

# An Experimental Study on Polity Science Students: Impact of the Film Wag the Dog on Political Psychology

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## ABSTRACT

*The mass media has considerable influence in this age of democracy. Besides providing information, political elites are often using the media as strategic tools to alter the political landscape through the use of political imagery and rhetoric. This research employs experimental quantitative methodology to examine the impact of media, specifically the film Wag the Dog, on the behavior of political science students. By adopting three indicators drawn from political psychology principles – emotions, political beliefs, and motivations for political behavior – we identified that gender and scientific background influenced the public's reaction to the media's construction of conditions. Three results were obtained from this experimental investigation: 1) The Wag the Dog film did not have a discernible impact on the emotional dimension of students; 2) its influence on the political dimension of belief was not significant; 3) its effect on the dimension of political motives of behavior was extremely dominant; and 4) variations in responses to the three dimensions were influenced by gender disparities.*

## ABSTRAK

Media massa memiliki pengaruh yang cukup besar di era demokrasi ini. Selain menyediakan informasi, elit politik sering menggunakan media sebagai alat strategis untuk mengubah lanskap politik melalui penggunaan citra dan retorika politik. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi kuantitatif eksperimental untuk menguji dampak media, khususnya film Wag the Dog, terhadap perilaku mahasiswa ilmu politik. Dengan mengadopsi tiga indikator yang diambil dari prinsip-prinsip psikologi politik—emosi, keyakinan politik, dan motivasi perilaku politik—kami mengidentifikasi bahwa gender dan latar belakang ilmiah memengaruhi reaksi publik terhadap konstruksi kondisi oleh media. Tiga hasil diperoleh dari penyelidikan eksperimental ini: 1) Film Wag the Dog tidak memiliki dampak yang terlihat pada dimensi emosional mahasiswa; 2) pengaruhnya terhadap dimensi politik keyakinan tidak signifikan; 3) pengaruhnya terhadap dimensi motif politik perilaku sangat dominan; dan 4) variasi respons terhadap ketiga dimensi tersebut dipengaruhi oleh kesenjangan gender.

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## INTRODUCTION

The mass media has significant influence in a political era such as this. Contemporary media has evolved beyond being a simple provider of information, and now frequently serves as a deliberate catalyst for political transformation (Parkhurst, 2016). The mass media serves as the dominant means through which a country exercises control, manages affairs, and fosters creativity within a community (Nugroho & Sudono, 2022). It can effectively replace other forms of power. The media serves as a powerful tool for individuals and society to obtain representations of social reality. It presents prescriptive ideals and judgements through a combination of news and entertainment, exerting significant influence on individuals and organizations (McQuail, 2016).

The mass media includes print media, such as newspapers, magazines, and tabloids, as well as electronic media. The mediums of communication include radio, television, internet, and film. Within a democratic nation, the privileged class initiated making use of mass media as a tactic to mould the public perception (Nesbitt-Larking & Kinnvall, 2012). There exists a symbiotic association between the political elite and the owners of the media, which is advantageous for both parties involved. The media serves as a communication tool for political socialisation. Political socialisation refers to the process by which individuals acquire their political beliefs and behavioural tendencies. Political socialisation refers to the process through which individuals acquire and internalise knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours related to politics, including political cognition, political influence, and political involvement. Political participation (Abi-Ghannam et al., 2023; Cudina et al., 2023).

The utilization of media as a means of political socialization is an integral aspect of technical advancement. The term "media" in this article refers to all forms of media that are consumed by public, regardless of whether they are privately or government-managed, or privately handled at the government's behest (Kertzer & Tingley, 2018). The functions of political socialization that it serves include information dissemination, education, entertainment, propaganda, and advertising. Within the entertainment section, there is a diverse range of forms, including movies, music, news, short videos, animations, and more (Rovira Kaltwasser, 2021). The author aims to demonstrate how mass media serves as a means of disseminating political information, encompassing both educational content and political propaganda (Sumarno, 1989), like a film.

The process of incorporating politics into movies is carried out by a skilled individual who serves as a political communicator (Huddy et al., 2023). This individual is a professional who transforms the image of the president (a member of the political elite) and elevates them to a well-recognized and highly admired figure (Muldoon et al., 2021). The film aims to depict the government's success as a public image. The film studio actively engaged in professional communication to shape the picture's image and ultimately generate money.

