

Article

The Mediatization of Public Administration: A Scoping Review

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Abstract

This article presents an exploratory study of the concept of political mediatization. Using the scoping review method, we survey academic writings on this subfield of political communication. This research aims to highlight the dominant topics covered in the literature on the mediatization of politics, identify gaps in research, and provide a better understanding of how studies on mediatization align within the broader literature on political communication. With this systematic approach, we aim to better conceptualize the mediatization of public administration by identifying consensus on the concept in the existing literature. The scoping review process indicates that: (1) Studies analyzing mediatization focus on political actors and institutions, and the junction between political mediatization and public administration is rarely studied; (2) Approaches used to study the mediatization of politics are mostly qualitative; (3) The mediatization of public administration has only been analyzed quantitatively in European contexts, and; (4) Indicators used to measure the degree of mediatization in public administration differ widely between studies.

Keywords: mediatization of politics, mediatization of public administration, scoping review, political communication

Introduction

Although they have been questioned before, the structural influences of the media on politics are now widely recognized in research and decision makers have had to adjust to this reality (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2006; McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Brown & Deegan, 1998). In literature on political communication, the concept of political mediatization is commonly used to explain the influences of news media on the political sphere (Strömbäck, 2011; Entman,

2007). This mediatization of politics denotes problems or concomitant consequences of the development of modern mass media (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999).

The concept is commonly used in political communication to explain the effects of media logic on the political arena (Strömbäck, 2011; Entman, 2007). Studies on the mediatization of politics generally focus either on political actors or on political institutions as a whole, leaving public administration out of the fray. While the link between political and administrative spheres is often studied, the link between public service and the media is considerably under-researched.

Canada's public administration relies on a Keynesian model that includes interventionist, bureaucratic, and centralized characteristics (Hamel & Jouve, 2006). From the 1970s onward, such a state-focused public administration model was criticized by politicians and by civil society. Most notably, critics denounced the excessive influence of public servants on the formulation and implementation of public policies, the impersonal feature of public services, the alienation of civil servants, and the lack of efficiency within public administration (Roberge, 2012). In his analysis of the Canadian case, Aucoin (2012) suggests that governing parties make instrumental use of the public service and administrative resources in order to secure partisan advantage over other political parties; they engage in what he calls a "New Political Governance" (NPG). Several technological transformations have also occurred in recent years that have rendered the analysis of mediatization more pressing. Mainly, developments in the fields of telecommunications and, more recently, digital media have forced public administrations to adapt (Mancini, 1999). The communication practices in Canada's public administration have thus undergone many transformations in line with New Public Management and New Political Governance models. Understanding the influence institutions like the media may have on entities responsible for citizen services and state administration is therefore of paramount importance in democratic societies.

How is the mediatization of politics defined? How much influence do the news media have on the functioning and the activities of political and administrative structures? What has research on this matter been able to reveal so far? This paper looks at the academic literature on mediatization of both the political arena and the public administration. It aims to observe how the concept was apprehended methodologically and, most importantly, how it is operationalized and measured.

In order to produce a systematic and transferable review of the scientific production on mediatization, the scoping review method is used. This exploratory research presents an analysis of all academic work published on the mediatization of

politics following the guidelines established by the *Joanna Briggs Institute* (JBI) to create a mapping of this subfield up to August 2018. The method of scoping review is defined by the JBI as a type of review estimating the size and scope of a body of literature on a given topic. The conventional goal of a scoping review is to extract consensus in the literature, to observe trends and to identify gaps and diverging research results. Most existing literature reviews on mediatization focus on the identification of common features among writings on mediatization (Marcinkowski, 2014). Our scoping review aims to take a broader approach to give a more general portrait of what is known on the effects of news media logics on political institutions and public administration. This paper is built on the existing literature analyzing mediatization with a scoping methodology, which can be considered as a rigorous, effective and transparent synthesis of the literature (Joanna Briggs Institute, 2015).

This scoping analysis intends to provide an exhaustive overview of 156 academic publications on mediatization and to objectively describe the work of the entire community of scholars working in the subfield (Joanna Briggs Institute, 2015). A deeper analysis of how the mediatization of public administration is conceptualized and measured in existing research is also presented.

Political communication represents a broad field of research located at the intersection of communication and political science. Political communication refers to the role that communication plays in the political process (Chaffee, 1975). The study of political mediatization is a subfield of political communication. Writings on the mediatization of politics use their own terms to describe and define the influence of news media logics on institutions. The mediatization subfield appears to be limited, while only few authors use the term “political mediatization” to refer to media influences on politics. The scoping review makes it possible to identify the most used terms and concepts in the literature on political mediatization and to observe how these concepts can be aligned with other subfields in political communication.

Our scoping review makes it possible to state several facts about the literature on political mediatization. First, the theoretical definition of the concept appears to be consensual in the literature. However, its operationalization and measurement diverge in the studies. Results from studies attempting to assess the degree of political or administrative mediatization are also divergent. Considering these differences, how can the scientific community discuss degree of mediatization when the operationalization and measurement of this concept do not reach consensus? Second, most studies focus on the analysis of the influence of news media on political actors and institutions, while the link between media and public administration remains understudied. This paper aims to define the boundaries of academic knowledge on

mediatization. The scoping review also aims to identify avenues for future research in the subfield.

Scoping Review Methodology

Document Search Strategy

This analysis follows the *Reviewers' Manual Methodology for JBI Scoping Reviews* to create an evidence-based mapping of the literature on political mediatization up to August 2018. ¹This paper uses a three-step search strategy to collect and select relevant sources.

