

Mass media plays a crucial role

[Media](#)



Media influence or media effects are terms used in media studies, psychology, communication theory and sociology to refer to the theories about the ways the mass media affect how their audiences think and behave. Mass media plays a crucial role in forming and reflecting public opinion, connecting the world to individuals and reproducing the self-image of society. Critiques in the early-to-mid twentieth century suggested that media weaken or delimit the individual's capacity to act autonomously — sometimes being ascribed an influence reminiscent of the telescreens of the dystopian novel *1984*.

Mid 20th-century empirical studies, however, suggested more moderate effects of the media. Current scholarship presents a more complex interaction between the media and society, with the media on generating information from a network of relations and influences and with the individual interpretations and evaluations of the information provided, as well as generating information outside of media contexts. The consequences and ramifications of the mass media relate not merely to the way newsworthy events are perceived (and which are reported at all), but also to a multitude of cultural influences that operate through the media.

The media has a strong social and cultural impact upon society. This is predicated upon their ability to reach a wide audience with a strong and influential message. Marshall McLuhan uses the phrase “the medium is the message” as a means of explaining how the distribution of a message can often be more important than content of the message itself. [1] It is through the persuasiveness of media such as television, radio and print media that messages reach their target audiences. These have been influential media

as they have been largely responsible for structuring people's daily lives and routines. 2] Television broadcasting has a large amount of control over the content society watches and the times in which it is viewed. This is a distinguishing feature of traditional media which New media have challenged by altering the participation habits of the public. The internet creates a space for more diverse political opinions, social and cultural viewpoints and a heightened level of consumer participation. There have been suggestions that allowing consumers to produce information through the internet will lead to an overload of information.