influencing the Political Socialization Process

	Component						$\bar{x}$	Sd
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Political opinions and thoughts of my friends	,767						2,25	1,02
Political opinions that my group of friends is close to.	,763						2,12	1,02
Political discussions and comments among my group of friends	,754						2,34	1,10
Political views and thoughts of my teachers	,675						2,43	1,06
Activities that are done at my school	,624						2,12	1,07
Events and activities we do with my group of friends	,575						2,17	1,09

Educational policies of the administrators in the institutions where I studied	,505		2,09	1,10
Political ideologies that are prevalent in society	,491		2,15	1,06
Textbooks and materials that I use in the institutions where I study	,451		2,30	1,20
Newspaper news		,764	2,44	1,15
Columns, commentaries and analyzes in the newspaper		,749	2,37	1,18
Political news, debates, and other programs on the radio		,686	2,06	1,11
Political content on the Internet (political information, news, commentary, analysis, etc.)		,644	2,39	1,12
Political information, commentary, and articles in magazines.		,644	2,29	1,12
Political talk shows on television		,567	2,45	1,17
News bulletins on television		,465	2,57	1,11
My mother's political views and thoughts		,822	2,56	1,24
My father's political views and thoughts		,797	2,61	1,28
Political views and thoughts of my family		,707	3,07	1,11
Political views and thoughts of my brothers		,673	2,08	1,11
Political discussions and conversations within the family		,605	2,72	1,15
Political party I feel close to		,754	3,22	1,27
The leader of the political party I feel close to		,693	2,88	1,31
The activities and policies of the political party I feel close to		,665	2,77	1,25

Political ideologies to which I feel close	,644	3,53	1,05
Individuals involved in the leadership of the political party to which I feel close	,631	2,68	1,27
Non-governmental organizations to which I feel close	,760	2,37	1,16
Activities of non-governmental organizations	,701	2,63	1,12
Educational activities conducted by non-governmental organizations	,678	2,12	1,01
Political thoughts and views of leaders of non-governmental organizations	,503	2,22	1,11
Activities conducted by groups and institutions with a particular ideology	,502	2,23	1,11
My religious beliefs and values	,752	3,72	1,15
The fact that I live in a Muslim country	,740	3,40	1,32
Religious beliefs and values in the environment in which I grew up	,698	3,26	1,20
Political thoughts and attitudes of religious opinion leaders	,554	2,30	1,24
Cronbach's Alpha	,933		
Explained Variance (%)	60,195		
KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy)	,925		
Barlett's Test of Sphericity	X^2 = 8920,265 Sd= 595 P= ,000		

As one could see from the table, all the items prepared for the scale have an average value higher than 2. However, the highest average values among the items are "religious beliefs and values I hold", "political ideologies I feel close to", "religious beliefs and values in the environment I grew up in", "living in a Muslim country", "political party I feel close to", "political views and thoughts of my family". The fact that the expressions in the scale are above 2 indicates that the mentioned items are more or less distant from the ineffective or non-effective options. In other words, almost all expressions created for the elements that influence political socialization have a low or increasing effect, and there are no ineffective elements in them.[3]

After examining the descriptive statistics of the items in the scale, the items in question were subjected to factor analysis. The result of the factor analysis was a KMO value of 925 and the scale items were grouped into 6 factors. It was found that these factors explained 60.195% of the total variance.

According to this result, as per their compatibility with the elements constituting each factor, the first factor was named as "school and friends", the second factor as "the media", the third as "family", the fourth as "political persons and party", the fifth as "non-governmental organizations", and finally the sixth factor as "religion".[4] As can be seen from the table, the items of the scale load on the corresponding factors. However, the item "Political ideologies prevalent in society" loads on the first factor "School and friends". This situation could be ascribed to individuals perceiving any given environment within their ideological structure. Consequently, in view of these said environments creating the world around the individual, it could be interpreted, individuals are led to belief that this is the general situation in society.

---

3   The options were arranged as "1. Not at all effective 2. Not effective 3. Slightly effective 4. Effective 5. Very effective".

4   Varimax rotation table was taken into consideration in the evaluation of factor groups. The eigenvalues (Eigenvalues) of the items subjected to factor analysis were 1 and the criterion of 0.45 was taken as the minimum loading size.

Table 18.