First, a manual literature review of over 100 sources was conducted. The documents included in this analysis enabled the identification of the main keywords used in the titles and abstracts. Second, a specific search request was created with identified keywords in relevant databases. Nine multidisciplinary or specialized document databases were chosen to allow a large scoping of academic texts originating from various disciplines such as political science, administration, communication, economy, sociology and technology. Requests were adjusted to the specificities of each document database. Two of the nine research requests are presented in *Appendix A*. All database requests were executed in August 2018. In order to ensure the exhaustivity of the approach, no research constraints in terms of language, type of document or year of publication were used. Here is the summary of the results obtained in each database:

International Bibliography of the Social Sciences : 422 results

Worldwide Political Science Abstracts : 262 results

PAIS International : 43 results

ProQuest Dissertations Theses Global : 92 results

Academic Search Premier : 535 results

Communication Mass Media Complete : 397 results

Web of Science : 962 results

Google Scholar : 300 results²

¹ The document research strategy has been developed in collaboration with a library consultant in document search strategy development from the library of Université Laval. The author wishes to thank Richard Dufour for his invaluable help and guidance during the entire research process.

² 60,100 search results were actually identified by Google Scholar. Because of Google Scholar's specificities, we observed a significant decline in the relevance of references after the first 200 request

WorldCat 3,716 results

Finally, the third step of the scoping strategy involves the creation of a list of all relevant documents cited in the list of sources found during the second step. This final gathering step allowed us to create a final list of 6,729 sources.

Selection criteria

The complete list of sources was then analyzed to decide whether to include or exclude each reference in the literature analysis. *Figure 1* details the process of reference selection in the scoping review based on the following criteria:

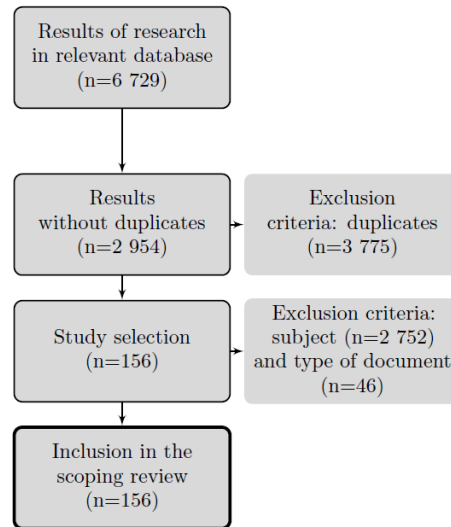
Inclusion Criteria were as follows: 1) Subject: Any reference whose main subject is related to political or administrative mediatization or the influence of the media logic on political actors, politics, politicians, civil servants, administration, institutions, government or democracy, and this, in a democratic state; 2) Types of documents: Scientific articles, books, thesis papers, and scientific conference papers; and 3) All languages.

Exclusion Criteria were as follows: 1) Duplicated sources: References included more than once; 2) Subject: Any reference whose main subject is not related to mediatization or the influence of the media logic in a democratic state; and 3) Type of documents: Unpublished articles, articles waiting for correction or verification, journalistic articles, websites, blogs, and book reviews.

Thus, 156 sources were included in the final reference database used for analysis. Defined characteristics for each reference included were then extracted to identify the distribution of the production according to several relevant aspects, and to create a mapping of the literature on mediatization.

results. Thus, we only collected the first 300 references, at which point we believe we have reached saturation.

Figure 1: Literature Handling Flowchart of Political Mediatization



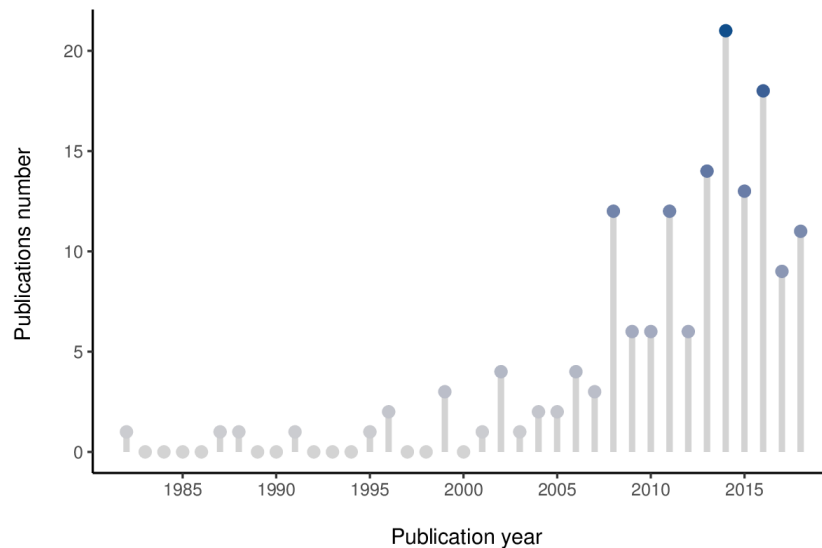
How is the Mediatization of Politics Studied?

First the analysis of the literature has made it possible to identify a consensual definition of the mediatization of politics in the field of research. Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999, p. 249), whose article is widely quoted in the discipline, indicate that the concept of mediatization is associated with problems or concomitant consequences of the development of modern mass media. Mediatization can be understood as an intrinsically process-oriented concept (Strömbäck, 2008). Processes leading to the reinforcement and expansion of the news media culture (Jansson, 2002) are the central objects of the research subfield.

The associated notion of the mediatization of politics is itself defined as a long-term process leading to an increase in the influence of the media in the political arena (Hjarvard, 2008). Thus, the concept refers to activities and political processes that are altered, shaped or structured by the news media logic. The mediatization of politics also refers to the perceived need of individuals, organizations, and social systems to communicate with or through the media (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014). In a mediatization context, the news media are also the largest source of information, and the main communication channel between the rulers and the governed (Bennett & Entman, 2001; Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999; Blumler et al., 1999). Mediatization has been studied since 1983 by Litz (1983) who observed the influence of media logics in the context of a state government policy structure. From the references identified,

the mediatization concept has been more widely used in the literature since 2008. The body of knowledge on mediatization analyzed in the scoping review process has expanded in recent years and interest on the concept also seems to have been increasing.

