

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Hamma Lakhdar University of El-Oued
Faculty of Arts and Languages
Department of Arts and English Language



UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCE OF AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION ON DOMESTIC POLICY FORMATION

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization**

Submitted by:

HADJAIDJI Messaouda

HAMARHOUM Zoulikha

Supervised by:

Dr. YOUMBAI Mohamed Yacine

Board of Examiners:

Dr. GHEDEIR B. Mohamed

President

University of El-Oued

Dr. YOUMBAI Med Yacine

Supervisor

University of El-Oued

Prof. NAOUA Mohammed

Examiner

University of El-Oued

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Dedication

The fruit of knowledge is the greatest achievement that a person obtains in his life.

I dedicate this work to the pillars of my life:

“To my parents, who gave me the gift of dreams and the ability to realize them”.

Then, to my precious sisters ,and brothers

*Finally , To "myself", who has confronted every obstacle, dared to overcome them,
and will persist in honoring the commitment.*

"HAMARHOUM ZOULIKHA"

Dedication

The story has ended, and I have lifted my hat, bidding farewell to past years.

I dedicate my graduation to the source of love and life,

*to your kind soul, to the true meaning of manhood. To the one who taught me many
meanings in life, to the one who raised me*

*alongside my beloved father, who will never be replaced. May God have mercy
on you and bless your pure soul.*

*I will never forget you as long as I live. To the big heart pulsating with love and
tenderness, to the symbol of compassion*

And warmth, to the one my heart will always beat for with love, my dear mother.

May God protect her and prolong her life.

*To my aunt, who I call my beloved mother, and to my brother and my sisters, who
support my every step and are the pillars of my success.*

*Thanks to you, I stand in this beautiful and honorable position. Thank you to all my
friends, thank you to those who*

taught me knowledge, thank you all.

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Abstract

This research explores how American public opinion influences domestic policy choices by analyzing historical and modern instances to understand how public opinion affects policy results and the various elements that influence this connection. The research goal is to recognize and examine how public opinion is impacting, and combined in the formulation of domestic policies. It studies how elected officials and government institutions respond to changes in public opinion, and evaluate how much public sentiment influences policy agendas and decision-making procedures. Moreover, the research will investigate how media, interest groups, and public opinion polls impact public perceptions and policy results. The importance of this research is in its capacity to examine essential inquiries about how democracy operates, government responsiveness, and the influences on policy-making. The study suggests that the opinions of the broader population are essential in influencing internal policies, prompting policymakers to take public preferences into account when making decisions. Data of the results had gathered and analyzed through a qualitative research which involves reviewing literature, analyzing case studies, and drawing conclusions to make recommendations. The results indicate that the opinions of American citizens are essential in influencing domestic policies in the United States, with political figures, the media, and the issue's significance all playing significant role. Public opinion is usually taken into account by elected officials and policymakers when creating and executing policies, especially for important issues when the public opinion is paying attention. . In summary, policymaking in the United States is significantly impacted by public opinion. Nevertheless, the impact differs among different sectors and tiers of government.

Keywords : American Public Opinion, Citizens, Domestic policy , Polls, Political Decision-Making

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACA	Affordable Care Act
AC	American Capital
CPI	Consumer Price Index
EPA	Environment Protection Agency
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act
GDP	Gross Domestic Product.
Gov Track US	Government Track of the United States
K-12	Kindergarten to 12 th Grade
NAACP	the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.
PP	Percentage Point .
TCJA	Tax Cuts and Jobs Act .
TV	Television
U.S	United States
WPO	World Public Opinion
WWAC	Women's Working Agreement Conference

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Since the founding of the United States, the influence of public opinion has been significant in American politics. The core of democratic governance is based on the idea that policy decisions should reflect the will of the people. Over time, powerful labor unions have played a crucial role in shaping national politics. At the same time, the majority of individuals involved in U.S. politics recognize the great importance of domestic affairs. In the United States, domestic public opinion holds substantial sway in guiding the actions and decisions of political leaders and authorities. It acts as a potent and transformative force in shaping political preferences.

The American public opinion is seen as a gauge for how deeply society is engaging in various political and social issues in the nation. It serves as a gauge, providing important information on the level of support or opposition to government actions and policies. The interaction between the public and policymakers plays a crucial role in the democratic process in the United States.

2. Statement of the Problem

The research explores how American public opinion influences domestic policy decisions. Through an analysis of historical and current instances, we seek to understand the degree to which public sentiment impacts policy results, and the factors that influence this connection. Additionally, this study will examine areas where public opinion diverges from policy choices and investigate possible explanations for these inconsistencies.

3. Aims of the Study

The primary objective of this dissertation is to provide valuable insights into the interplay between public opinion and domestic policy-making. This research aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To identify and analyze the mechanisms through which public opinion is expressed, influenced, and aggregated in the context of domestic policy-making .
- To examine the reactivity of elected officials and government institutions to shifts in public sentiment, and to assess the extent to which public opinion shapes policy agendas and decision-making, processes .
- To explore the role of various actors, including media, interest groups and public opinion polls, in shaping public perceptions and influencing policy outcomes .

- To examine the impact of public opinion on key areas of domestic policy, such as; healthcare, education, taxation and social welfare.
- To contribute to a deeper understanding of the democratic process in America by highlighting the significance of public opinion as a driving force behind policy reforms and legislative initiatives.

4. Research Questions

The issue we face lies in the discrepancy between the American public opinion and the actual policies being implemented. This opens the door to questions regarding the extent of public opinion's influence on political decision-making and the representation of policymakers of the people's will. by shedding light on this issue, we pose the following research questions:

Q1. What are the primary factors influencing public opinion on key domestic policy issues?

Q2. To what extent do elected officials and policymakers consider public opinion when formulating and implementing policies?

Q3. How does American public opinion shape the development and implementation of domestic policies ?

We hypothesize that if politicians consider the preferences of the people while making choices, public opinion might have a considerable impact on domestic policy.

We also hypothesize that if a positive relationship between public opinion and the final outcomes of policies exists, then the success of policies that align with the public's preferences will occur.