The Relationship between the Following of Political Content and the Media Factor

		Political Content Following	Media
Political Content Following	Pearson Correlation	1	,508[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	612	612
Media	Pearson Correlation	,508[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	612	613

[**]. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In the research, the overall scale score was calculated from the average scores of the prepared questions on the frequency of college students' following of political content. Considering the results of the correlation analysis between the media factor and this overall score of political content following and the media factor based on this overall result, it was found that there is a positive, moderate, and significant relationship between the two (r=508, p < 0.01). In this sense, it could be said that the importance of the media factor in the process of political socialization increases with the rise of political content following.

Table 19.

The Relationship Between Political Activism and the Media Factor

		Media
Media	Pearson Correlation	1
	N	613
I participate in political discussions or conversations within the family	Pearson Correlation	,225
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	613
I participate in political discussions or conversations in my friend group	Pearson Correlation	,235
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	611

I have political discussions with my teachers at school and talk to them about political issues.	Pearson Correlation	,333
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	607
I attend political rallies and meetings	Pearson Correlation	,308
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	606
I participate in the activities of political parties	Pearson Correlation	,314
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	608
I participate in the activities of non-governmental organizations (voluntary aid organizations, etc.)	Pearson Correlation	,322
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	602
I follow Turkey's political agenda through the media	Pearson Correlation	,315
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	608
I follow the world's political agenda through the media.	Pearson Correlation	,302
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	607
I plan my life according to political developments.	Pearson Correlation	,383
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	609
I carry the political agenda in the media into my daily life.	Pearson Correlation	,443
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	604
I share the political agenda in the media on social media	Pearson Correlation	,374
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	605
I write comments under the news I read on internet news sites.	Pearson Correlation	,332
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	608

I take part in protest actions.	Pearson Correlation	,303
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	610
I participate in signature gathering campaigns for state causes.	Pearson Correlation	,300
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	609
I turn to the appropriate government agencies to find solutions to my environmental or personal problems.	Pearson Correlation	,340
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000
	N	611

Undoubtedly, the political activities of individuals are the result of political socialization processes. For this reason, the effectiveness of the media factor in the process of political socialization should also be examined in terms of the relations of this factor to political actions. Looking at the results of the correlation analysis conducted in this regard, one finds that there are positive, weak, and significant relationships at the level of $p < 0.01$ between all actions expressing the individual's politicalness and the media factor. Examining the data in the table, the highest correlations are between the media factor and "I carry the political agenda in the media into my daily life" (r =.433), "I make my life plans according to political developments" (r=.383), "I carry the political agenda in the media into my daily life" (r =.383), "I share the political agenda in the media on social media" (r=.374). The fact that these relationships are positive means that when one increases, the other also increases. When the effectiveness of the media factor increases, the rate of people taking political action also increases. The results obtained in this present research that both traditional media and new media increase interest in political issues and political participation support the findings of the previous researches (Atkin & Gantz, 1978; Karakaya & Glazier, 2019).

Table 20.

The Relationship Between Interest in Political Issues on the Agenda and the Media Factor

		Interest in current political issues	Media
Interest in current political issues	Pearson Correlation	1	,411[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	542	542
Media	Pearson Correlation	,411[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	542	613
[**]. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Looking at the results of the correlation analysis between the media factor and the degree of interest of the participants in political issues on the agenda, one finds that there is a positive, significant, and moderate relationship between these two (r = 411, p < 0.01). In this sense, it could be said that as the level of interest in the political issues on the agenda increases, the effect of the media factor in the process of political socialization also increases.

Table 21.

Difference in the Media Factor by Gender

	Gender	N	x̄	Sd	t	Sig. (2 tailed)
Media	Male	331	2,36	,836	- ,308	,758
	Female	282	2,38	,832		

The effect of the media factor on the acquisition of political knowledge, beliefs and values in the political socialization process shows no significant difference between genders (t = -.308; sd = 611; p > 0.05). Looking at the mean scores for this factor, one finds that males have a mean score of 2.36 and females have a mean score of 2.38, and the difference between these mean scores shows almost no difference. In this sense, it could be stated that the media factor has an effect regardless of the respective roles of women and men in society. In other words, although there is a differentiation between women and men in terms of political participation in the research (Akman Özdemir, 2018), this difference disappears when evaluating the media.

Moreoever, the result of ANOVA analysis between the media factor and "political identity", "place of residence", "type of graduated high school ", "father's educational level", "mother's educational level" did not show any significant relationship between the mentioned variables. (p > 0.05). In the ANOVA analysis for multiple categorical variables, only a significant difference was found between "family political identity" and the media factor.