Figure 2: The Study of Mediatization Over Time

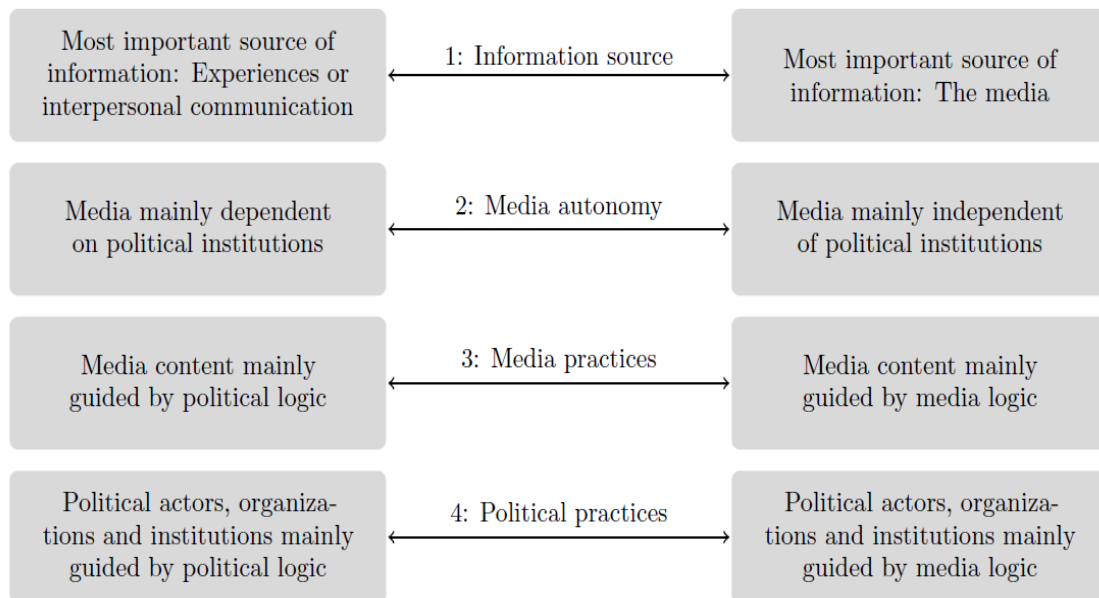


n = 156

Differentiation is established with the term “mediation,” also used by political communication scholars, which refers to any act of intervention, transmission or reconciliation between different actors, communities or institutions (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999, p. 249). In a mediation case, the news media are intermediaries between a communicator and an audience. Thus, in the mediation of politics, the news media represent the most important source of information as well as the main information channel between the rulers and the governed (Bennett & Entman, 2001). Blumler et al. (1999) present the relations between the media and political message producers during three periods in the history of political communication. These three stages represent the transition from mediation to mediatization. In the earliest period, the political sphere is less influenced by the media, which is more likely to act as a transmitter of information. The second age of political communication is characterized by the willingness of the political actors to increase their visibility in the media, which leads them to introduce systematic communication strategies. The third era is marked by the mediatization of politics. News media proliferation and omnipresence led the political arena to adapt its practices and activities to the media’s

logics (Blumler et al., 1999). The concept of “mediatization” is more relevant to this analysis since the degree of news media influence on actors and institutions is observed. The concept is then declined in four dimensions.

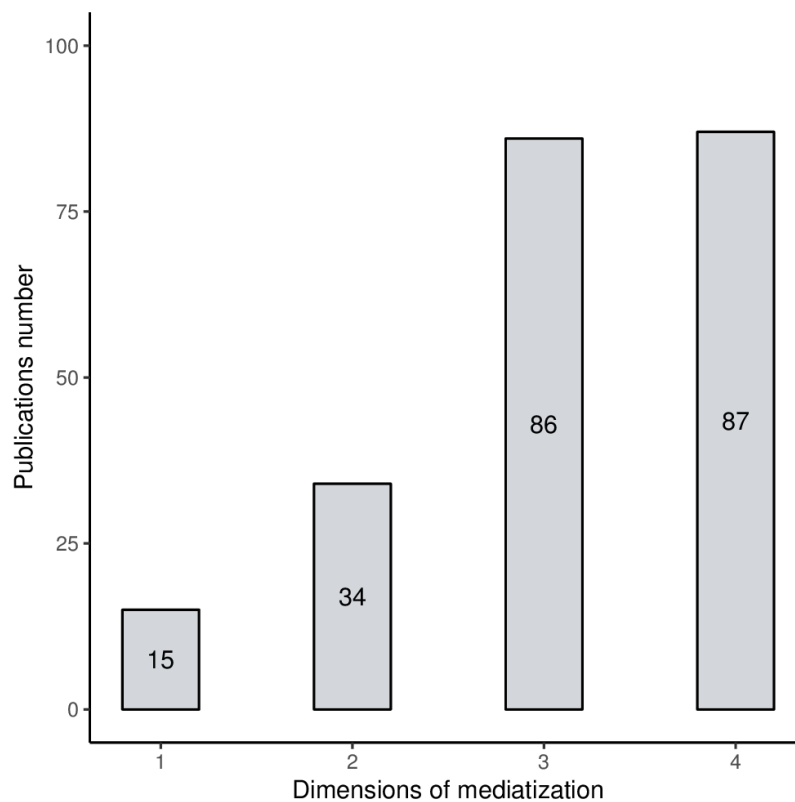
Figure 3: The Four-Dimensional Conceptualization of the Mediatization of Politics (Figure from Strömbäck, 2008, p. 235)



The four dimensions of political mediatization (see *Figure 3*) were developed by Strömbäck (2008) and have since been used to categorize types of studies that analyze media influences on politics. The first dimension of political mediatization is the extent to which the media is the most important source of information on politics and society, as well as the most important channel of communication between governments and citizens compared to interpersonal communication. The second dimension of the mediatization of politics refers to the degree of media independence, in terms of governance and in relation to institutions and political actors. The third dimension is the proportion of media content guided by a media logic compared to a political logic. Finally, the fourth dimension of political mediatization is the level of adherence of actors and political institutions to the media logics (Strömbäck, 2008, p. 234).