5. Research Methodology

This research utilizes a qualitative research methodology based on a mixed-methods approach to collect and analyze data to understand the relationship between public opinion and domestic policy in the United States.

A Literature Review is conducted through an extensive review of scholarly articles, books, public opinion polls, and government reports in order to understand historical trends and theories regarding public opinion and domestic policy. Moreover, comprehensive case studies on specific policy issues are also examined to reveal how public opinion influenced political decision-making.

6. Significance of the Study

The study on American public opinion and domestic policy formation is significant because it addresses fundamental questions about the functioning of

democracy, the responsiveness of government, and the factors that shape policy decisions. Its findings have important implications for debates about the health of American democracy and the role of citizens in the policymaking process.

7. Structure of the Study

This dissertation comprises an introduction setting the stages of the topic, in addition to two chapters. The first chapter is theoretical, whilst the second is practical. The first chapter deals with defining public opinion and its importance, the factors influencing American public opinion, and finally its role.

The second chapter sheds light on the public opinion on domestic policy issues in the USA, the impact of public opinion on America's domestic policy, case studies of specific policies shaped by public opinion, the challenges in shaping public opinion, and finally future trends. At the end of the study, a conclusion reviewing the chapters to finally confirm that American public opinion has a major influence in shaping American domestic policy.

CHAPTER ONE

Dynamic Nature of American Public Opinion

Chapter One: Dynamic Nature of American Public Opinion

Introduction

1.1. Origins Of Public Opinion

1.2. Defining American Public Opinion

1.3. Measuring Public Opinion

1.4. Importance of American Public Opinion in a democracy

1.5. Factors Influencing American Public Opinion

1.6. Role of American Public Opinion in Shaping Policy Decisions

Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter delves into the theoretical underpinnings of the dissertation, focusing on the dynamic nature of American public opinion. It is structured into six parts for comprehensive coverage. The first part provides a historical background of public opinion, while the second part precisely defines popular opinion. The third part delves into effective methods for measuring public opinion, and the fourth part underscores the pivotal importance of public opinion in a democracy. The fifth section thoroughly examines the various factors that influence American public opinion, and finally, the role of public opinion in shaping policy decisions is meticulously explored.

1.1 .Origins Of Public Opinion

Public opinion can be related to several significant events from different periods. The change of growth of public opinion that was experienced during the Enlightenment of the 18th century was a distinct new shift in political discourses. In this period literacy level ascended in return facilitating the expansion of the merchant group whereby more persons gained access to the political forums with a voice to present their political opinions. this new ability to express views in the open facilitated the promotion of the modern political process of making a society more liberal. It was a time of great changes in the world and people's minds and ideas became more influential in society and the real life of the state (Price, 1992).

Mack (2023) stated that during the Middle Ages and early modern times, authority figures such as rulers and religious leaders sought public support by cultivating popularity. This was due to technological advancements in written works around the 15th century, particularly in print media, which allowed authors to popularize ideas and contribute to the expression of public opinions. Print media primarily included newspapers, which were established in the 1600s and quickly disseminated information and opinions, although they were somewhat limited by censorship practices. in the late 1700s, Jacques Necker, the financial minister of Louis XVI, spoke about the effect of public opinion on the financial and political system, noting that the educated class enjoyed maximum authority in this case. One of the revolutionary movements in human history was the formation of the thirteen colonies of the United States of America and their separation from England in the late seventeenth century, which was a significant event influenced by public sentiment. Although the actual terms "public opinion" or its related terms such as "opinion public" were not coined before the eighteenth century, the concept that there is something known as public opinion, collectively formed by consensus and dissent, existed from ancient civilizations but evolved with advancements in communication, education, and politics.

Al-Khatib (2013) detailed that, at the dawn of the current age, several philosophers and scientists regarded public opinion as deserving of their attention, although these individuals used terms that differed from those of their peers. From the principles that Machiavelli outlined in his lectures, it can be presumed that the theorist was interested in what is today referred to as The voice of the people. Montesquieu here used what Rousseau referred to as 'public reason' – and they are to be identified with the 'general will'. Nonetheless, in this present generation, where technology in mobility and interconnection is already established enabling societies to interact, the persons can easily interact. despite the transformation of the globe into a tiny village and the creation of new phrases such as globalization, constellation, and universality, the most significant aspect of all of the above remains: the struggle for people's rights Human rights struggle of the people Human rights for peoples' rights Public opinion was seen to have a great impact on the processes of self-determination, on the stretching of education and culture and on the creation of the human rights notions.

Al-Khatib (2013) stated that, during this period, both the size and quality of the group of public opinion augmented and the techniques of public opinion communications became better to suit the needs of the increasing numbers of people who were engaging in public opinion from home or office. This led to people having civil rights but without having to encounter issues such as race, class, religion and other discriminating factors. For this reason, the role of public opinion began to enhance, and it became a significant factor that politicians and leaders of different countries came to address.

1 .2 .Defining American Public Opinion

Scholars differ on one concept of public opinion. The concept has several interpretations based on how "the public" is defined and ideas about who is opinion should or does matter the most individuals, organizations, or elites. in this context, many attempts have been made to give a more consistent definition.

In analysing the rhetorical traces of American politics, one of the most important terms to speak of is public opinion. In essence, public opinion entails the general perception of people in a particular society about political leadership and administration. However, the meaning or definition of the term public opinion can specifically be understood in several ways as has been defined by different scholars (Paletz et al.,2011).

Bakr (2021) pointed that in politics and personal life people are influenced by the opinions of other people in the community they dwell in. It defines the connection between those who rule over society and those who are to be ruled by the former. Another factor is that public opinion is a crucial aspect that affects elections and political choices as well. thus, it can be deemed that the direction of public opinion can be considered as one of the most significant factors dictating governance in democratic countries. It is thus pertinent to safeguard against allowing some entities

to manage the level of public awareness to ensure that democratic processes continue to be considered legitimate.

Longley (2021) stated that over five decades ago, in 1961, an American political scientist V. O. Key made a definition of public opinion which is still widely accepted today as “those public ideas with which the governing establishments consider it advisable to comport. ”

Erikson and Tedin (2019) believe that public opinion can be regarded as the overall perceptions and attitudes of adults regarding matters that are of concern to the government or the policies that it has set.

