

## Contents

1. Political Support and Mass Media: Relevance and Objectives of this Study	17
2. The Impact of Mass Media on Political Attitudes	23
2.1. Political Media Information as a Predictor of Political Attitudes	24
2.1.1. The Impact of Routine Use of Political Media Information	24
2.1.2. The Impact of Certain Aspects of News Coverage	27
2.1.3. The Impact of Media Strategy Frames	30
2.1.4. Summary and Conclusion	32
2.2. Mechanisms by which Media Information has an Impact on Political Attitudes	34
2.2.1. Trough Effects on Social Reality Perceptions	35
2.2.2. Trough Effects on Issue Accessibility or Perceived Issue Importance	36
2.2.3. Trough Effects on Emotions	37
2.2.4. Trough Effects on Political Knowledge	37
2.2.5. Summary and Conclusion	38
2.3. Conditionality of the Media's Impact on Political Attitudes	39
2.3.1. The Role of Media Trust and Media Credibility	39
2.3.2. The Role of Political Sophistication	40
2.3.3. The Role of Intensity of General Media Use	42
2.3.4. The Role of Information Processing Strategies	43
2.3.5. The Role of Individual Predispositions	43
2.3.6. Summary and Conclusion	45
2.4. Summary and Suggestions for the Present Study	47
3. A Preferences-Perceptions Model of Media Effects on Political Support	50
3.1. The Preferences-Perceptions Relationship as Predictor of Political Support	52
3.2. The Media's Impact on the Preferences-Perceptions Relationship	56
3.2.1. The Media's Impact on the Perception of Political Processes	57
3.2.2. The Media's Impact on Preferences Regarding Political Processes	60
3.2.3. The Media's Presentations of Political Processes	61
3.3. Outline of the Preferences-Perceptions Model of Media Effects	63
3.4. This Study's Empirical Program to Test the Model	71

4. Media Presentations of Political Decision-Making Processes	74
4.1. Research Question	74
4.2. Method	75
4.2.1. Content Analysis Sample	75
4.2.2. Codebook and Reliability	77
4.2.3. Procedure	79
4.3. Results	80
4.3.1. Characteristics of the Media's Presentations of Political Processes	80
4.3.2. Identifying Presentation Patterns	85
4.4. Summary and Discussion	86
5. Measuring Citizens' Process Preferences and Perceptions	88
5.1. Hypotheses	88
5.2. Method	90
5.2.1. Variables and Operationalization	91
5.2.2. Participants and Procedures	93
5.2.3. Data Analysis	95
5.3. Results	95
5.3.1. Process Preferences: Model Development and Validation	96
5.3.2. Measuring Process Perceptions	101
5.3.3. Discriminant Validity of Preferences and Perceptions Scales	104
5.3.4. Test of Cultural Invariance of Process Preferences Scale	105
5.3.5. Process Preferences: Test of Invariance Regarding Objects of Assessment	107
5.3.6. Construct Validity of the Scales	112
5.4. Summary and Discussion	118
6. Short-Term Effects of Media on Process Perceptions and Political Support	121
6.1. Research Questions and Hypotheses	121
6.2. Method	123
6.2.1. Experimental Design and Participants	123
6.2.2. Procedures	124
6.2.3. Stimulus Material	131
6.2.4. Variables and Operationalization	134
6.2.5. Data Analysis	136
6.3. Results	136
6.3.1. Treatment and Manipulation Checks	136
6.3.2. Impact of Stimulus Articles on Process Perceptions	138
6.3.3. Effect of Stimulus Articles on Political Support via Effects on Accessibility	143

6.4. Summary and Discussion	144
7. Long-Term Effects of Media on Process Perceptions and Political Support	148
7.1. Research Questions and Hypotheses	148
7.2. Method	151
7.2.1. Variables and Operationalization	151
7.2.2. Participants and Procedure	154
7.2.3. Data Analysis	156
7.3. Results	159
7.3.1. The Impact of Television Use on Process Perceptions and Political Support	160
7.3.2. The Impact of Television Use on Process Preferences and Political Support	163
7.3.3. The Role of Process Preferences as Moderator of Effects on Political Support	167
7.3.4. Chronical Accessibility as Moderator	171
7.3.5. The Joint Impact of Media Use and Situational Exposure	172
7.4. Summary and Discussion	174
8. Conclusions	178
9. References	187
10. Appendix	203
10.1. Overview of Items Included in the Literature Review	203
10.2. Overview of Items Used in the Study	212
10.3. Measurement Models of Latent Factors Used in the Analyses	216