Our scoping review helps define the distribution of the literature on mediatization of politics according to three parameters: each of the four dimensions of the mediatization of politics, the research design, as well as the type of institutions or actors analyzed. When they are combined, these characteristics provide an exhaustive portrait of the literature on the mediatization of politics. They are further detailed in the following section.

Figure 4: Which Dimensions of Mediatization do Researchers Analyze?



n = 156

The scoping review identifies which dimensions of the mediatization of politics are further analyzed. Aspects of mediatization discussed in research questions of the included references were used to observe the prevalence of each of the four dimensions of mediatization in the studies. *Figure 4* shows the distribution of the dimensions of mediatization in our sample. Dimensions of media and political practices are the subject of more research, while dimensions of information sources have been the subject of only 15 studies.

Two concepts are central in the schematization of political mediatization: political logic and media logic. The term “logic” refers to formal and informal rules, routines and principles of reasoning, as well as to action within an entity (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014, p. 14).

Political logic is described as political decision-making and implementation in an institutional, collective and authoritative process. Lasswell (1950) describes this logic as ultimately aiming to develop and implement politics with a re-election goal. Concretely, the political logic “includes the processes of winning public support and elections, of distributing political power, of deliberation, bargaining and decision-making, of implementing political decisions, and of power as it relates to who gets what, when, and how” (Lasswell, 1950, p. 67). This logic can be categorized according to three dimensions: 1) processes of rules and regulations of the political system; 2) problem-definition processes, as well as the development and implementation of public policies; and 3) processes of gaining support for an individual candidacy, a party, or a political program (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014).

Media logic is a process of information production, including a process of selection and formatting, leading institutions to a particular way of interpreting society and its issues (Mazzoleni, 2008). Thus, the different types of media organizations share similarities in terms of practices, rules, routines, standards, and values (Cook, 1998; Hjarvard, 2008; Sparrow, 1999). These rules and procedures can be formal or informal and are “often understood as quasinatural ways to get things done” (Cook, 1998, p. 71) in the media system.

Administrative logic is also introduced to the schematization when studies aim to analyze the mediatization of public service institutions. Administrative logic refers to clear and formal organizational frameworks and rules that derive from laws and regulatory processes. Explicit rules that are specific to one or more institutions (Rhodes, 2000), as well as formal or informal organizational standards, are included in this logic. For example, ethical code refers to a formal standard, while organizational culture is an informal norm.

These three logics are guiding, to a greater or lesser extent, the functioning and practices of political bodies, institutions, and public administration. Additionally, public service is described as being mediatized when media logics become more prominent compared to political and administrative logics in the structure and the institutional functioning. The literature establishes a difference between the mediatization of the political and administrative spheres and this distinction is

necessary since the missions and mandates of the two entities are not the same. Thus, the influence of the media and the relationship that the two entities have with the media must be analyzed separately.

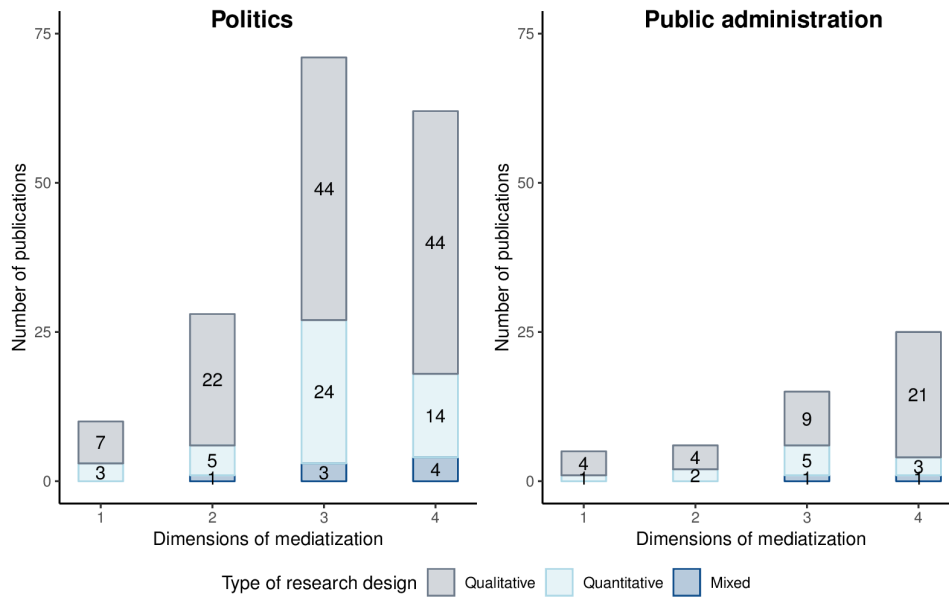
The term “public administration” is a generic notion that refers to all activities involved in the development and implementation of public policies (Graham Jr & Hays, 1993). Public administration thus encompasses the production of public goods and services created by the state to serve the needs of citizens. Public service³ is not essentially instrumental. Public sector’s decisions and actions are involved in a government’s decision-making process (Box, 2014). However, as explained by Wilson (1887, p. 10), the concept of public administration lies outside the real political sphere: “Administrative questions are not political questions. Although politics set the tasks for administration, it should not be suffered to manipulate its offices” (Wilson, 1887, p. 10).