Glynn (2016) stated that public opinion has been classified into five categories based on various features. The fourth category defines that public opinion is formed by the power of media and elite. Political analysts believe that public opinion is influenced by influential people such as journalists, politicians, and pollsters. This idea, proposed by Walter Lippmann, suggests that public opinion is often shaped by these leaders in society. Lippmann's claim was that the average citizen cannot keep up to date with every public issue, so their opinions on such issues would be superficial. Public opinion is largely formed by individuals' basic reactions to the information they receive from the media and a limited number of influential opinion leaders.

According to the definitions presented earlier, we can see that Paletz gives the term Public Opinion great importance in American politics, which is a common word reflecting people's wishes for governance and political leadership. The understanding of it is rather complicated and varies from one expert to another. Meanwhile, M. Bakr says that public opinion has a massive impact on politics as well as everyday life whereby it affects decision-making, elections and general administration too within democratic societies where necessary to protect against manipulation so as not to compromise fair conduct of elections. On contrast though still related Longley believes that governments believe the opinions of the common man are worth listening to. According to Erikson public opinion is defined as "the views and beliefs of the adult population regarding government and its policy. While, Glynn categorized the public opinion into five, the fourth fell under the influence of media and elite, the vision of Walter Lippmann postulates that the opinions of common citizens are shallow because the common man lacks the time and expertise to follow every public issue, and public opinion is created through the responses of media.

1.2.1 .Consensus and Divided Opinion

Usually, there are quite a number of diverse opinions from the public, and the way the opinions are disseminated can indicate the amount of division and the possibility of compromise. A consensus is said to exist when a significant number of those who participated in a poll appear to share the same opinion on a particular issue

at the time of the poll. Issues that result in divided opinion are those in which the public holds widely differing attitudes (Schmidt et al., 2015).

FIGURE 01 : Consensus Opinion

Figure 1 shows a pattern of opinion that might be called consensual. However, Figure 2 shows a pattern of opinion that might be called a divided opinion.

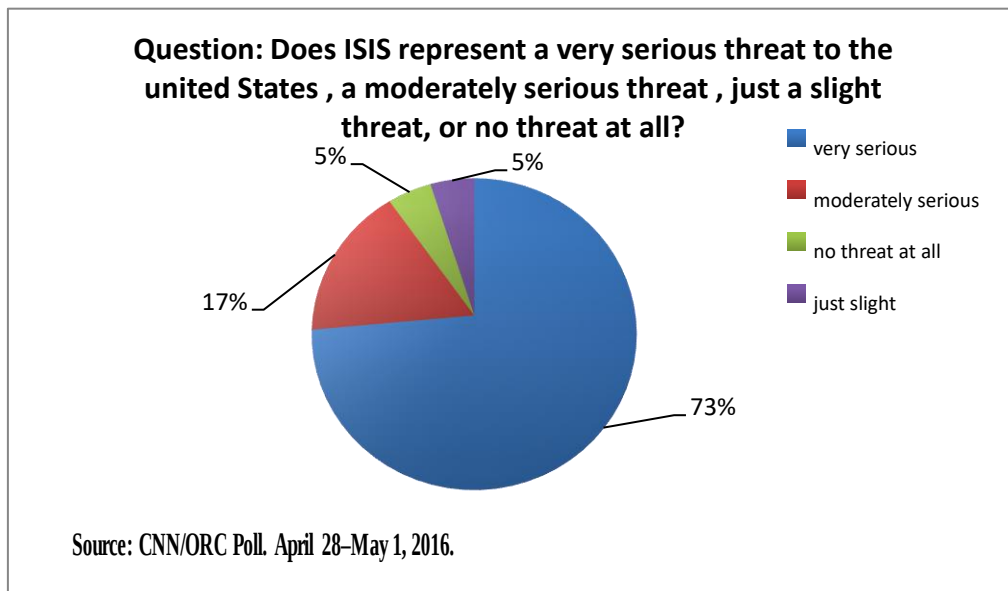
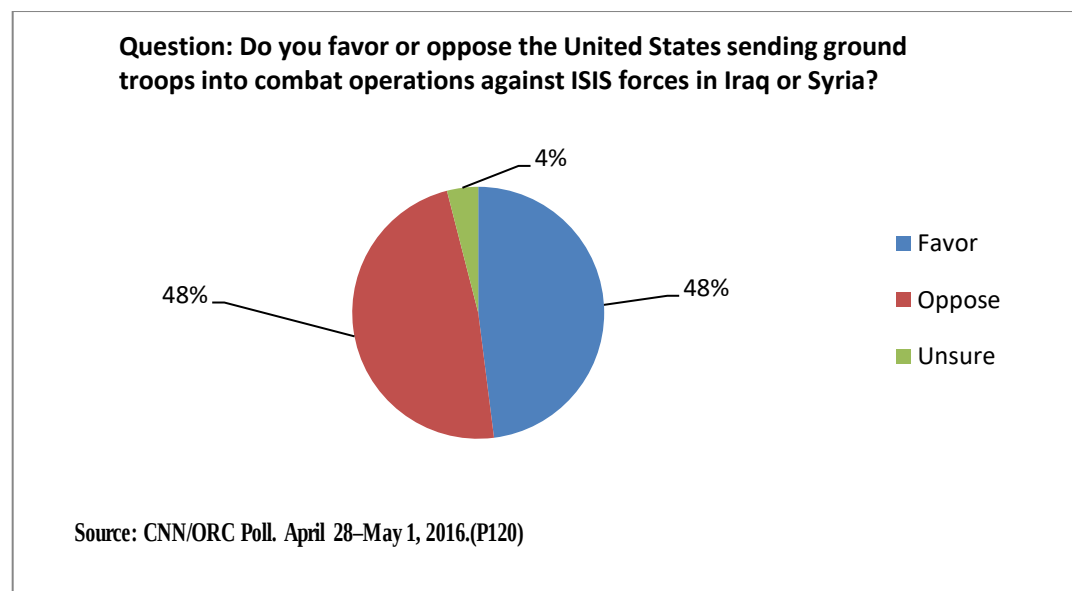


FIGURE 02 : Divided Opinion.



