

**Title:** The influence of media on the level of historical awareness of secondary school students in the Opolskie Voivodeship

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### ABSTRACT

The historical awareness of young people is one of the key areas of research in history didactics. Studies in this field enable us to learn about opinions and ideas regarding history and the factors that influence their formation. A better understanding of this topic can serve the development of school historical education and also be helpful in evaluating the results of history teaching so far. It is widely acknowledged that the historical awareness of students is shaped not only in the school environment but also beyond it. The media, in its broadest sense, plays a crucial role in influencing this development. Books, press, or historical movies are means of communication whose influence on historical awareness has long been known. The 21st century has brought a number of new digital media. The internet has revolutionized not only issues related to access to information but also many other spheres of human activity, including those related to the functioning of history in the media space.

The main goal of this work was to examine the influence of media on the historical awareness of secondary school students in the Opole Voivodeship. Previous researches in this area had a partial character, and the relationship between the historical awareness of young people and the media has not been comprehensively studied. Many history educators have called for research on this issue, and the need for it has become even more urgent due to the widespread access to the internet and the resulting effects on historical education (both in and out of school).

Following the example of previous researchers on the topic of historical awareness among young people, a diagnostic survey using a questionnaire technique was used to conduct the research. The survey consisted of three stages: pilot, main, and verification. The main stage was conducted in 2019-2020 on a group of 1198 students attending secondary schools (high schools, technical schools, vocational schools) in the Opolskie Voivodeship. The verification stage was conducted in 2021 and involved 102 students. The questionnaire used during the main and verification stages consisted of 20 questions. The construction of the study was partly based on questionnaires that had been used in previous research by Janusz Rulka in 1985 and Łukasz Michalski in 2007. This allowed for at least partial comparison of the obtained data.

Comparisons of the results, although imperfect in many ways, were nonetheless an important element in determining certain general changes occurring in the historical awareness of young people.

The first chapter of the doctoral dissertation outlines the connections between culture, education, and media. Special attention is paid to defining media and related concepts such as mass media, new media, and new new media, which are relevant to the dissertation. The third subchapter presents the use of media as educational tools in historical education. Issues related to the properties of various types of educational media are discussed. There is also a significant focus on the potential use of video games in historical education.

The second chapter discusses issues related to the historical awareness of young people. The first subchapter concerns the concept of historical awareness, outlining various research perspectives on this topic, both sociological and historical. The second subchapter provides an overview of research on historical awareness.

The methodology of the research is discussed in chapter three. The first part outlines the subject and objectives of the research, as well as the research questions and hypotheses. The second subchapter covers issues related to the research methods, techniques, and tools used. The last part of the chapter is devoted to the characterization of the study population and the research area.

In the fourth chapter, based on the collected material, three important aspects related to memory of the past were characterized. The first of these was the interest in historical books and films as well as history as a school subject. The second element discussed in this chapter was the identification of sources of historical knowledge among the researched population. In both cases, the obtained results were compared with previous studies on historical awareness of young people. To better demonstrate the importance of media in shaping historical awareness, the aspect of the frequency of using individual media was also presented.

Chapter five concerns textual media as a factor influencing historical awareness. It presents the results of research related to historical books and historical press. The compilation of historical books that garnered the most interest was compared with similar studies conducted by other researchers in this field. The school textbook, as an extremely important element of historical education, was discussed in the third subchapter.

Chapter six was devoted to audiovisual media as carriers of historical knowledge. The three most important forms - films, television, and music - were discussed. The most commonly mentioned historical films by the subjects were characterized. The obtained results were also compared with the results of previous studies by other researchers in this area. Data on

television channels and programs, current affairs programs, and news programs were presented. The last subchapter focuses on music - it includes the interest of the subjects in music related to historical themes, taking into account specific artists and music genres.

Chapter seven discusses sources of historical knowledge in the virtual space. The first subsection covers historical channels on the popular YouTube platform. The second subsection presents the results of research on websites. Social media (especially Facebook) is the topic of the third subsection, where data is presented on how often the participants encountered historical content on social media. The last subsection focuses on the interest in video games with historical themes. In addition to the results concerning the use of this medium, the most popular titles mentioned by the participants are briefly characterized.

Chapter eight is of particular importance to the entire study as it provides an analysis of selected elements of historical awareness among young people in the context of media. The participants' opinions on which events from Polish history were portrayed in the media as sources of pride or shame for Poles are presented in the first subsection. In the second subsection, the participants' views on which historical figures are portrayed as outstanding are analyzed. Justifications for the chosen answers are presented, which allowed for a better understanding of the results obtained. A comparison with similar studies from the past was also made, providing insight into changes in the historical awareness of young people over the years.

The conclusions and research proposals were presented in the final chapter, which closes the main part of this study. The bibliography, lists of charts and tables, as well as appendices were included. The appendices contain the survey questionnaires, descriptions of pilot studies, tables of results, and statistical calculations.