The scoping review process also highlights the most commonly used research methods to investigate the mediatization of politics. A wide range of research design is used in this literature. Among the reviewed work, 24 different designs were developed to analyze political mediatization. These approaches were grouped into three broad categories: “qualitative,” “quantitative” or “mixed.”

Finally, the 156 reviewed studies were distinguished according to what their research subject is, whether they analyzed the mediatization of political bodies or of public administration. The concept of mediatization is rarely studied with a focus on administrative institutions and actors. The concept has been applied to public administration by Thorbjørnsrud (2015). This researcher defined the mediatization of public administration and its impacts without, however, operationalizing the concept and observing its influence in a systematic way.

³ This term is used as a synonym for public administration in this research.

Figure 5: Characteristics of the Literature on Mediatization



n = 156

Mediatization of the political and administrative realms are related, but their analysis is carried out separately in the reviewed studies. A limited number of contributions analyze the degree of mediatization of public institutions. Most of them are case studies. Thus, references were categorized according to their objective to analyze political institutions and actors or public administrative institutions and civil servants.

As Figure 5 indicates, there are much fewer studies that analyze the mediatization of public administration (24 % of the studies included compared to 76 % analyzing political institutions). In addition, studies on the influence of media logic are mostly qualitative in design (69 % compared to 26 % of quantitative research and 5 % of mixed-methods). Among qualitative research designs, grounded theory studies and case studies are the most common.

Furthermore, the scoping review reveals that the mediatization of politics concept is commonly used in political communication to explain the influences of the news media on political institutions and actors. However, the exercise also reveals a lack of research studying mediatization with an empirical approach. Studies also focus on actors and political institutions. Therefore, the link between the media and public

administration remains rarely studied. The review also indicates that quantitative studies analyzing mediatization use diverging indicators to measure the influences of the media logic on practices and functioning of public service and politics.

Finally, our scoping review shows that studies on the mediatization of public administration focus solely on European cases. We have identified only four quantitative research that analyze the influence of media logic on public service. These contributions use the following cases for their studies:

Meyer (2009) : European Commission

Esser and Strömbäck (2014) : Germany, United Kingdom, Austria and Switzerland

Fredriksson, Schillemans, and Pallas (2015) : Sweden

Fawzi (2018) : Germany

The scoping review process made it possible to precisely identify the boundaries of knowledge in the field of research on political mediatization and highlight some theoretical and methodological gaps. Our next step is to observe where this research subfield is located within the broader political communication literature.

Mediatization of Politics and Political Communication

The literature on the mediatization of politics uses its own terms to describe the concept of the influence of media logic on institutions. Although much research across this literature evaluate media influence, scholars use different conceptualizations and terminologies to study what are either highly similar or meaningfully related concepts. Our research aims to integrate these concepts under a coherent theory on the mediatization of politics as it pertains to public administration. Our scoping review helps to identify the most commonly used terms and concepts across political communication literature and facilitate the evaluation of where and how these terms are applied in order to ultimately clarify links and sketch an integrated theory. Definitions and indicators of the mediatization concept are similar to those from three subfields frequently associated to political communication research: 1) the influence of news media, 2) the permanent campaign, and 3) *New Political Governance*.

Influences of the news media

From the perspective of mediatization, Esser and Strömbäck (2014) explain that media influence refers to “all activities and processes that are altered, shaped or structured

by the media and the perceived need of individuals, organizations and social systems to communicate with or through the media (p. 11). Following this definition, media influence both transcends and includes media effects (Mazzoleni & Schulz, 1999) in the way that most media effect theories assume that “media effects follow from content, whereas mediatization also includes how the media through their very existence and semi-structural properties exert influence” (Esser & Strömbäck, 2014, p. 10).

The literature on media effects provides a partial understanding of motivations behind changes in political organizations. It shows that if political and governmental institutions adapt to media logics, it is largely while trying to counter or minimize their structural effects. McCombs’ and Shaw’s (1972) empirical studies have shown a high level of agreement between the news media and voters in their assessment of issues importance during election campaigns, but also outside of election periods. The news media then contribute to shaping the political agenda (agenda-setting) by focusing on specific issues rather than others in their news coverage. Since citizens’ attention is limited (Miller & Krosnick, 2000), this media effect would be to prioritize the various public issues within the public sphere. Thus, the way the media presents information would influence what citizens consider as significant in public affairs. Academic writings on this matter therefore demonstrate that the news media impact individual cognitive patterns and influence citizens’ perceptions of issue importance in a more (Lasswell, 1927; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987; Bartels, 1993; Zaller, 1996; Brown & Deegan, 1998) or less (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944; Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974; Katz, Lazarsfeld, & Roper, 2017; Mutz, 2001) significant way. Thus, some studies show a strong media effect on citizens’ identification of important issues: “Mass media had strong, long-term effects on audiences, based on the ubiquitous and consonant stream of messages they presented to audiences” (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2006, p. 10). Past research has weighed this effect, especially with the two-step-flow theory (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944), the uses and gratifications theory (Katz et al., 1974) as well as the limited effects theory (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944; Katz et al., 2017).

Media practices can also have an impact on voters’ perceptions of political issues. This phenomenon, called priming, is described by Iyengar and Kinder (1987, p. 63) as a change in the standards used by citizens to build their evaluation of politics and politicians. Often referred to as an extension of agenda-setting, priming occurs when news content suggests to audiences specific questions to assess politicians’ and governments’ performance (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2006; Domke, Shah, & Wackman, 1998, p. 11). While agenda-setting means prioritizing issues in news, priming is the fact of highlighting specific aspects of an issue considered by the media as particularly significant (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2006). As a result, politicians’ and,

possibly, public services' concern for high-profile issues could be affected. By explaining issues in a prioritized way, the news media point out at which issues need to be taken into account by the public, but also on which criteria politicians and policies should be evaluated (Domke et al., 1998). Elected officials, attentive to population concerns and expectations, could therefore make decisions that are influenced by the news media's information processing.