1.3. Measuring Public Opinion

Measuring public sentiments can be a tough task that needs different concepts, models, and hindrances.. In America, various techniques are available to gauge public opinion :

1.3.1. Surveys and polling

Oldendick (2002) assumes that there was a clear distinction between surveys and polls. Polls were shorter and generally focused on politics, while surveys were more comprehensive, captured additional contextual details, and emphasized providing rationale. Over time, the distinction between these two terms has become less clear.

Schmidt et al.(2015) believes that the people of a democratic society have different means for voicing out their opinions. Questionnaires are popular tools used to collect and assess the public's opinions on a particular issue. It was developed by American companies over the last few decades to forecast presidential elections. Thus, it emerged as a phenomenon in other nations across the globe (Hallak, 2020) .

The self-measurements of approval ratings offered a scientific approach towards identifying and measuring the opinions of the public. Social scientist Jean Converse points out that the survey has existed for two thousand years but became refined in the twentieth century to provide a clearer perspective of mass masses and cultures, and a peek at the insight of elites. As time went by, polls and surveys became more accurate due to selective sampling and improvements in methods. A sample is a group selected by a researcher to represent the totality of the population, it is however because, researchers can never take a poll of the entire population that choosing the correct sample is extremely important to the success of any poll (Rom et al., 2022).

Paletz et al. (2011) emphasize that scientific polls and surveys are universally considered the best means of conducting opinion polls. They ensure that the correct methodology is followed to avoid errors when arriving at conclusions in research. This includes using correct sampling techniques and formulating questions. Scientific polls and surveys involve several people in a society in a way that represents the entire society in question. The collected sample uses a probability sampling technique that allows all members of the population to have an equal chance of being included in the sample. This means that it is possible to obtain a true reflection of the opinions of people within any given community, but only if the opinion sampling tool used has a small sample size. For example, a random sample of one thousand two hundred persons may reflect the popular sentiment prevailing over the total populace of the United States of America.

As an example, one of the most famous institutions for conducting public opinion polls is :

1.3.1.1 . Gallup Polls

Soltani and Zeroual (2021) stated that Gallup poll is an international organization that offers analytics and guidance to assist leaders and organizations in addressing their most urgent issues. In 1935, George Gallup founded the American research firm Public Opinion, which later became known as Gallup Inc. His legacy of insight and impartiality has solidified Gallup as a globally respected and widely recognized brand. The headquarters are located in Washington D.C.(Gallup Inc) . George Gallup aimed to impartially assess the viewpoints of people to ensure his autonomy and neutrality. Dr. Gallup decided that he would only conduct surveys that were not funded or supported by partisan organizations like the Republican and Democratic parties, a principle that Gallup still upholds today.

1.3.2 . Benchmark Surveys

Viewing from the his perspective, Aransiola (2024) holds the view that benchmark polls are surveys intended to establish the perception or sentiments in the population regarding a particular issue or candidate. These polls are important as the first readings for further surveys, as they enable tracking the shifts in public opinion. As stated by Aransiola, benchmark polls are useful tools for comparing trends in various fields at different points in time, such as political polls, polls of public opinion, and business polls.

1.3.3 .Focus Groups

A focus group is in fact, a small but selected group of people for whom a particular treatment is applied and they are later interrogated about it. . as for asking for the observation it means that other people can provide comments as well and more real-life contact might reasonably follow. Focus group discussion is a good method of field research to understand how ideas are created or how bullies control those around them but cannot be used to extrapolate the findings over the whole population. nonetheless, they are an effective tool for attempting to determine how a person might react to a series of events (Bozonelos , n.d.).

From the preceding we understand that utilizing various polling techniques, with proper sample and question formation, allows researchers, lawmakers, and the media to accurately assess and examine the opinions of the American public. the results of these surveys greatly influence policy decisions and political results in the United States. However, polls provide us a solid picture of how the general population feels or thinks, but they do not convey the real-life dynamic of how ideas are formed or exchanged.

1.4 . Importance of American Public Opinion in a Democracy

The role of public opinion is vital in our interconnected world. During an interview with the Council on Foreign Relations, Steven Kull, a political psychologist from , stated that public opinion can generally be viewed as a helpful ally by policy practitioners looking to enhance international cooperation, although not always. Put simply, it is crucial for Americans to grasp global public opinion because it allows them to see the world and themselves from a new angle (Rom et al., 2022).

Mack (2023) describes that public opinion is crucial for democracy as it motivates elected officials to prioritize the needs of their constituents in order to secure another term in office. If a politician moves too far away from the desires of the general public and public opinion changes, it is doubtful that they will be successful in upcoming elections.

From the information provided, it can be deduced that Public opinion is crucial in influencing democracy. Steven Kull (is a political psychologist at the University of Maryland. he is the founder and president of Voice of the People, an organization focused on giving the public a greater voice in government) believes that public opinion can be a useful asset for policymakers, offering Americans a fresh viewpoint on global issues. Public opinion in a representative democracy has various roles, such as encouraging elected officials to focus on constituent needs and serving as a means for citizens to express discontent and remove politicians who ignore their views. This interaction is essential for democracy, as it guarantees that elected leaders are held responsible to the citizens and are receptive to their demands.

1.5 .Factors Influencing American Public Opinion

There are numerous crucial factors that shape and impact public opinion in the United States. public opinion is influenced by an intricate mix of values, attitudes, social influences, current events, and the actions of political leaders and the media. grasping these factors is vital for policymakers aiming to reflect the people's will. we examine the key factors affecting the formation of American public opinion.

1.5.1 .Political Socialization

Nickerson (2024) consider that political socialization is when individuals learn about the main values and traditions of a society, including those values that determine how politics should be conducted and how power is exerted. political socialization takes place at various points in an individual's life, with the most significant period being during childhood and adolescence. the family is typically seen as the main influencer of political beliefs, followed by schools, the media, and friends. political socialization, while a long-standing phenomenon, has been subject to in-depth and systematic examination since the early 1900s.