Furthermore, visualizing politics holds significant importance for the political elite. The purpose of the imagery is to convey to the public that this individual possesses a highly favorable image. This image will have a significant impact on both the perception of the elite and the party, ultimately shaping their views and attitudes. In contemporary times, political iconography has transformed into an asset for political parties in the realm of political marketing. Many political parties perceive the use of imagery as a powerful strategy to reduce unfavorable perceptions of specific parties and political leaders (Hendrastomo, 2009). It can be said that the image is inherent in the imagination of the people (Rovira Kaltwasser, 2021; Schoonvelde et al., 2019).

Individuals' imaginations can vary from one another. Imagination is an innate quality found in the anticipations of every human. Each person has a unique method of expressing their imagination in relation to political reality. The mass media, through which political messages are conveyed, only represents a reconstructed version of actual reality. The portrayal of reality by the media is a cohesive and consistent representation. Hence, the depiction offered by the media can be referred to as media reality or artificial reality, which diverges from the actual world (Dan Nimmo, 1989).

The media serves as a conduit for corporate and political interests, presenting a constructed version of reality. The media engages in a purposeful reconstruction of life, focusing on its orientation towards specific goals. The reconstruction has a message to be communicated. In the realm of politics, the media frequently serves as a tool to enhance the reputation and standing of elites or political parties by carefully presenting their image. Furthermore, the media serves to tackle many concerns. The movie "Wag the Dog" was also like that.

The film "Wag the Dog" serves as a quintessential illustration of how propaganda can be employed by political or business entities within a context of press freedom. The video depicts the endeavours of journalists who are deceived by manipulative public relations experts or authoritarian leaders. A Spin Doctor is a campaign specialist who is adept in devising plans, exerting influence over the public, and mobilising large groups of people. He is highly visible in the media and can be described as a political strategist (Handayani, 2013). Political strategists or consultants who professionally serve the political elite maintain a favorable rapport with the media, enabling them to disseminate misinformation. Propaganda possesses the ability to manipulate facts to sway public opinion.

In this film, the spin doctor possesses a keen understanding of the journalist's fast-paced and sensation-seeking working method. The perception in society, meticulously shaped by the media, as though it were authentic. The public places trust in the outcomes of media manipulation without delving into a thorough analysis of the underlying mechanisms involved in news production.

In the age of journalistic liberty, it is insufficient to merely accept information without a healthy dose of skepticism. Skepticism serves as a method of confirming the accuracy of information received from the media. Particularly when media is actively involved in shaping the government's image for political motives. Here, it signifies the intentional manipulation of information for the goal of promoting propaganda. These journalists can be described as advocates for the interests of specific political classes. It is intriguing to further investigate the impact of a film on the development of student perspectives. In this film, the spin doctor possesses a comprehensive understanding of the journalist's operational framework, which is characterized by haste and a strong need for sensationalism. The perception in society, meticulously shaped by the media, as though it were an authentic representation of reality. The public places trust in the outcomes of media manipulation without delving into a thorough analysis of the underlying mechanisms involved in news production.

For youths, particularly students, films serve as a commonly consumed medium of knowledge among millennials. It signifies a strong correlation between film and millennials. Contemporary millennials exhibit a preference for consuming films as opposed to engaging with books. It is intriguing to delve deeper into the impact of films on the perceptions of students, specifically those studying political science. Political Science Students possess a greater level of intuition regarding political matters. The political science students are likely to provide a more precise analysis of the Wag the Dog movie, which explores propaganda and political images.

This article explores the perspective of Political Science students regarding the influence of mass media in shaping political image and disseminating propaganda, specifically in the context of the film "Wag the Dog". To provide a more comprehensive explanation, the following details are presented: 1) The film "Wag the Dog" impacts the emotions of students studying Political Sciences in relation to the creation of political image and propaganda. 2) The film "Wag the Dog" influences the confidence of students studying Political Sciences in relation to the creation and dissemination of political image. 3) The film "Wag the Dog" affects the political motivation and behaviors of students studying Political Sciences in relation to the creation of political image and propaganda. 4) Gender aspects play a role in shaping the response of students studying Political Sciences after watching the movie "Wag the Dog".

## METHODS

### Types of Research

Quantitative research methods are defined as approaches rooted in the positivist philosophy. These methods are employed to study a specific population and sample. Data collection techniques typically involve random selection, while data analysis is conducted using quantitative/statistical research instruments. The primary objective is to test the established hypothesis. Moreover, the research employs a quantitative methodology that is experimental in nature.

An experimental study is a commonly used research strategy to examine the effects of specific treatments on others under controlled conditions. The researchers used a quantitative approach, especially employing the Quasi-Experimental method with a One Group Pretest and Posttest Design, based on the given explanation and research field. The research design will be evaluated by employing a Pre-test, which will be conducted before the Political Science Students of FISIP UIN Ar-Raniry view the movie. After the Politics Students have watched the film, they will be given a post-test. The ensuing experiments evaluated their media consumption reaction to major Indonesian networks such as BBC, CNBC, and CNN.

