

Abstract

This thesis investigates the formation of threat perception in the context of the war in Ukraine. The theoretical framework is based on agenda-setting theory, which posits a strong influence of media in shaping public opinion, in this case, threat perception. The research employs mixed methods, specifically a combination of media analysis, secondary analysis of a dataset, and analysis of qualitative interviews. The findings indicate that at the beginning of the war in Ukraine, people's concerns responded indirectly to the media agenda. The frequency of following general social events in the media did not correlate with the level of threat people perceived. However, the level of threat was positively associated with the proportion of news about the war in Ukraine in the media, with interest and discussion acting as mediating variables. Additionally, the results suggest that the level of perceived threat is also related to the feeling of being threatened by the war, anxiety, and the perception of the situation in Ukraine as the most important social issue. The role of sociodemographic characteristics was found to be insignificant.

Keywords

Agenda setting, media effect, war in Ukraine, threat perception, mixed design