The family as a source of political socialization. research indicates that parents' impact is attributed to two elements: communication and openness. parents

are always expressing their feelings and preferences to their children. due to their overwhelming desire for parental validation, children are highly open to their parents' opinions. parents expect to be respected by their children, which makes it less likely for children to influence them (Schmidt et al., 2015).

Schmidt et al.(2015) consider that education is a means of political socialization. from the beginning of the republic, schools were seen as significant transmitters of political knowledge and attitudes. children in the primary grades learn about their nation mostly in patriotic terms. they learn about the pilgrims, the flag, and a few of the country's presidents. by high school, pupils acquire a more nuanced grasp of the political system. in general, the more education a person obtains, the more probable it is that he or she will be engaged in politics, confident in his or her capacity to grasp political issues, and actively participate in the political process.

Schmidt et al.(2015) stated that when a youngster starts school, his or her companions have a significant impact on their conduct and views. friendships and relationships within peer groups influence political beliefs in both youngsters and adults. however, we must distinguish between the impacts of peer group pressure on attitudes in general and peer group pressure on political beliefs. peer relationships are often nonpolitical in nature. peer groups are more likely to affect political opinions when they actually participate in political activity. individuals with a shared ethnic identity, for example, may form a political relationship by advocating for the group's civil liberties and rights.

Traditional mass media consists of print (primarily newspapers) and broadcast (particularly television and radio networks). the media sets the agenda for public opinion by determining which subjects to focus on. the media determines what makes news the occurrences that are worthy of coverage. public opinion is influenced by how the media frames stories (Holman, 2018).

Political socialization plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion by impacting the beliefs and attitudes that form individual viewpoints. comprehending political socialization is essential for understanding the formation of public opinion and its influence on the political landscape.

1 .5 .2 .Political institutions / Political Leaders

The U.S. government is split into three parts: the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. the branch of government that makes laws, also called congress, has the duty of creating the laws of the country. it consists of two chambers: the house of representatives and the senate. the president leads the executive branch, which is accountable for carrying out the laws created by congress. the primary duty of the judicial branch, including the supreme court and federal courts, is to interpret laws and verify their adherence to the constitution (Boundless, 2024).

Schmidt et al.(2015) said that we are also affected by official opinion leaders, such as presidents, lobbyists, congressmen, news commentators, and religious leaders, whose professions include persuading people to change their minds.

In all countries, governments try to influence what their citizens believe; however, in the United States, governmental messages are in competition with various other political entities. despite their varying approaches in changing public opinion, all recent presidents have utilized election campaign-style polling to measure and influence public opinion (Lowi et al., 2011).

1 .5 .3 .Interest Groups

Scotece (2024) stated that an interest group is a collection of people who have shared goals and seek to influence public policy. they are also known as special interest organizations, advocacy groups, or pressure groups. the fundamental goal of creating interest groups is to allow individuals, companies, and other organizations to band together and strengthen their capacity to influence government decisions. a huge group is more likely to achieve its objectives and affect policy than an individual working alone.

The design of the American government encourages the involvement of interest groups throughout different stages of policy development. Americans have the ability to establish associations within their communities or urban areas and push for change within the local government or state officials. they have the option to become members of statewide groups or national groups and attempt to impact government policy either through congress or one of the executive agencies or cabinet departments. representatives from big companies might try to sway members of congress or the president themselves during social gatherings or fundraising events. if efforts to impact government through the executive and legislative branches are unsuccessful, interest groups can resort to the legal system by bringing cases to state or federal courts in order to accomplish their political goals (Schmidt et al., 2015).

As an exemple , Paletz et al.(2011) said that University of Texas at Austin is an educational institution. its primary goals are education and research. similar to other educational institutions, it acts as an interest group in influencing government decisions. these policies involve government . funding for facilities, as well as student grants, loans, and work study. the organization may seek to influence legislation and judicial judgments related to research, admissions, gender equality in intercollegiate sports, and student records. the university may request earmarking funding from congress for certain initiatives, skipping the traditional merit-based competition .

Scotese (2024) described that interest groups play an extremely important and pivotal role in society as they serve as the voice for a wide range of interests to the government. These groups are responsible for keeping both their members and the public informed about government actions and policies. Additionally, they provide

avenues for citizens to engage in politics and establish channels of communication between the public and their elected representatives.

1.5.3.1.Types of Interest Groups

Interest groups can be categorized as economic groups or public interest noneconomic groups:

Economic groups concentrate on topics like salaries, safeguarding industries, generating employment, and maximizing profits, among others, and can also be categorized into subgroups like business, labor, agriculture, and professional sectors. for instance, the United States chamber of commerce is a business association claiming to be the biggest in the world, supporting companies of every size and promoting policies that foster job creation and economic growth (Rom et al., 2022).

However, Rom et al.(2022) described that Noneconomic groups do not organize themselves around economic or business-oriented purposes, instead working to advance noneconomic issues such as the environment or education. one example is Greenpeace international, an umbrella organization representing Greenpeace offices in 27 regions and 55 countries that all work together to promote environmental protections. varieties of noneconomic groups include public interest groups, single-issue groups, civil rights groups, and ideological groups.

Feldkamp (2013) stated that the rationale for this classification of citizens is based on how they react to interest-group campaigns with the involvement of the mass media. Specifically, these citizens are likely to be aware of any interest group if news coverage is almost obligatory; in order for greater public support of special interest to emerge, positive portrayals have to be present in the media agenda. It is in this respect that Albert and Darlington have noted that, like elections, referenda are favorable to interest groups where advertising is well employed. This is because, the campaigns that target address referenda, must have a short time within which they have to make the populace change its minds as compared to the slow and subtle manner which is used in the support of programming. All in all, it would sound reasonable to state that the media play the biggest role among social and political institutions in forming the preferences and opinion of the citizens.

1.5.4.Social Movements and Civil Society

Paletz et al. (2011) explained that a social movement includes a recognized leadership and a formal, enduring organizational structure. movements are established by people with shared concerns about longstanding societal problems and a view that their rights and interests are not being adequately represented, they can evolve from small-scale efforts to national organizations and become lobbying groups that influence government officials. social movements can be longstanding, ranging from months to years, or even decades. members of the movement believe that working in groups toward a common purpose through collective efforts will gain

more attention from media and government officials for effecting change than individuals working alone. establishing a communication network to motivate people and mobilize them to take action is a key component of a social movement. digital media have become important tools in the organization of social movements. websites, twitter feeds, social media, text messages, and other forms of media are used by them to publicize their cause, recruit members, raise funds, and orchestrate events.