By implementing the previously described research method, the obtained results will be more precise. In order to mitigate the bias that arises from the research findings, the following methodology will be employed in this study:

<i>Pre-test</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Post-Test</i>
T <sub>1</sub>	X	T <sub>2</sub>

## Description:

**T1:** The pre-test was given before to a Political Science student viewing a movie.

**X:** A video is used as a type of treatment to a student studying political science.

**T2:** The concluding examination (Post-Test) will be administered subsequent to the Political Science Students viewing the film.

## Phases of research

- Gathering research material: selecting the measuring scale (in this instance, the Likert scale), identifying target demographics and samples, compiling a roster of pre-test statements, and creating a list of post-test questions.
- Engaging with library resources: extracting pertinent knowledge from written materials, such as books, journals, or articles. The objective is to ascertain the pertinent indication of a theory that is applicable to the subject matter of the ongoing research or study.
- Conducting data analysis: conducting validity tests, normality testing, simple linear regression tests, determinant coefficient tests, and analysis.
- Analyzing the results: entails examining each aspect (such as emotions, political views, reasons of political behaviors, and even gender dimensions) to elucidate the perceptions derived from the experiment following the viewing of the movie "Wag the Dog."

## Population and Sample

The population of this study comprises 249 students enrolled in the Prodi Political Sciences Faculty of Social Sciences and Government Sciences at Islamic State University of Ar-Raniry for the years 2019, 2020, and 2021. The rationale for selecting Students 2019 for both 2020 and 2021 is based on the fact that both cohorts have already completed relevant coursework, which, as stated by the authors, enhances their comprehension of this research.

No	Level	Males	Female	Quantity
1	2019	59	36	95
2	2020	27	26	53
3	2021	68	33	101
Total				249

**Tabel 1. The Phenomenon of Population Growth**

In this study, the author used a purposive selection technique, wherein the sample is selected based on specific criteria. The author considers students who have attended courses relating to this research in the years 2019, 2020, and 2021, since it enhances their comprehension of the film "Wag the Dog." Based on the above statement, the author intentionally selected a certain sample size of 125 students majoring in Political Science that fulfils the author's expectations.

## The strategies for analyzing data

After doing the instrument's test, the objective is to examine many aspects:

- A normality test is conducted to evaluate the distribution of data or variables within a group, specifically to determine if the data follows a normal distribution.
- The purpose of conducting a simple regression analysis is to examine the impact of the media variable (X) on student perception (Y). The regression test provides estimates of the change in the dependent variable when the independent variable increases or decreases by one unit.
- Adjusted R-Squared is a statistical measure used to quantify the proportion of the combined impact of the variables on the dependent variable. In addition, this test can also be utilized to assess the efficacy of the regression line we possess.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Synopsis of the Wag the Dog

"Wag the Dog" is a satirical film that critiques the American government. The cast of Barry Levinson's film includes Dustin Hoffman, Robert Deniro, Anne Heche, and Denis Leary. The film is an adaptation of the satirical conspiracy novel "Wag the Dog" written by American author Larry Beinhart, with a political subject. The film shows the proceedings of the United States' general election, which is held to pick the President. However, a fortnight before the vote tally, one of the female aviators arrived and alleged that she had experienced harassment from the President within the confines of the President's office. The president perceived that his campaign was imperilled with potential failure. Subsequently, the president recognises the necessity of enlisting the aid of an individual proficient in restoring his public image. Subsequently, Winifred Ames, an assistant to the President, approaches Conrad Brean, a communications expert and the agent for the presidential campaign, with the objective of diverting public attention away from the President's sex scandal.

Brean seeks the assistance of Stanley Motts, a prominent Hollywood film director portrayed by Dustin Hoffman, to collaborate in producing a film centred around the Albanian conflict. Motts fabricated the entire narrative, which exceeded Brean's desired scope. Following a brief session of creative thinking, they devised a straightforward yet astonishing storyline in which Albanian terrorists successfully transported nuclear weapons to Canada with the intention of clandestinely transferring them to the United States.

By employing genuine actors, actresses, and advanced special effects. Brean and Motts are tasked with ensuring the tale is brought to the post-election period without any ambiguity. Once all of these scenarios have been successfully executed, the media professionals become completely dedicated to the conflict. Gradually, the collective attention of the American people is increasingly fixated on news regarding the conflict in Albania. The president is portrayed as heroic for resolving a non-existent conflict. Consequently, the president's public image has been restored and the story of the sex scandal has gained widespread attention. This circumstance also proved advantageous for the president as he ultimately emerged victorious in the election with a significantly larger number of votes compared to his opponent.