Furthermore, the information framing model has been the subject of several studies on the news media's effects. Framing is based on the assumption that the way an issue is portrayed in the news influences the way audiences understand this issue (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2006). During the news processing, journalists select a defined way to present a given event to audiences. Lippmann's classic study initially conceptualized this framing effect. Lippmann (1922, p. 3) described "the world outside and the pictures in our heads" as two completely different realities. The news media influence public opinion by presenting limited information that audiences use to build an image of events. Information sources, images and excerpts from interviews are based on journalistic decisions. The way information is presented is the framing of information; it is what the audience uses to build their representation of reality. Some researchers have criticized the concept of information framing. A more nuanced interpretation of media effect on citizens has emerged by taking into account the audiences' ability to construct their own understanding of issues (Just, Crigler, & Neuman, 1996; Katz et al., 2017). However, even if the framing effect on the audience's perception is not assuredly direct, its effect on their conceptions of politics and politicians is recognized (Iyengar, 1990; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2006).

Thus, the importance given to certain events in media coverage can affect the way politicians are governing. We can consider that, in an attempt to reduce or control the influence of the news media on citizens, politicians and administrative institutions may change their behaviour and communication strategies. Mediatization of politics may be a reaction to the media's structural effects.

Permanent campaigning

Former Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin compared state governance to flying a Boeing 747 :

When you fly a 747 over the Atlantic Ocean, you want the nose of the plane to point straight up if it starts to point down, you have a problem. Once the nose points down for any amount of time, it becomes very difficult to pull it back up. The same applies in government. You never want to let up, to have your eye off the ball, because when you

start losing public support, it is very difficult to get it back (cited in Vongdouangchanh, 2008).

With this comparison, the former Canadian politician explains how the permanent campaign phenomenon, which dictates the actions of many Western governments, really works. This philosophy of governance implies that political parties in power regularly monitor public opinion on political issues in order to maintain and build voters' support outside of an official election period (Vergeer, Hermans, & Sams, 2013, p. 485). In these systems, rulers constantly appear before the news media to testify on the progress of their projects. As a result, there is little difference between an election campaign and state governance; the staff, tactics and tools used during the campaign follow the winning candidate in elected office and spread throughout the public administration (Blumenthal, 1980). In this context, the importance given to politicians' and institutions' image propagated by the news media takes on a special significance (Scammell, 2007). This way of governing means that re-election is a government's primary goal and guides its actions and decisions throughout the mandate.

When deciding whom to vote for, citizens are following a process of socio-psychological decision-making. Usually, they make decisions by combining information from their personal experience and from the news media, without always doing research, in an intuitive and fast way (Marland, 2016). Information available to citizens when making voting decisions is often limited. The percentage of citizens interested in politics and regularly informed about it is estimated at 33 % in the United Kingdom, 15 % in Canada, and 55 % in the United States (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, Levy, & Nielsen, 2017). Thus, in order to develop political communications and a political party brand, electoral strategies have been deployed in electoral campaigns during the last decades by focusing on targeted messages as well as the use of panels and opinion polls (Marland, 2016). These electoral strategies are now integrated into the periods between elections and in the public service functioning. In this context of permanent campaigning, governments adopt practices with partisan and electoral aims.

According to Savoie (2010, p. 96), many factors contributed to globalizing and increasing permanent campaigning practices in governments, including the news media, media blogging, negative election campaigns, the increase of political professionals and spin specialists, the increase of undecided voters, and the spending restrictions introduced during election campaigns, but not between polls. Always under journalists' scrutiny, political parties fight a constant battle to prove to voters that they are the most suitable to govern. Number of swing voters has also increased

during the last decades (Swanson & Mancini, 1996). Chaffee and Rimal (1996) explain that politicians are aware of this phenomenon and that they continuously try to influence late vote choices through various persuasion strategies. While professionals of media relations' and communication's strategic tools were mobilized before on an *ad hoc* basis during election campaigns, they are now at the heart of political organizations' day-to-day routines (Lilleker & Negrine, 2002, p. 306).

New Political Governance

According to the separation of powers, a government's democratic activities must meet a neutrality standard. Public servants are non-partisan and merit-based employees who provide objective advice to politicians in power and implement policies in an impartial and non-partisan manner. This separation of powers is referred to as the policy/administration dichotomy. In an apolitical administrative system, public service employees have the responsibility to uphold the parliamentary democracy (Marland, 2016).

When permanent campaign practices are reflected in the public service, public administration is characterized by a *New Political Governance model* (NPG). The concept is described by Aucoin (2012) as a public administration model where pressures from institutional and external environments constrain implementation of public policies as well as the delivery of public services in a plural system.

NPG is described as a continuation (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000) or even as a product (Aucoin, 2012) of the *New Public Management* model (NPM). NPM is defined as a set of measures aimed to perform a close control of costs and an optimal allocation of resources to provide the necessary, but strictly necessary public services, as well as to eliminate any expenses that might appear excessive (Hood, 1991). NPM is characterized as an administration model that focuses mainly on results (Hood, 1995). The formal public service organization is then structured to promote an optimal performance in achieving common objectives. Emerging in the 1980s, this model includes several distinct components: professional management practices in the public sector, explicit standards and performance measures, a focus on results control, customer-oriented services and quality of services, a public sector disaggregation, the introduction of an external competition in the public sector, the introduction of methods and tools of private management as well as a focus on discipline and parsimony (Hood, 1995; Hughes, 2012). Increasing control over the elected government's policies and programs is also a central NPM principle.