Civil society is made up of the wide range of non-governmental organizations and institutions representing the various cultural, religious, and special interest groups that uphold the interests and values of citizens while enforcing societal norms. Civil society is where social movements coalesce in support of a variety of social interests, many of which are competing against each other. In this way, it operates as an arena in which various interests compete, bargain, and settle before the level of legislation or arbitration becomes necessary. (Downey, 2023)

1 .5 .4 .1 .A brief History of Social Movements

Paletz et al. (2011) emphasizes that the united states has a rich history of social movements, which have had considerable impacts in terms of the political process and government policy. in the mid-1800s, the aim of the abolitionist movement was to abolish slavery, one of the reasons that the civil war was fought. the temperance movement, assisted by the Anti-Saloon League and the Women's Christian Temperance Union, managed to convince congress to approve the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919, which made the sale and transportation of alcohol illegal. in 1935, the prohibition against alcohol was taken off. ensuring the right to vote for all citizens has been the principle aim of most of the important social movements. in the era of founding, only men who owned land were guaranteed suffrage in the constitution. states based their voting restrictions on race, age, sex, creed, and individual character. by the year 1844, all states had rid themselves of the landowning requirement, but racial barriers remained in place until 1870 and gender barriers until 1920.

Examples of social movements in the United States include:

1 .5 .4 .1 .1 . The Civil Rights Movement

In response to the segregation of African Americans that took place in the southern states, the civil rights movement was founded in the 1950s. In addition to violating black residents' fundamental civil rights in several other ways, these segregationist practices made it difficult for them to exercise their right to vote. at addition to always sitting at the back of public buses, African Americans were required to utilize separate restrooms and water fountains from White people. Generally speaking, black pupils attended less-than-white students' schools in terms of quality. Racial limitations on voting were removed from the Constitution by the Fifteenth Amendment of 1870. However, it was not until the Voting Rights Act and

the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that minority individuals were granted the ability to vote in full (Paletz et al., 2011).

Masturzo (2023) Believed that the legislative measures like the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 were initiated due to the civil rights movement. Black American's representation in the political arena increased, and such shifts in power manifested themselves in areas such as music and television. nevertheless, there were also negative reactions to this, the so-called "kulturkampf", and some sections of society rejected the societal and legal changes in America.

1.5.4.1.2 . The Women's Rights Movement

Chiali and Benabdi (2021) stated that the 'fight for women's rights' was initiated by prominent women including Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. these two white middle-class females, along with three other friends went on to write a paper which was known as the Declaration of Sentiments. it was similar to the American Declaration of Independence, which said 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.' Thereafter, the five females informed the females of nearby towns on the basic women's meeting that was to be held in the Methodist Church in Seneca Falls on 19 The WWAC identifies the Seneca Falls Convention as the first meeting held to discuss women's rights as inhabitants of the United States. The former sought to transform the male attitude towards female kind and liberate from the male direction stipulated by legal, religious, traditional, and cultural codes. Therefore, the conference declares: Finally, it will be important to follow all the legal requisites and organizational measures to achieve the company's goal. Ideally, we shall employ some of the following strategies: enlisting representatives, spreading pamphlets, calling on the State and National lawmakers, and seeking the active participation of the church and media. The authors believe that the discussed convention will result in a series of conventions that encompass all the regions of the country.

Soken-Huberty (2024) stated that this movement focused on women's legal, economic, and social rights; gender roles; reproductive rights; financial independence; equality in the workplace; and abuse at home. It expanded early feminism ideas with such issues as family dynamics and inequality, leading to legal and social reforms. It drew criticism for being blind to the needs of women of color and thus brought on discussions on inter-sectionality and diversity of women's experiences in feminism.

1.5.4.1.3 . The Environmental Movement

Environmental movements are aimed at preserving natural resources and the environment from damaging human activities and enforcing sustainability practices. The environmental movements can be particular to specific areas of countries or

regions, yet they are also interconnected with the whole world, whereby countries work together to curb concerns affecting the Earth's ecosystems (Evans, 2024) .

1 .5 .4 .1 .4 . Black Lives Matter (2013-present)

This movement began following the acquittal of George Zimmerman for the murder of Trayvon Martin. The mainstream point is to address institutional racism and police brutality, promoting fair treatment and the cessation of police aggression (Dreier, 2020).

1 .5 .4 .1 .5 . Occupy Wall Street (2011)

The protest began with economic inequality and the role of corporations in the government. The protest aimed at being a critical moment that brought into question the existing distribution of power and supported radical transformations in society and the economy (Dreier, 2020).

1 .5 .4 .1 .6 . Fight for \$15 (2012-present)

This effort is intended to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, while encouraging better working conditions and fair recompense for the low-paid worker. (Dreier, 2020).

1 .5 .4 .1 .7 . The Women's March (2017-present)

It was formed as a response to the election of Donald Trump, focusing on issues such as women's rights, reproductive rights, and social justice (Dreier, 2020).

1 .5 .4 .1 .8 . Immigrant Rights Movement (2006-present)

The Movement focuses on the undocumented immigrant community, aiming to raise awareness and drive immigration reform. It promotes citizenship paths, deportation defense, and essential services like healthcare and education, fostering a more equitable society (The mapping American Social Movements Project, 2006).

These examples represent only a small portion of the numerous social movements in the United States. Social movements are crucial in the political process, and they have had a substantial impact on molding American society and politics.

Pons (2024) stated that social movements have been known to affect the public opinion of the citizens in the United States. However, recent studies have indicated that protests and movements might raise the internet activity but may gain minimal effects on political attitude and electoral behavior. Nevertheless, there are several instances in which the protests had a huge impact on public perception. The Black Lives Matter protest over the death of George Floyd resulted in changing public attitudes toward racism and a boost to the Democrats. This shows how social movements affect public opinion, especially those topics affecting the issue of racial

equity and equality. Other social movements, such as those geared towards environmental conservation, gender equality, gun control, immigration, national and international politics, and racism, have also been influential in the United States. Many of the movements trace their path on social media sites like Twitter and Google search volume; this may include changing online interest in policy issues and voting intentions before and after the emergence of the movement.