Table 22.

Difference in the Media Factor by the Political Identity of Family

Political Identity	N	x̄	Sd	F	Sig.	Significant Difference (Tukey HSD)
Conservative	186	2,44	,856			Islamist
Nationalist	148	2,44	,802	2,439	,018	Islamist
Democrat	27	2,32	,907			
Islamist	102	2,10	,753			Conservative, Islamist
Socialist	13	2,80	,748			
Liberal	7	2,46	1,022			
Ataturkist	61	2,41	,786			
Social Democrat	16	2,30	,990			

As shown in the table, there is a significant difference between the political identity family and the media factor (p < 0.05). From the data in the table, one could notice that there is a difference between the media factor and the 'political identity of family' variable among the Islamists, the Nationalists, and the Conservatives. According to the obtained data, the averages of the Conservatives and the Nationalists as the highest averages are the same, (x̄ 2.44). The average of the Islamists, which is the lowest average, is x̄ 2.10.

Conclusion and Evaluation

Social phenomena and events have been studied throughout history in the context and lights of a multitude of factors. It is obvious that the underlying motives behind all these researches have been affected and shaped by the regnant conditions of the time. The prevailing social, economic, political, technical, etc. conditions of the respective time have caused the development of social events and phenomena, and

thereby bringing about, within the framework of these developments, a societal change occurring first from the individual level. In such a case, when examining today's social structure, the media, which undoubtedly has   a profound influence on social structure, is a subject of particular importance. Today, the study of media is no longer limited to communication studies, but extends to many fields, from political science to sociology, from fine arts to religious studies. The reason for this is that the media, as a social actor, has implications for numerous issues in society. In this regard, as the general acceptance shows, the media is an important social actor with a considerable impact on society, not least in relation to the political aspect thereof. Starting from such an underlying assumption, this present study focuses on the impact of the media on the process of political socialization.

A look at the research results shows that participants prefer new media tools over traditional media in their media use habits. While this finding differs from some previous studies, it is consistent with the findings of more recent studies. For example, in the study conducted by Toruk in 2008 on the media use habits of university youth, television ranked first among the media tools used. In the study conducted by İnce and Koçak in 2017, the situation changes in favor of new media. While television ranks second in the aforementioned study, the Internet was identified as the most frequently used mass communication tool. This situation could be explained by the rapid c spread of the Internet in social ground.

Studies show that political orientations could be of impact on the nature of the evaluations of the media (Michael & Breaux, 2021). It was also assumed that these evaluations are reflected in the media following, and as part of the present research, measurements were carried out in this regard. The findings obtained in this context show that participants predominantly follow media that are close to their own views. These findings are consistent with the findings of Akın (2009). According to this, people tend to prefer media that are close to their views because of their political, cultural, or religious references. It is observed that this situation could be explained not only within the framework of the "Uses and Gratifications Theory" (Akın, 2009) but also within the framework of the "Cognitive Dissonance Theory". According to the latter theory, people do not want to contradict their own behavior and seek information to legitimize their behavior. Therefore, media preferences are shaped as per this content (Alpay, 2019; McIntyre, 2019).

As for the data on the reading 'positions' of media messages, it was found that it is media messages coming both from those close to their own views and from those outside their own views that are mostly read from the 'negotiated' position by the participants. This type of reading also found that participants read both the

media that are close to their own views and the media that are outside their own views as oppositional, and their mean scores are remarkably close to each other. This obtained data shows that young people in college are not in the 'dominant' reading position against media messages. Looking at the studies on this topic, one finds that the emerged results are not consistent with the results obtained in this present research. In these studies conducted on the axis of reception analysis, it was found that in general, young people approach and read the messages from the 'dominant' reading position. (see Demir, 2007; Şeker & Şimşek 2012). Besides, what it should be noted and considered is that for these conflicting results, many a factor may be responsible (see İlhan, 2010).

