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## SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

### **The third person effect and the impact of media messages based on the opinions of students of the University of Rzeszów**

The subject of perception and media influence on recipients in world literature is often taken. However, the development of mass media is so fast that the issues often get outdated, and thus it is difficult to grasp the essence of the topic under research.

In Poland, the subject of media and mass communication is analyzed by many researchers. In their works, they raise issues related to the analysis of mass media functioning, the role of the media as an instrument of marketing activities (including political marketing) and the impact of media messages on recipients. However, work on the third person effect is rare in Poland. Due to the high complexity of the mass media issue, it is difficult to consider the proposed topic from the perspective of only one field, because the subject of mass media is interdisciplinary. This doctoral thesis, due to the reference to the theory of the Chicago school or positivist theories, is a sociological work. However, the problems presented in it require a broader interdisciplinary approach, especially in the case of the third person effect, which was proposed by W. Phillips Davison as a hypothesis. Currently, this concept is largely developed on the basis of social psychology. However, the concept of mass media can be considered from the perspective of, among others sociology, social psychology, political science and economics. Therefore, to avoid the error of reductionism, ie to explain the studied phenomenon only in terms of a narrow set of concepts from one field, the elements of the theory of social psychology and political science were used in the doctoral thesis.

The main objective of the work is to determine whether there is a third person effect among students of the University of Rzeszów, what variables have an impact on the formation of this effect and what affects the size and its strength. The study was conducted among students. As a social category, they are people who seek to broaden their interests and knowledge, often traveling and open to social change. First of all, these are people who often use mass media. Research shows that young people devote much of their day to the media, so it's interesting to see if they see their influence on themselves or others.

The stage of conducting the study was preceded by an analysis of the existing materials concerning the theory of the media and the third person effect. This allowed to formulate the main questions and research hypotheses. Variables that were interesting in the author's opinion in the context of the third person effect are social capital, cultural capital, social involvement and media perception. The analysis of the collected research material allowed to answer the questions posed and research hypotheses.

In the first chapters of the thesis (chapters 2 and 3) theories on media communication. It was also tried to explain the concept of media coverage, in particular, attention to advertising as one of the types of media coverage. This is to introduce the reader to issues related to the influence of the media, discussed in the subsequent chapters of the dissertation.

In Chapter 4, the author referred to the issue of the media society, which can be considered as well suited to the currently occurring social changes and young people functioning in it. Theories on the influence of mass media and the means by which the media try to influence the recipients are discussed. Attention was also drawn to social and cultural capital, as it was recognized that the capital held by the respondents may differentiate the occurrence of the third person effect. It is also worth noting that social and cultural capital can be considered as factors of social development, thus it is interesting to present at the work what level the surveyed students present.

The theories concerning the third person effect was presented in Chapter 5 are significant for the dissertation. The genesis and definition of the third person effect was presented, and attention was drawn to the variables that may affect the formation of the third person effect.

The next chapter presents the research methodology and the technique of own research. It also included the presentation of the purpose of the work, questions and research hypotheses, the operationalization of the most important concepts and sampling.

Chapter 7 presents the results of the survey conducted among students of the University of Rzeszów. The research hypotheses were verified and the results obtained were discussed in detail. Analytical chapters end with sub-sections containing synthetic conclusions that arise after the analysis of the research material.

Chapter 8 of the paper is a chapter summarizing the analysis carried out, with an indication of what assumptions were made and the direction of further work on the third person effect.