From the above, we can come to know that US Social Movements have immense strength to turn the public opinion, even on important issues: racial justice, gun control, and climate change. Though protests rarely do affect political beliefs or influence voting behavior, there certainly have been cases when social movements proved successful in changing public perceptions and bringing changes in legislation.

1.5.5 . Media Influence

The current era is referred to as the age of information. Mass media is the strong and efficient tools for disseminating information. Mass media plays a substantial role in contemporary society.

According to Blakeley (2023) media can be explained as a method of communicating data or knowledge. There are various categorizations of mass media, but the most general definition that can be derived refers to media that is designed to communicate to a large population at once. Discussion of the role and influence of the media in the United States of America and the global society is rather topical in the modern world. Looking at consumers, they are conversely affected by media; while creators are affected by the media, though to a limited extent. Today, different people who attend media production, media consumption, and the formulation of public policies on media use receive direct impacts of today's media in different ways. This is due to the influence of the media because it can control the consumerism of products, the voters of specific political parties, and the pursuit of specific quality lifestyles. The revelation of mass media and its impact on modern society can give the common populace the chance to make rational decisions and assess information properly.

Blakeley (2023) stated that the mass media is a crucial factor because it affects individuals daily. People are always surrounded and influenced by media on social networking sites, through advertisements on websites visited, books or TV shows before going to bed. There are many reasons why Social media is important, one of which permits people to communicate and stay connected with relatives and friends in other parts of the world. Refreezing is crucial in change management since it involves entrenching changes to ensure that they become a new normal, Through constant exposure to its stories, it is evident that media has a significant impact on the society that one has to live in, This is why anyone needs to be able to have an understanding of the impact and power of the media.

1.5.5.1. Types of Media

Prior to analyzing mass media and political choices, it is essential to comprehend the specific types in which information is disseminated. there are several types of mass media . Print media ,electronic media and New age media.

Blakeley (2023) said that the first medium is print media. Print media includes the physical publications of flyers, posters, and pamphlets. Print media has been successfully used across history to spread both information and propaganda.

According to Mokhtari (2017) electronic media is one of the media that requires the user to utilize an. electronic power source to access it. it is also referred to as 'broadcast media'. it includes electronic media like TV, and radio, and recent others like the internet and phones offer various functions, one of them being used in self-promotion and advertising of the business or products. using electronic media, through media devices, networks, television, or the internet, is a very powerful method of communicating with others. there are various ways of using electronic media to benefit oneself.

Fortunately, digital and social media made its appearance. The internet, along with internet-based platforms, has made it possible for people to produce and retrieve information in ways previously unimaginable. These innovations have also wrestled some authority from traditional power players who oversee the flow of information, a process described by many researchers as the democratization of knowledge and information. Equally, these platforms usually have very few controls and regulatory frameworks; most of them see misinformation traveling to more people (Blakeley, 2023).

McCombs (2011) acknowledges that the news media can influence the public's focus by highlighting important issues through top stories, headlines, and time length. In his 1922 book "Public Opinion," Walter Lippmann described how the media shapes the public's understanding of current affairs by determining what information the public is exposed to. Since the themes that appear on the media agenda also become dominant in the public consciousness, the media's agendas have a significant influence on the population's agendas. To study the effect of agenda-setting, social scientists examine the pattern of news coverage by a news agency over a certain period. Surveys are conducted to determine the level of public response to the leading national issues.

Kiryakova et al. (2020) stated that the mass media, being referred to as the fourth power, substantially influences public awareness. In fact, public opinion is evident everywhere in public life. Without it, none of the political, social, economic, or environmental spheres can operate properly. At present, popular subjects, anxieties, and questions gain popularity and become the concern of the public. Discussions, talk shows, information programs, and many other programs are held over these topics. Media is one of the primary shapers of public opinion and an integral part of state

information policy. By selecting and popularizing certain information, the media can influence public awareness and consciousness in a very effective manner. Reduction of costs and enhancement of the dissemination of government-related information are some of the essential aims of the media.

While not all media content is political, political information is vital to the public's understanding and decision regarding the government and issues in society. The media can control public opinion through emotional portrayal of events and may change the attitudes and behaviors in society. Confrontation of information is done in different ways with the purpose of changing the perception of a recipient towards news and the resulting effect may cause changes in their values and behavior. Television, through its audio-visual capability, is a strong medium for strengthening or weakening the value of news. In general, the role of the media in the development of public consciousness and daily orientation is indispensable to the life of modern society (Kiryakova et al., 2020) .

1 .5 .5 .2 . Social Media Influences on Public Opinion

Ausat (2023) stated that social media is an online terminology that refers to websites where people and groups can interact, share, and communicate with each other using the internet. it allows users to create, publish, and share all types of content, including text, pictures, videos, and audio with a wider audience. the basic objective of social media sites is to facilitate social interaction, connection of people, and information-sharing between the users. social media users can follow, like, and respond to the published content of other users. the form of sharing is thus much more overt and dynamic compared with the other types of media. aside from that, social media allows users to build an online network of relations that can be composed of friends, family members, colleagues, and people they have never met physically.

According to, Ausat (2023) different types of social media have emerged, which possess different characteristics and purposes. a few examples of social media websites include:

- Facebook: This is a social communication site through which users can share photos, videos, friends, and families and keep them updated with the events and current status in their network.
- Twitter: This service allows users to post short messages called “tweets” with a maximum number of characters allowed. Users, or other accounts, navigate to other users and engage in conversations with individual tweets through replies or retweets.
- Instagram: Comprises mainly of circulation of images and videos. To search for some specific materials, or share them, possibly, users can upload photographs, and apply filters, and hashtags.
- LinkedIn: Concerning this, the professional aspect of this website makes the users look for job vacancies, network professionally and share work tales.

- TikTok: An Application User application that enables the creation and sharing of concise, creative clips recreating obstacles or tunes.
- YouTube: While its primary function remains to be a video-sharing site, YouTube also features social functions that allow people to communicate with each other through comments, subscriptions provided to channels, as well as sharing.