In the questions prepared to measure the effect of the media on politicalness in terms of thought, attitude and behavior, it was found that the judgment "media reinforce my political thoughts" has the highest value. The judgments "encourage me to follow political parties" and "encourage me to participate in the activities of non-governmental organizations" are the judgments with the highest average value after the first judgment. What follows them is the judgment that "the media change my political thoughts". Thus, like the previous studies (Akın, 2009; Metin, 2014), it could be noted that the impact of the on the political thoughts of the individual is one of reinforcement, rather than one of change. This is one of the most striking findings of the study. The definition of political socialization as learning about the political and its internalization (reinforcement) (Marshall 1999, p. 760) shows that the media plays a crucial role at this point. On the other hand, the literature (Roskin et al., 2013, p. 156; Renshon 1975, p. 32) considers the family factor as the most important source of political socialization. For this reason, it is assumed that the media has an impact on reinforcing the processes initiated by the primary socialization agents of the socialization process, such as the family and school (Chaffe et al. 1970). However, Türkoğlu (2010) states that the views that the media only have a reinforcing effect are wrong because they refer to the limited effect of the media. According to these views, family, church, mosque, school and other socialization agents are more effective. According to Türkoğlu, in terms of attitude change, strengthening the existing attitude (emotion-thought-behavior potential), for example, effects such as perceiving emotions as knowledge about reality and increasing the power of an inactive attitude to take action are not innocent at all (2010, p. 12).

The responses that the media has an influence on the political thoughts of the participants' families are important findings to support the views of Türkoğlu (2010). This is because these results show that the media could be indirectly evaluated among the primary sources. Because in this case, the media shapes the political

thoughts of the family and the family passes on the thoughts shaped by the media to the child. Also, the fact that the media encourages individuals to follow political parties, which are one of the main sources of prevailing political values, and to join nongovernmental organizations shows that the media results in the espousal of some political orientations. In fact, political parties already produce some political values or disseminate existing values as part of their institutional activities. Therefore, individuals who follow political parties with the support of the media will have some exposure to the values they propagate. It could be thought that an analogous situation will arise with nongovernmental organizations; so much so that the political aspects of these organizations are dominant in Turkey. In such organizations, many political issues come to the fore, and political activities may even be carried out. Looking at it even at an absolutely minimal level, one could say that the environment of these organizations mostly consists of political institutions and organizations, and this provides individuals with an environment where they form an idea of politics and the political. Therefore, it can be said that individuals who turn to such institutions also tend to the political. All this can be evaluated in such a way that the media has a major influence on the development of political attitudes. This situation was also evident in the study conducted by Chaffe et al. (1970) on 1291 elementary and high school students. According to this research, it was concluded that young people's political views are mainly based on the media and that the media are more effective in the process of politicization than family, teachers and groups of friends.

Looking at the data on the political status of participants obtained as a result of the research, one finds that college youth are highly involved in political discussions and conversations with their families and friend groups. On the other hand, hardly preferred by the young people are participation in protests, writing comments under the news-on-news sites on the Internet, participation in political party activities, and participation in political discussions and conversations with their teachers at school. These findings obtained in the study are similar to those of Akman Özdemir (2018). According to the findings of Akman Özdemir (2018), young people do not tend to share their political views with state officials and in the media. According to these findings, young people also never engage in activities such as volunteering for political parties, wearing a badge symbolizing a political stream, or participating in political actions. All these results show that young people at college tend to give a wide berth to collective or public political actions.

When individuals are exposed to media messages, these messages fall into the pool of knowledge that individuals have previously acquired. In such a case, it is not always possible to match previous information with information from the media. In fact, these

messages often contradict old information. In such a case, it has been asked how the young people at the college would react, and important results have been obtained with the questions developed for this purpose. In this case, while young people at the college tend to question the media messages, they are less likely to question their prior knowledge. However, the important finding here is that they do not directly reject the media messages. Although they rely on their prior knowledge, the fact that college youth question these messages shows that they are not indifferent to media messages. In fact, the media has a high political content (Kotze, 1986) and thereby being considered an important source of political information (Mascola, 1972). This situation makes it clear why college youth cannot be indifferent to media messages.