### Result of Data Analysis

#### 1. Validity Test

The validity test is conducted to ascertain the usability of the assessment instrument based on the validity level of each statement item and the sample size of 125 students in this study. If the number of counts is greater than the number of tables, then the statement item is considered legitimate. If the count of  $r$  is less than the number of  $r$  tables, then the declaration item is considered invalid.

Variable	Statement item	$r$ count	$r$ table	Description
Media (X)	Pre-test 1	0,495**	0.1757	Valid
	Pre-test 2	0,487**	0.1757	Valid
	Pre-test 3	0,287**	0.1757	Valid
Perception (Y)	Pre-test 4	0,707**	0.1757	Valid
	Pre-test 5	0,634**	0.1757	Valid
	Pre-test 6	0,481**	0.1757	Valid
	Pre-test 7	0,651**	0.1757	Valid
	Pre-test 8	0,607**	0.1757	Valid
	Pre-test 9	0,266**	0.1757	Valid

**Table 2. Pre-test Validity Test Results**

Source: Pre-test data processed using SPSS version 26



Variabel	Item Pernyataan	<i>r hitung</i>	<i>r tabel</i>	ket
Media (X)	Post-test 1	0,392**	0.1757	Valid
	Post-test 2	0,478**	0.1757	Valid
	Post-test 3	0,382**	0.1757	Valid
Persepsi (Y)	Post-test 4	0,511**	0.1757	Valid
	Post-test 5	0,547**	0.1757	Valid
	Post-test 6	0,495**	0.1757	Valid
	Post-test 7	0,363**	0.1757	Valid
	Post-test 8	0,379**	0.1757	Valid
	Post-test 9	0,391**	0.1757	Valid

**Table 3. Post-test Validity Test Results**

Source: Post-test data processed using SPSS version 26

Based on the validity test table generated using SPSS version 26, it is evident that the validity coefficient (R or r) exceeds the critical value (r table). All statement items on the pre-test and post-test have been deemed valid after conducting validity testing for each item. No statement items were excluded from either test.

## 2. Reliability Testing

Reliability tests can be used to evaluate the consistency of outcomes by measuring the same symptoms. This study employed the Alpha Cronbach ( $\alpha$ ) test to assess the reliability, as each statement in the study utilised a Likert scale. An instrument is considered dependable if the value of Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) exceeds 0.60. Conversely, if the Alpha value is below 0.60, the instrument is deemed unreliable.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.658	9

Table 5. Pre-test Reliability Test Results

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.471	9

**Table 4. Pre-test Reliability Test Results**

Source: Data processed using SPSS version 26

Based on the pre-test reliability test table generated using SPSS version 26, it is evident that the alpha value is greater than 0.60, specifically 0.658, which exceeds the threshold of 0.60. Based on the outcomes of the reliability testing of pre-test variables, it can be inferred that the variable under investigation is deemed reliable.

## 3. Normality test

The purpose of the normality test is to determine if the interfering variables or residues in a regression model follow a normal distribution. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistical test was employed in this work as a method to assess normalcy. The normalcy test in this investigation is displayed in the subsequent table:

Tests of Normality	
Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>	Shapiro-Wilk

	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
<b>Pretest</b>	.242	9	.138	.854	9	.082

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

**Table 6. Pre-test of Normality**

Source: Data processed using SPSS version 26

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
<b>Posttest</b>	.248	9	.116	.913	9	.338

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

**Table 7. Post-test Normality**

Source: Data processed using SPSS version 26

The normality test indicates that the significance of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on the pre-test data is greater than 0.05, specifically 0.138. Therefore, we may conclude that the pre-test data follows a normal distribution.

#### 4. Linear Regression Test

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
<b>1</b>	(Constant)	4.023	1.551		2.594	.122
	MEDIA	.060	.404	.103	.147	.897

a. Dependent Variable: PERSEPSI

**Table 8 Linear Regression Test Results**

Source: Data processed using SPSS version 26

The table above shows the constant value (a) of 4.023 and the value (b) of 0.60. Using these values, we can derive the simple linear regression equation as follows: The equation is Y equals 4.023 plus 0.60 times X. Based on the aforementioned computations in SPSS, the following conclusions can be drawn: The constant value of 4.023 indicates that when the variable MEDIA (X) is equal to 0, the variable PERSEPSI (Y) will be 4.023, provided that all other factors that potentially influence perception remain constant. The regression coefficient of 0.60 for the media variable indicates that for every 1 unit rise in media variables, there will be a corresponding increase of 0.60 units in student perception. Based on the regression calculations provided, it can be inferred that there is a positive correlation between the medium variable and the student's perception variable.