Comparatively, in the New Political Governance model, greater political control pressures the civil service, leading to the politicization of administrative institutions. Politicians therefore exert more than a legitimate democratic control over public services. In this model, elected governments make use of public service and governance resources to ensure political and electoral advantage over other (opposition) parties (Aucoin, 2012). The image produced is that of a state apparatus whose corporate identity and visibility must reflect key government themes and messages in information and communication materials so that “overarching goals and the government's priorities for the country are consistently identified and communicated” (Marland, 2016, p. 289). The concept of the permanent campaign is inherent to the NPG model. Aucoin (2012, p. 179) observes four main features of the NPG: 1) the integration of executive governance and permanent campaigning practices into the public administration; 2) the presence of partisan political staff in the civil service; 3) politicization in the appointment of the highest officials of the state; and 4) the presupposition, in organizational culture, that public service's loyalty and support for the government means a need to be a partisan of the government in place.

Media coverage is an external pressure facing governmental organizations in the New Political Governance administrative model. Challenging decisions and monitoring public administration, this pressure from the news media is a factor that may lead a government to do “whatever they deem necessary to stay in power” (Roberts, 2008). Aucoin (2012) presents the changes in the media economy as a contributing factor to an increased competition between news media businesses. This increased competition is pushing journalists to scrutinize politicians and the government for exclusivity (Aucoin, 2012). To counter the structural effects of the media and to make its mark on the public agenda, the government is deploying media management strategies. When these strategies revolve around a re-election goal, the administrative model can be characterized as New Political Governance.

Concretely, permanent campaign practices are associated with the NPG model of administration. In this governance model, we can observe in government bodies a specialization of professionals in media relations and image management, as well as the centralization of communication management processes within the executive office. These two characteristics of permanent campaigning and New Political Governance are strongly linked to the literature on the mediatization of politics and are elaborated on in the following sections.

Professionalization of politics

The professionalization of politics has been the subject of several studies in the 1990s following changes in political processes and the introduction of new professional fields (Mancini, 1999; Blumler & Gurevitch, 2000; Schlesinger & Tumber, 1994). In a widely quoted article, Lilleker and Negrine (2002) questioned this notion. According to them, the concept describes an increase of professional jobs within the political sphere, a task specialization as well as an increase in experts like communication professionals, image managers or analysts in political organizations (Lilleker & Negrine, 2002, p. 99). The “professionalization” term can therefore be used generically to refer to these changes in the processes of political influence optimization and of mediatization control.

Mancini (1999) presents professionalization of the political and public sectors as a result of the development of telecommunications, and, more recently, of digital media, which forces systems to adapt. The political arena is described as a victim of the professionalization in other sectors (Gibson & Römmele, 2001, p. 34). In reaction to changes in media practices, politicians and government organizations need to use specialists in new communication tools to quickly spread and adapt their messages to the needs of journalists (Gibson & Römmele, 2001). This adaptation, marked by the immediacy of communication, is described as necessary for political and administrative bodies in order to be able to progress successfully in a transformed media system:

Today, the parties and candidates who are the most timely, who can respond with the greatest speed to current events, to their adversaries, and to the themes chosen by the mass media are those who win elections (Mancini, 1999, p. 239).

Consequently, the evolution of communication and strategic processes brings novel needs and objectives to political institutions. These changes translate into the use of a diverse range of professionals with expertise in media, surveys, marketing and public relations. While the work of government experts is specialized, complex and uses specific jargon, media relations professionals sort out this information to highlight key aspects in a simplified message (Marland, 2016, p. 287).

Voter volatility may have contributed to the increasing use of marketing professionals in campaign strategies, before spreading to everyday practices in governments, and then, in public administration. With the accentuation of voters’ detachment from politics, tactics gradually turned to a conception of voters as consumers in search of a product rather than loyal political partisans (Vergeer et al., 2013, p. 480). According to Hallin and Mancini (2004), citizen-oriented political

organizations have morphed into media and marketing-oriented parties. Blumler et al. (1999) describe the ideal advertising of a party or a government as shaping the media environment so that journalists focus only on specific chosen issues, messages, and spokespersons. For journalists, this narrower information choice poses an independence problem, which encourages them to look for ways “to stamp their marks” on political news (Blumler et al., 1999, p. 215). While the political area develops strategies to optimize communication efficiency, specialization in the journalistic field is also increasing. In order to protect themselves from the influence of political communication strategies, journalists may attempt to develop specific political expertise that allows them to better interpret and evaluate information provided by political and administrative staff (Charron, 1994).

This professionalization in the fields of public relations and communication within governments also contributes to concentrating the public information release at the centre of their executive.

Communication centralization

In recent decades, ministers’ offices have grown in terms of resources and political staff, not only during election campaigns, but also in everyday practices. Power has focused more on politicians occupying the highest positions rather than being dispersed in the party, the public administration and the government (Savoie, 2010, p. 98). The advent of television in the media sphere accentuated this decision-making concentration by directing media attention to specific personalities appearing on the screen (Blumler et al., 1999). For example, in the US, the choice of institutionalizing the Press Office at the White House rather than at the US Congress ensures that the President remains at the centre of media attention, according to McKay and Paletz (2004). Public relations strategies, coordinated by a common entity, seemed necessary in order to monitor and respond to the growing stream of journalistic news (McNair, 2004). Generally, a government’s media relations coordination is centralized within the office of the leader of the executive branch - in Canada, this is the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) - and is directed by the government’s press officer. Giving guidelines for communication services, press officers also manage proactively the information spread from the administration to the news media rather than in an essentially reactive way (Blumler et al., 1999, p. 215).