Moreover, social media occupies a prominent place in contemporary media studies. In this direction, the question often in focus has been do social media wield an agenda-building power like traditional media or absent this power, does it only produce content to and in tandem with the prevailing, already existing agenda? As mentioned earlier, social media is also a medium in which the news of traditional media is disseminated. Judging from the data obtained in the research, it appears that social media is used chiefly to follow the last-minute developments. On the other hand, the percentage of those who say "I follow the posts of people whose opinions are important to me" is the second highest average among the actions taken on social media during the research. These findings obtained in the research support the views of Türköz (2016, p. 109) on this topic. According to Türköz, social media is a platform where agenda-setting events are intensively discussed, not least during election cycles. Here, individuals declare their views on current issues and follow the posts of people whose opinions matter to them. People whose opinions are given importance here can be considered opinion leaders. In this respect, social media is an environment where opinion leaders can more easily meet their audience. By re-circulating traditional media messages in the social media environment, these individuals can increase or decrease the impact of these messages. This is also shown by the research findings of Dobies et al. (2020) on this topic. According to Dobies et al. (2020), opinion leaders have the potential to create trust in the flow of information on social media, and on the contrary, they have the potential to increase the problematic flow of information. When social media users do not trust the information on this platform, opinion leaders emerge as a powerful actor. Given all these assessments, it can be said that young people are returning to traditional media content on social media platforms, and opinion leaders are also involved here. For this reason, it would be more appropriate to consider social media together with traditional media in the process of political socialization.

A scale was developed to determine the importance of the media in the process of political socialization, which is the main problem of the study. As a result of the reliability analysis of the scale, the Cronbach's alpha value was again at a high level of 0.933. The factor analysis resulted in a KMO value of ,925, and the items of the scale were grouped into 6 factors. The media was identified as the second factor among these factors, and it was found that the media is one of the main actors in the process of political socialization.

As regards the tests conducted for the media factor, a significant relationship was found between the media factor and political content following, as well as between participants' political action and the media factor. These results support research findings that media increases political participation and interest (Atkin & Gantz, 1978; Karakaya & Glazier, 2019; Moeller & Vreese, 2013). Again, there is a significant difference between family political identity and the media factor. As a result of the one-way analysis of variance between the family political identity and the media factor, those who define the family political identity as Islamist differ from those who define the family political identity as nationalist and conservative. According to the results, the average of those with an Islamist family is lower than the average of those with a nationalist and conservative family. This can be interpreted to mean that young people from Islamist families tend to have stronger reference points outside of the media. Apart from these, no significant correlation was found between the media factor and the variables "political identity," "place of residence," "type of high school graduated", "father's level of education" and "mother's level of education".

From a very general point of view, all in all, in today's world, the media holds a special and prominent place in political information. Individuals receive daily political information through the media, wherefore this puts the media ahead of other environmental factors. While there is a social segment that escapes this situation, this represents an exceedingly small number in the overall population. For large groups outside this group, the media is considered the only and mandatory source of political information. This is because it is almost impossible for these segments to reach the political decision-making centers and the politicians in these centers, and thus to obtain political information from primary sources. Therefore, most of the society is equipped with secondary political information conveyed through the media and gains political orientations based on this information. On the other hand, the complex structure of the contemporary social structure also extends to politics. The complexity of political events and developments taking place in the world exceeds the ability of individuals to understand them. Therefore, individuals are becoming increasingly dependent on the media, both for access to this information and for resolving the complex structure of this information. Individuals can be informed

about all these developments in relation to the amount presented by the media and within the framework they draw. This dependence of large segments of society on the media raises the question of the impact of the media on the political aspect of society. Clearly, individuals who provide political information through the media are naturally exposed to some of the media's direction and influence at this point. In this regard, the media represents the most important facet of politics. If the media seeks to normalize the power or political relations of subordinate groups, then socialized individuals will evaluate politics in this normalization process without going beyond the general power framework. In other words, the media socializes the individual in a cultural environment where power reproduces itself by producing views from above.

Therefore, this study, which aims to determine the role of the media on young people in the process of political socialization, is one of the few studies on this topic in our country. However, it is clear that the study has some limitations. For this reason, there is a need for further new and novel studies on this topic. For example, together with young people at university, as is the case in this present work, inter alia, young people who do not study in college, children, and adults could also be included in the sample space of another study. In addition, the experience of meeting and using media technologies is different in each society. Considering these differences, a comparative study with different countries would be useful at this point. The fact is that in most societies where the media are widely used, they influence society in many ways. Foremost among them are politics and politicalness of individuals.

References | Kaynakça

Akın, M. H. (2009). Siyasal toplumsallaşma sürecinde gençlik: Teorik ve uygulamalı bir çalışma (Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi). Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Sosyoloji Ana Bilim Dalı.

Akman Özdemir, P. (2018). Gençlik döneminde siyasal toplumsallaşma: Toplumsal katılım ile kitle iletişim araçları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi. *Gençlik Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 6 (14), 171-196.