#### 5. Determinant coefficient test

The determination coefficient is used to determine how much influence a free variable has on a bound variable. The value of the determination coefficient is determined by the Adjusted R square value.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
<b>1</b>	.103 <sup>a</sup>	.011	-.484	.35165

a. Predictors: (Constant), Media (X)

**Table 9. Determinant Coefficient Test Results**

Source: Data processed using SPSS version 26

From the given data, it is evident that the Adjusted R Square value is 0.484, indicating that the Media variable (X) has a 48.4% impact on the Perception (Y) variable.

## The Political Psychology Implications of Wag the Dog: Emotions, Beliefs and Political Behavior

### 1. The Emotional Aspect of Visual Representation and Political Manipulation.

The emotional dimension is a multifaceted phenomenon that comprises the subjective experience of positive or negative feelings towards a consumable entity, including the visual medium of film. Humans possess a cognitive system, encompassing their thinking processes, ideas, and information, that influences the way students react to their observations. Three indicators, namely joy, sadness, and anger, were utilised to validate the emotional dimension in this investigation. The confirmation method involves administering pre-test measurements prior to students viewing the Wag the Dog movie, followed by post-test measurements after they have watched the movie. These are the emotional fluctuations that take place prior to and following the viewing of the movie, which impact the emotional aspect.

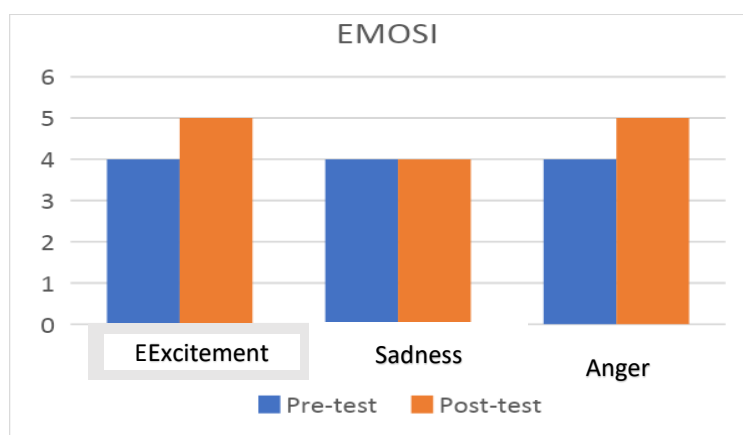


Figure 1. Emotions

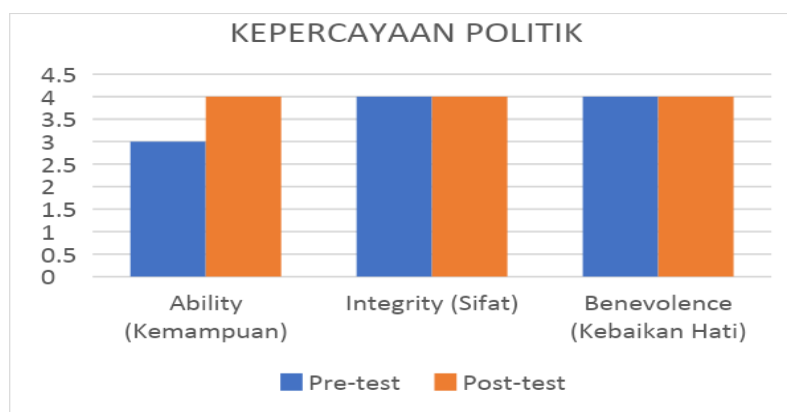
The table presents three noteworthy observations regarding the signs of joy, sadness, and anger. Initially, there is a noticeable change in the emotional expression of happiness and anger prior to and after viewing the film. Although the change is not particularly substantial. Prior to seeing, the level of agreement was at scale 4, but after watching, it increased to scale 5, indicating a strong agreement. Illustrations include the preliminary remarks "I am pleased to observe the news being showcased by prominent media outlets such as the BBC, CNBC, CNN" and the subsequent statements "It is highly gratifying to witness news being featured in renowned media outlets like the BBC, CNBC, CNN". The expression of enthusiasm stems from the cleverness of the political manipulation carried out by the media in depicting prominent individuals. Anger, like joy, elicits a similar reaction. The pre-test statement indicated anger by expressing dissatisfaction with the media's consistent portrayal of a leader in a negative light. In the post-test, the statement conveyed that the media, which consistently presents a negative image of the leader, is not trustworthy. The imprecise fluctuation of joy and anger indicators is caused by the disproportionate portrayal of news in Indonesia by the mass media. Furthermore, the buzzer's existence was intentionally fabricated by the privileged class to serve their political agenda.