Richard Nixon was the first American president to appoint a communication director to coordinate the information flow from the executive department (Ornstein & Mann, 2000). This department, independent from the press service, was responsible for controlling communications of the public administration, controlling

journalists' access to state officials as well as maintaining friendly relations with the press. This centralization and reinforced control of communication processes within the government also affect the practices of elected officials. Politicians must restrict their interventions to positions established by their party: "They should not dissent or create controversies, they should toe the party line, and so forth." (Lilleker & Negrine, 2002, p. 100) The United Kingdom's Select Committee on Communications (2004) recommended, following the US example, to implement a more powerful, authoritarian, and central communication management and a new permanent Secretariat for Government Communications. The report mentions the need for these reforms due to crucial relations between ministries and the news media "in the current media climate, with many more outlets for news, an adversarial relationship between the media and the government, and the cult of the celebrity fuelling a focus on personalities in all walks of public life" (Select Committee on Communications, 2004). In Canada, Marland (2016) observed at the federal level centralized communication strategies around the Prime Minister's Office to unify messages and brands in communications, repeat messages in a simple and effective way, and ensure cohesion, consistency and coherence with the party line. Since the 1960s, researchers have observed a more significant degree of standardization of political discourses and a greater concentration of parties' political strategies towards few individuals or groups, especially towards cabinets' public relations teams (Côté, 2012).

Conclusion

Using a scoping review approach, this article charts the literature on the mediatization of politics and public administration. It demonstrates that this literature is expanding globally. This methodology produces a rigorous, effective, and transparent overview of the research subfield. The paper summarizes what is known to date, points out at the gaps in literature, and identifies divergences in the operationalization of the concept.

The scoping review allows us to identify persistent lack of information about mediatization in terms of knowledge and methodological gaps. (1) Studies on mediatization focus mainly on media content, the level of adherence of political actors to the media logic (i.e. the third and fourth dimensions of mediatization). Sources of information in political or administrative decision-making processes remain sparsely analyzed. (2) Studies investigating the association of the political sphere and the news media logics constitute the majority of studies on mediatization while the influence of media logic on public administrative actors and activities as well as on the independence of administrative institutions is not sufficiently studied. (3) Approaches used to study mediatization of politics are mostly qualitative. More specifically in

regard to the study of public service mediatization, the scoping review reveals that only 13 quantitative or mixed studies were conducted from 1982 to 2018 to analyze the four dimensions of mediatization. (4) Mediatization of public administration has been quantitatively analyzed in an essentially European setting (Meyer, 2009; Esser & Strömbäck, 2014; Fredriksson et al., 2015; Fawzi, 2018). (5) Indicators used to measure the degree of mediatization are still greatly heterogeneous between studies. No single formal framework for operationalizing and measuring the concept has yet been agreed upon. (6) No previous research has studied the mediatization of public administration in a longitudinal and quantitative design. Examining the degree of mediatization over time could lead to a more accurate understanding of the possible persistence of long-term news media effects.

The scoping review also indicates that the study of mediatization of politics and public services is closely related to the literature on the structural effects of news media, on the permanent campaigning and on the New Political Governance model. However, more research is needed to better connect the mediatization subfield to existing knowledge in political communication. For instance, research on structural effects, permanent campaigning and NPG could help inform on the conceptual operationalization of mediatization.

Ultimately, our analysis identifies the knowledge boundaries in the literature on mediatization. It is currently difficult to discuss the news media influence on political and administrative bodies since the existing quantitative research on mediatization rely on a diversity of indicators. The conclusions obtained from these contributions also diverge. It is critical to understand whether the variation in results across these studies is real or if it is simply an outcome of measurement biases arising from the use of different indicators. The indicators themselves are grounded in theory. In order to better understand the application of mediatization, we need to test the theories motivating these indicators. Thus, we argue that the rigorous process of operationalization of the mediatization of politics hypothesis should be a central component of future research. Given the potential significant impacts of the news media on democratic institutions, the time has come for academics to explore them with a stronger theoretical framework. How can the scientific community discuss the degree of mediatization when there is little agreement regarding the operationalization and measurement of the concept? It is critical to understanding whether the variation in findings across studies is real or simply an artefact of measurement arising from the use of different indicators.

Despite the lack of research on the mediatization of public administration, the results tend to observe that departments are adjusting to media logics: as activities

and resources related to communication are increasing, departments are increasingly monitoring media activities, and their relationships with the media centralize, institutionalize and become more formal. Thus, the media transformations seem in turn to transform the functioning of the public service. Is it their place? What are the democratic implications of this phenomenon? These normative questions persist and should be explored in future research.

Understanding the influence institutions like the media may have on government decision makers as well as on entities responsible for citizen services and state administration is of paramount importance in democratic societies. Research on mediatization could potentially raise and answer questions about the evolving contribution of media logics in modern democratic societies beyond the realm of elections and partisan politics.

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Appendices

A. Examples of Database Requests

International Bibliography of the Social Sciences

Search in: Anywhere except full text - NOFT

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mediatiz* OR mediatis* OR medializ* OR medialis* OR "media influence*" OR  
"media logic"
```

Coordinated with AND

Search in: Subject heading - MAINSUBJECT

```
politic* OR government* OR institution* OR administrat*
```

Web of Science

Search in: TOPICS

```
(mediatiz* OR mediatis* OR medializ* OR medialis* OR "media influence*" OR  
"media logic") AND (politic* OR politique* OR gouvernement* OR  
government* OR institution* OR administrat*)
```

Coordinated with AND

Search in: Abstract

```
(mediatization OR mediatisation OR "media influence*" OR "media logic") AND  
(politic*  
OR politique* OR gouvernement* OR government* OR institution* OR  
administrat*)
```