Writing Assignment #2

Wonsehlea Teah

July 3 2019

**Part 1**

Article: News Media Impact on the Ingredients of Presidential Evaluations

The study aims to explore the cognitive mediators that influence news media priming, whether covering an issue on the media increases its perceived national importance, and whether media trust, and political knowledge influence priming[[1]](#footnote-1). The researchers rely on the theory of media priming which suggests that when media attention activates people’s memory towards an issue, they tend to automatically and unconsciously make political judgments based upon it. For this purpose, the study first tests measures associated with presidential performance, presidential approval against media trust, political knowledge and accessibility. Other variables such as party identification, agenda setting, and judgment about issues of national importance are further tested against media stories related to immigration, drugs, and pollution to measure the moderating effects of knowledge and trust on priming.

The study involved participants, tested for political knowledge, media trust, and party identification, being exposed to 5 different nonpolitical stories and being randomly assigned to view media reports on immigration and drugs, and another set of participants to crime and pollution in two different experiments. They were asked to fill a questionnaire assessing presidential performance and their overall knowledge of the issue at hand. The findings indicated that media trust, alongside plays a significant role in influencing the effects of media, but priming may not be a result of media manipulation.

The research contributes to existing knowledge on media coverage by emphasizing the importance of newsworthiness for news selection in order to protect citizen interests and help them make sound political judgment. However, the study relied on young adults’ political opinions based on recently acquired knowledge about an issue, instead of testing for effects after a prolonged exposure to the same issue.

Article: Explaining Presidential Approval

The study aims to assess presidential approval studies in terms of their nuance towards highlighting factors that contribute to individual evaluations[[2]](#footnote-2). It rests on the theory that presidential evaluations are significantly influenced by issues that are salient to the people. The researchers hypothesize that public salience may vary over time which can fluctuate presidential performance evaluations and, in turn, impact presidential approval.

The study involved a cross-sectional regression analysis of 23 public opinion polls, and a content analysis of media content to determine public salience. A time-series based regression analysis was performed to observe the relationship between salience and public opinion, and then on presidential approval evaluations. The findings confirm the hypothesis that public salience regarding issues varies over time and can directly impacts the public’s assessment of the presidents performance as well as their overall approval.

The study contributes by highlighting the various factors which complicate presidential approval measurement and suggests adding salience as a critical factor in developing public evaluation models. However, the study does not take into account the possibility that different issues may vary in salience to different groups of people at a time.

**Part 2**

The study by Edwards III, Mitchell and Welch (1995) takes into account the role of salience in mediating public opinion and thus highlighting the complexity involved in understanding the public’s approval of a president[[3]](#footnote-3). Moreover, issues can vary in salience over time and thus require a time-series and cross-sectional study to analyze public opinion changes over time. In this respect, Edwards III, Mitchell and Welch (1995) point out a critical limitation in other research that study presidential approval. On the other hand, Miller and Krosnick (2000), test media priming resulting from media manipulation of public minds. In this regard, they attempt to identify important mediators that potentially effect presidential approval alongside their inter-relationships[[4]](#footnote-4). The methods involved responders exposed to various media issues and filling out a questionnaire that measured their evaluation of a president’s performance while testing them for party identification, media trust, and political knowledge. However, the study’s results are limited in terms of scope as only tests the immediate impact of one particular dose of media issue coverage, without testing for attitudes that can develop over time from exposure. Moreover, people tend to be more thoughtful in experiments and be consciously aware of priming tendencies. Conversely, the Edwards III, Mitchell and Welch (1995) take into consideration the presence of public salience with regards to a particular issue and any variation over time that can affect that salience, and thus presents a more accurate picture of the effects of media in influencing presidential approval.

**Part 3**

In analyzing whether working from home can affect the productivity of employees, I would design a large cohort study comprising of over 500 participants, divided into a control group and experimental group. I would also take into account the availability of resources, internet access, and time with the organization, while assessing their performance in terms of working hours, call rate, attrition and other factors over a prolonged period of time. Furthermore, I would measure the organizations to assess potential cost savings against employee productivity.

# Bibliography

Edwards III, George C., William Mitchell, and Reed Welch. 1995. "Explaining Presidential Approval: The Significance of Issue Salience." *American Journal of Political Science* 39 (1): 108-134. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2111760?origin=JSTOR-pdf.

Miller, Joanne M., and Jon A. Krosnick. 2000. "News Media Impact on the Ingredients of Presidential Evaluations: Politically Knowledgeable." *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (2): 301-315. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2669312?origin=JSTOR-pdf.

1. Edwards III, George C., William Mitchell, and Reed Welch. 1995. "Explaining Presidential Approval: The Significance of Issue Salience." *American Journal of Political Science* 39 (1): 108-134. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2111760?origin=JSTOR-pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Miller, Joanne M., and Jon A. Krosnick. 2000. "News Media Impact on the Ingredients of Presidential Evaluations: Politically Knowledgeable." *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (2): 301-315. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2669312?origin=JSTOR-pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Edwards III, George C., William Mitchell, and Reed Welch. 1995. "Explaining Presidential Approval: The Significance of Issue Salience." *American Journal of Political Science* 39 (1): 108-134. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2111760?origin=JSTOR-pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Miller, Joanne M., and Jon A. Krosnick. 2000. "News Media Impact on the Ingredients of Presidential Evaluations: Politically Knowledgeable." *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (2): 301-315. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2669312?origin=JSTOR-pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)