Moreover, the degree of sadness, assessed on a 4-point scale, remained constant both before to and during the movie screening. (I concur). The pre-test remark, "I am apprehensive about witnessing the manipulation of news by major media outlets," is mirrored in the post-test declaration, which expresses sorrow upon the realization that major media outlets can manipulate the news. The strategic orchestration of event design within the military environment in Albania generates a deceptive portrayal of warfare, notwithstanding the lack of genuine hostilities. The acknowledgment of the media as a powerful political force capable of influencing public opinion has emerged.

### 2. The Dimension of Confidence in Imaging and Political Propaganda.



Political views refer to the actions or attitudes that people or groups express within a political setting. Political belief can be defined as an individual's conviction or sentiment that originates in opposition to the government or the ruling class, regarding their responsibility or role in expressing the desires of society. Political confidence can be quantified using three indicators: ability, integrity, and compassion (Kindness). Below are the measured dimensions of political belief in this experiment:



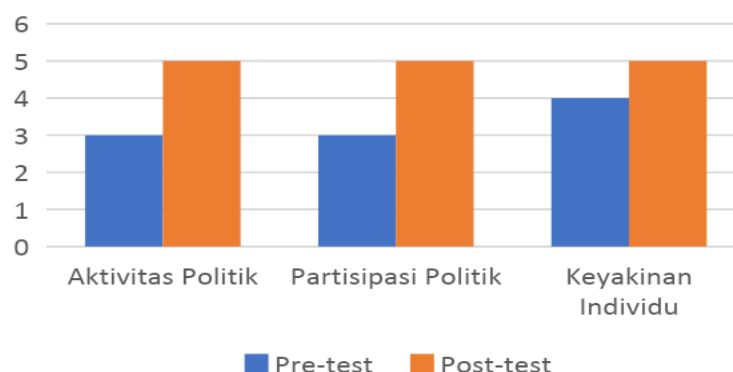
**Figure 2. Political Belief**

The table displays two entities. The only indicator that demonstrates changes before and after watching the movie is the ability indicator (ability). While the change is not particularly substantial, it involves moving from scale 3 (sufficiently approved) to scale 4 (Agree). The shift was evident in the pre-test statement, which asserted that a leader with a positive media image must possess commendable skills. However, the post-test statement contradicted this notion, stating that a leader who excels in media does not necessarily possess exceptional capabilities. The empirical evidence reveals that the positive portrayal of a leader in the media has minimal impact on popular political perception of the political ruling class.

Furthermore, there is a lack of progress observed in the integrity and benevolence markers, which are assessed on a scale of 4 (Agree). The pre-test displays the integrity indicator through the statement "I believe that a leader with high integrity will have a favorable image in the media", whereas the post-test statement states that "Leaders with a positive media image do not always possess higher integrity". It highlights that the positive portrayal of a leader in the media has little impact on the public's opinion of their political beliefs and the leader's integrity. Political science students engage in comprehensive examination, avoiding reliance on a single media source for information. The signal of compassion is also present (Kindness). The initial statement posits that a leader's compassion has an impact on their positive portrayal in the media. However, the subsequent statement contends that a media leader's favorable image is not solely derived from their own moral character. The student held the belief that the veracity of the media is not inherently synonymous with its benevolence. This implies that the political science student's perception of a leader's virtue is unaffected by the positive portrayal of the leader in the media.

### 3. Dimensions of Political Motive of Behavior against Imaging and Political Manipulation.

Political motives refer to the actions or endeavours undertaken by people or groups for political purposes. Political behaviour primarily pertains to the exercise of power and authority in governing public affairs, as well as the pursuit of political objectives. Based on the data presented in the graphic above, there are substantial and noteworthy changes seen in the three indicators. The measurement of political behaviour reasons involves three indices: political action, political involvement, and individual beliefs. The table below displays the outcomes of experiments conducted on political science students, focusing on the many aspects of political behaviour motives.