Alpay, Y. (2019). *Yalanın siyaseti*. Destek Yayınları.

Atkin C. K. & Gantz, W. (1978). Television news and political socialization. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 2, 183-198.

Balcı, Ş. (2007). Bir siyasal kültür yaratıcısı olarak siyasal toplumsallaşma ve siyasal toplumsallaşma sürecinde medyanın işlevleri. Bilal Arık & Mustafa Şeker (Ed.). *İletişim ve ötesi* içinde. Tablet Yayınları, 139-173.

Balcı, Ş., Tarhan, A. & Bal, E. (2013). *Medya ve siyasal katılım*. Literatürk Acedemia.

Bayram, Y. (2017). Approaching on the issues of political agenda and identification of media usage habits of the youths: The case of the July 15 coup attempt. *OPUS International Journal of Society Researches*, 7 (13), 889-911. https://doi.org/10.26466/opus.359703

Becan, C. (2018). Sosyal medya bağımlılığının haber takibi motivasyonları üzerine etkisi. *Erciyes İletişim Dergisi*, 5 (3), 238-256. https://doi.org/10.17680/erciyesakademia.350085

Beck, A. P. (1977). The role of agents in political socialization. Stanley Allen Renshon (Ed.). In *Handbook of political socialization.* The Free Press, 115-141.

Bruns, A., Highfield, T., & Burgess, J. (2013). The Arab Spring and social media audiences: English and Arabic Twitter users and their networks. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57(7), 871–898. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764213479374

Chaffee, S. H., Jackson-Beeck, M., Durall, J. & Wilson, D. (1977). Mass communication in political socialization. Stanley Allen Renshon (Ed.). In *Handbook of political socialization*. The Free Press, 223-258.

Chaffee, S. H., Ward, L. S. & Tıpton, L. P. (1970). Mass communication and political socialization. *Journalism Quarterly,* 47 (4), 647-666.

Conway, M. M., Wyckoff, M. L, Eleanor F. & Ahern D. (1981). The news media in children's political socialization. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 45, 164-168.

Çömlekçi, M. F. & Başol, O. (2019). Gençlerin sosyal medya kullanım amaçları ile sosyal medya bağımlılığı ilişkisinin incelenmesi. *Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 17 (4), 173-188. https://doi.org/10.18026/cbayarsos.525652

Dawson, R. E. & Prewitt K. (1969). *Political socialization*. Little, Brown & Company.

Demir-Kula, N. (2007). Elazığ'da Kurtlar Vadisi dizisinin alımlanması. *Afyon Kocatepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 9 (2), 251-266.

Dubois, E., Minaeian, S., Paquet-Labelle, A. & Beaudry, S. (2020). Who to trust on social media: How opinion leaders and seekers avoid disinformation and echo chambers. *Social Media + Society*. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120913993

Epstein, E. S. (2007). The political socialization effects of the daily show and the colbert report in high school aged adolescents (A Thesis Submitted In Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements For The Degree of Master of Arts In Communication), Washington State University.

Garramone, G. M. & Atkin, C. K. (1986). Mass communication and political socialization specifying the effects, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 50, 76-86.

Gimpel, J. G., Lay, J. Celeste, S. & Jason E. (2003). *Cultivating democracy: Civic environments and political socialization in America*. Brookings Institution Press.

Hall, S. (2006). Encoding/Decoding. Meenakshi Gigi Durham & Douglas M. Kellner (Eds.), *Media and cultural studies*. Blackwell Publishing, 163-173.

İlhan, V. (2010). Medya ve gençlik: 15-24 yaş arası gençlerin televizyon dizilerini izleme pratiklerindeki dönüşüm, (Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi). Erciyes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.

İnce, M. & Koçak, M. C. (2017). Üniversite öğrencilerinin sosyal medya kullanım alışkanlıkları: Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi örneği. *Karabük Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 7 (2), 736-749 .

Kalaycıoğlu, E. (1984). *Çağdaş siyasal bilim: Teori, olgu ve süreçler*. Osman Aykaç Matbaası.

Karakaya, S. & Glazier, R. A. (2019) Media, information, and political participation: The importance of online news sources in the absence of a free press, *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, 16 (3), 290-306. https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2019.1645784

Kırık, A. M. (2014). Arap Baharı bağlamında sosyal medya-birey etkileşimi ve toplumsal dönüşüm. *21. Yüzyılda Eğitim ve Toplum Eğitim Bilimleri ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 1 (3), 87-98.