**Figure 3. Motives For Political Behavior**

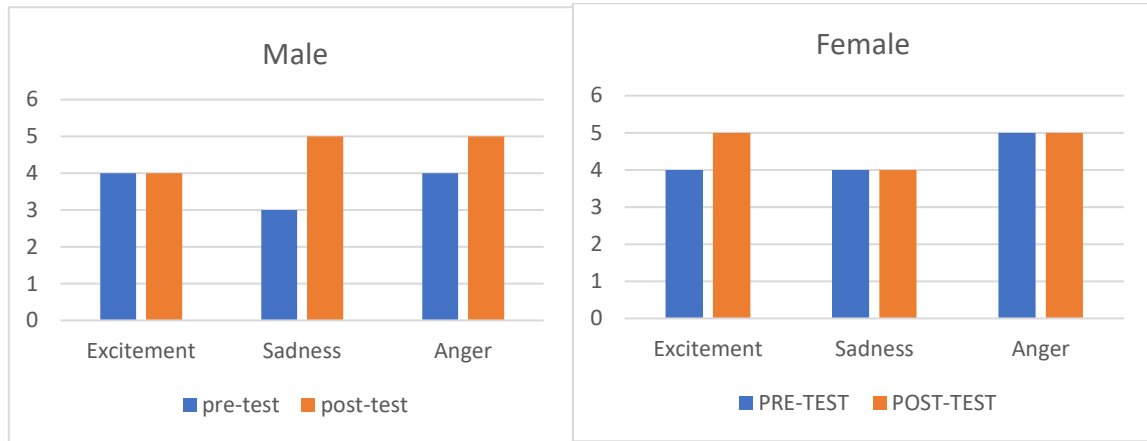
Contrary to the dimensions of emotion and political ideology, the dimension of motivation in political behaviors exhibits changes both prior to and following the observation of each measured indicator. The table displays two observations. Initially, the indicators of political activity and political participation shown a substantial alteration, transitioning from a pre-watching level of agreement of 3 (sufficiently agreed) to a scale of 5. (strongly agree). The confirmation procedure involves administering a pre-test that assesses the individual's understanding of the statement "I am aware that a leader who is engaged in political activity not only has a good purpose but also has something to accomplish." The confirmation post-test examines the statement that "Political activity conducted by a leader is solely intended to achieve a desired outcome and not for a noble purpose." Political science students commonly recognize the basic reality that the elite's actions, as portrayed by the media, aim to present a positive public image. Similarly, this applies to metrics of political engagement. The statement made during the pre-test was "I selected a leader based on their prominent portrayal of political engagement in the media." Conversely, the statement made during the post-test was "The presence of a highly politically involved individual in the media did not sway my decision to vote for them." It relies on comprehending the media with the intention of constructing a favorable perception of the leader.

Additionally, the individual's confidence indicators have undergone a transformation after seeing. However, the shift is rather insignificant in comparison to the measures of political activity and political involvement. The shift is seen in the pre-test statement "I am confident that my trust in a leader will grow due to their positive portrayal in the media," whereas the post-test statement states, "A leader's positive portrayal in the mass media does not enhance my trust." Once the pre-test achieved level 4 (as promised), the post-test advanced to level 5. (strongly agree). Political Science students understand that the positive portrayal of a leader by the media does not actually impact their decision-making process when selecting a leader with a favorable image. The students were well-informed about the political propaganda conducted by the mass media at an early stage.

Among the three elements of political activity (emotions, beliefs, and motives), this experiment of watching the movie "Wag the Dog" has the most significant impact on reasons for political behaviors. Students' general understanding of political science serves as an initial resource for evaluating visual information presented in political films. The acquisition of knowledge, the observations made, and the level of comprehension attained will shape their reaction to the film.

### **The Influence of Gender Disparities on Emotional Aspects, Political Ideologies, and Motivations For Political Engagement.**

Gender is an attribute that is produced by society and culture, and it applies to both men and women. Gender is a concept that describes the differentiation in the qualities, status, position, and societal roles of men and women, which are determined by sociocultural factors (Fakih, 2008). The graphic below illustrates the gender disparities that impact some parameters.



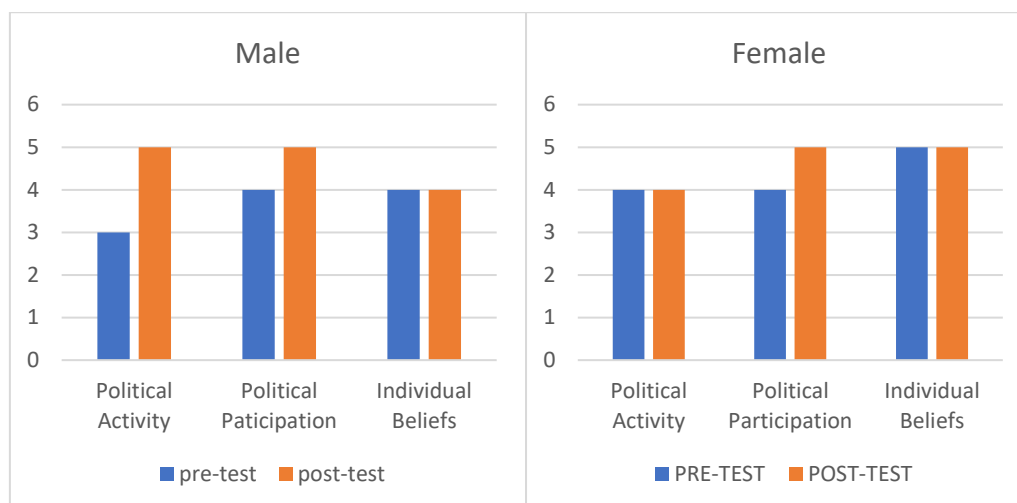
**Figure 4. Emotional Dimensions**

Based on the diagram data provided, it is evident that gender disparities will impact the variations in responses. In terms of the emotional aspect, the male participants exhibited a significant shift in their response to the sadness indication, increasing from a rating of 3 (moderately agreed) to a rating of 5 on a scale. (strongly agree). The next reading on the enthusiasm indicator shows a lack of progress, while the anger indicator remains stable without any significant fluctuations. In contrast to the female participants, who did not exhibit significant alterations in the emotional aspect. There is a minor alteration in the indication of enthusiasm, although it is not particularly noteworthy. Men have a greater degree of emotional responsiveness towards media content compared to women.



**Figure 5. The Dimension of Political Belief**

The figure provided illustrates how gender disparities impact the aspect of belief. Men who are notably masculine priorities certain qualities, such as courage and strength, as key attributes. While women who embody femininity priorities integrity, it is not the case for everyone. The graphic illustrates a noticeable change in the level of agreement towards the political aspect of confidence, as indicated by a shift from a rating of 3 (moderate agreement) to 5 (strong agreement) after viewing the film. They hold the belief that the media effectively influenced the perception of the elite's competence in the eyes of the populace. The female participants exhibit a disparity in the integrity indicator, as seen by a variation in their agreement levels before and after viewing, measured on a scale ranging from 4 (agreed) to 5 (very agreed). The dichotomy of masculinity and femininity emerged as a significant influence in the development of political psychology as a response to the mass media.



**Figure 6. Dimensions of Political Behavior Motives**

Based on the schematic data provided, it is evident that gender disparities influence variations in reactions to the dimensions of political behavioural reasons. The graphic reveals three key observations. Men are undergoing alterations in markers of political engagement and political participation, but women are merely undergoing changes in political involvement. With respect to political engagement, both males and females had comparable reactions, ranging from a rating of 4 (agree) to a rating of 5 (very agree). Furthermore, the analysis of political engagement indicators revealed noteworthy alterations just among male participants, namely in their ratings on a scale ranging from 3 (moderately approved) to 5 (strongly approved) before and after seeing the content (strongly agree). Both male and female respondents showed no change in measures of political participation before and after watching. However, it should be noted that women tend to have stronger political views, ranking at a level of 5 on a scale of agreement, whilst males often rank at a level of 4 (Agree). Ultimately, the alteration in media perception mostly impacts the male-female-gender dynamic in relation to the female.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates the influence of media on the political psychology of individuals who ingest the information disseminated by the media. However, the extent of that influence is largely determined by the individual's existing knowledge and history, as is seen in this experimental study. The experiment was performed on a political science student who possessed significant scientific expertise in the domain. If there is a reaction to the political film, there will be a non-academic response. While it does not completely exclude the possibility of a response, the response itself lacks significant meaning.

There are three primary conclusions that can be drawn from this study. Initially, the video has an impact on the emotions of political science students in a moderate manner. Specifically, out of the three indicators, only two indicators show a change in relation to media political images and propaganda before and after watching the film. Furthermore, the movie has had a negligible impact on the political ideologies of political science students. This is since only one out of the three indicators examined in the film has shown any alteration, namely pertaining to the portrayal of political figures in the media and the dissemination of propaganda. Furthermore, the video "Wag the Dog" has significantly impacted the aspects of political behaviors that drive the motivations of students studying political science. This is evidenced by the existence of alterations in the three indicators examined for political portrayal and manipulation. Furthermore, gender plays a significant role in shaping the response to each component. Men exhibit greater enthusiasm in providing comments compared to women, particularly in relation to attributes such as strength and courage, which are commonly associated with masculinity. Unlike women who tend to be more passive in their response to media political imagery and propaganda, particularly in terms of how women express their feminine influence.

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