Kotze, H. J. (1986). Mass media and political socialisation: A South African case study. *International Political Science Association*, 7(4), 415-434.

McIntyre, L. (2019) *Post-truth*. MIT Press.

Mackey, J. E. (2008). Political socialization: The political messages in televised news and the effect on young adults (Master of Arts Communication Studies). University of Kansas.

Marshall, G. (1999). *Sosyoloji Sözlüğü.* Osman Akınhay, Derya Kömürcü (Çev.). Bilim ve Sanat Yayınları.

Martin, J. D. (2011). News use and political socialization among young Jordanians. *The International Communication Gazette*, 73(8), 706–731.

Mascola, R. L. (1972). Political socialization of young adults mass media use, political attitudes and political efficacy (Master's Thesis), The Graduate Faculty of Texas Tech University. Mcquail, D., Windahl, S. (2005). *Kitle iletişim modelleri.* Konca Yumlu (Çev.). İmge Yayınları.

Metin, O. (2014). Sosyal medyanın siyasal toplumsallaşmaya etkisi: Üniversite öğrencileri örneği (Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi). Afyon Kocatepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.

Michael, R. B. & Breaux, B. O. (2021). The relationship between political affiliation and beliefs about sources of "fake news": Principles and implications. *Cognitive Research, 6*(1) https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/s41235-021-00278-1

Moeller Judith & Vreese C. (2013). The differential role of the media as an agent of political socialization in Europe, *European Journal of Communication*, 28(3), 309–325.

Niemi, R. G. & Sobieszek, B. I. (1977) Political socialization. *Annual Review of Sociology* (3. ed), 209-233.

Noelle-Neumann, E. (1998). *Kamuoyu: Suskunluk sarmalının keşfi*. Murat Özkök (Çev.). Dost Kitabevi Yayınları.

Özbey, C. (2014). Political socialization of children during the Hamidian Era: The periodical, Çocuklara Rehber (Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi). Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.

Renshon, A. S. (1975). The role of personality development in political socialization. David C. Schwartz, Sandra Kenyon Schwartz (Eds.), In *New directions in political socialization*, The Free Press.

Roskin, M. G., Cord, R. L, Medeiros, J. A. & Jones, W. S. (2013). *Siyaset bilimi: Bir giriş*, Adres Yayınları.

Smidi, A. & Shahin, S. (2017). Social media and social mobilisation in the Middle East: A survey of research on the Arab Spring. *India Quarterly*, 73(2), 196–209. https://doi.org/10.1177/0974928417700798

Şeker, T. & Şimşek, F. (2013). Kodlama-kodaçımı bağlamında Muhteşem Yüzyıl dizisinin lise öğrencileri üzerindeki etkilerine yönelik alımlama analizi. *Selçuk İletişim*, 7 (2), 111-120.

Tekinalp, Ş. & Uzun, R. (2013). İletişim *araştırmaları ve kuramları.* Derin Yayınları.

Telli, A. (2012). Mısır Devrimi'nde sosyal medyanın rolü, *Bilge Strateji*, 4(7), 65-91.

Tokgöz, O. (1978). Siyasal toplumsallaşmada kitle haberleşme araçlarının rolü ve önemi, *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, XXXIII,79-92.

Toruk, İ. (2008). Üniversite gençliğinin medya kullanma alışkanlıkları üzerine bir analiz. *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, (19), 475-488.

Turam, E. (1994). *Medyanın siyasi hayata etkileri*. İrfan Yayımcılık.

Türkoğlu, N. (2010). Toplumsal dönüşümler ve medyada izleyici katılımı (Rapor No: 110K004 (2515-COST-SOBAG). TÜBİTAK.

Türköz, Ş. (2016). Siyasal toplumsallaşma sürecinde kitle iletişim araçları ve sosyal medyanın rolü. *Afyon Kocatepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 18(1), 97-114.

Wolfsfeld, G., Segev, E., & Sheafer, T. (2013). Social media and the Arab Spring: Politics comes first. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 18(2), 115–137. https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161212471716

Yolçu, N. (2017). Siyasal katılım düzeyi ve siyasal toplumsallaşma araçlarına yönelik güven ölçümü: Kocaeli ili üzerine ampirik bir çalışma. *Erciyes İletişim Dergisi*, 5 (1), 40-58.