Social media has become a necessary evil for political communication, and it has also reflected significantly in popular opinion. Research evidence shows that people's opinions on political issues, politicians, and political organizations may be influenced by social media. That influence results from many variables, including the emotional impact of viral material, online networks and influencers' persuasive power, and exposure to specific information. Social media can add to the democratization of political discourse by allowing the dispersion of diverse opinions and giving a voice to marginalized groups. However, the prevalence of disinformation, echo chambers, and internet abuse might also degrade the level of political discourse and the public's confidence in the democratic system(Mirage News, 2024).

The impact of social media on political discourse and public opinion is complex and multifaceted, offering democratic countries opportunities and challenges all at the same time. Political communication on social media is becoming more and more essential, so individuals, governments, and platform providers have to meet the risks and try to shape an online environment that is safer and more open. By increasing digital literacy, supporting civil discourse, and stopping the spread of misinformation, we are using social media to include more public participation in democracy and an educated and lively public sphere (Mirage News, 2024).

Ipl.org. (2024) stated that according to Vivian Michaels, the 2016 Pew Center of Research poll indicated that around 35% of 18- to 29-year-olds obtained most of their information about the U.S. presidential election from social media. There is nothing wrong with using social media as your primary source of information, but you need to be aware of the slanted and false content supporters and influencers post in an effort to influence public opinion and manipulate the way the public thinks about their favorite candidate. It's easy, using social media to spread information and surround yourself with people who believe and act like you, to shape political and other views. People tend to think something is true just because they see a lot of "likes" or "shares" on it.

Celebrities are known to have their ideas loudly voiced and at times for good. Being popular among a lot of people, most of them prefer to side with their opinions when made on social media. This is clearly depicted when Oprah endorsed Barack Obama back in 2007 in a way that had a major influence on the result of the election in 2008 where over a million votes were garnered in favor of the candidate. Celebrities are, by virtue of mostly voicing their ideas on multiple social media platforms, intimately connected to social media. Celebrities are not aware that they

and social media have the power over public opinion; that is to say, their existence on social media influences to a large extent how the public views certain issues (ipl.org, 2024).

Based on the foregoing, The information age is characterized by the rapid sharing of information through various media such as the Internet, radio, newspapers, and television. These platforms are capable of reaching a substantially diverse audience and are valuable in swaying the public consciousness and raising people's awareness of important issues. On a different note, mass media can serve the purpose of entertaining people and educating them besides being able to compel people into taking some particular action. Furthermore, it fosters discussions, entailing debates and dialogues among individuals, communities and nations; and fosters cultural interactions and interchanges. It also has another negative impact in that it can also spread rumours and propaganda, which is not good.

1.6 . Role Of American Public Opinion In Shaping Policy Decisions

Holman (2018) stated that general attitudes or opinions of the people regarding politics and government are called public opinion. The concept of popular sovereignty; that the people are the ultimate source of governmental power is a fundamental principle of American democracy. The theory that citizens actually hold the power of government thus argues that public policies should be derived from the people's opinions. A political system's legitimacy may be measured by its capacity to respond to public opinion. There are two models through which policymakers take into account public opinion when constructing public policy: the delegate model and the trustee model.

According to the delegate model, the elected officials must enact the will of the people who put them into office. The government officials are just delegates instructed to do the will of the people. The representative democracy model is populist because elected officials have to follow public opinion but they also have the liberty to do what they think is in the best interest for the public or their constituents. Representatives do not have the liberty to do whatever they feel (Holman, 2018).

Holman (2018) referred to the trustee model provides latitude for government officials to decide what is best for the public. The government officials do not need to have their actions based solely on the opinions held by the public. The elected officials are seen as trustees to whom the public entrusts their wisdom, knowledge, skills, or knowledge to decide on what they consider most advantageous, rather than to merely follow the public opinion polls. In the trustee model, representatives are held accountable for their decisions in the regular elections, but they are also accorded significant latitude to choose. The trustee model is seen to be elitist in nature as it expects the elected representatives to be the elite in society, leaders elected to wisely decide on public policy but not merely reflect the public opinion

Conclusion

The chapter provided an overview of the concept of public opinion and the dynamism within the United States' politics. We concluded that American public opinion was an irresistible force, as it underpinned the democratic decision-making process. Public opinion always remained dynamic and continued to change and adjust according to the facts like timing and impacts of political socialization and media. Research showed that how and when the information was presented could influence public opinion and that newer messages usually influenced it more than the older ones. Further, opinions may also have gotten altered as per how people processed information, as higher levels of processing could be more conducive to leading to more solidified attitudes. Media had a huge impact on the views of the public, and politicians and other parties strategized their communication means to garner public opinions on various issues. In short, the ever-changing American public opinion only said that the complicated nature of public opinion formation was an encouragement and served as continuous study and analysis so that its mechanisms and implications within the modern-day politics were understood.

CHAPTER TWO

Public Opinion And Domestic Policy

Chapter Two: Public Opinion and Domestic Policy

Introduction

- 2.1. Public Opinion on Domestic Policy Issues in the United States
- 2.2. Trends in Public Opinion on Key Domestic Policy Issues
- 2.3. Impact of American Public Opinion on America's Domestic Policy
- 2.4 . Case Studies of Specific Policies shaped by American Public Opinion
- 2.5. Challenges in Shaping American Public Opinion
- 2.6. Future Trends

Conclusion

Introduction

Public opinion plays a crucial role in shaping domestic policy in the United States. This chapter examines the trends, impact, and challenges in this dynamic relationship. It begins by exploring the public's views on key domestic issues, from healthcare and education to crime and the environment. The chapter then analyzes how these opinions have shifted over time and the extent to which they influence policymaking at the federal, state, and local levels. Case studies highlight specific policies that have been significantly shaped by public sentiment, such as the Affordable Care Act and gun control legislation. The chapter also delves into the challenges involved in shaping and measuring public opinion, including the role of partisan divides, the media, and the complexity of public attitudes. Finally, it looks ahead to potential future trends, considering how demographic changes, technological advancements, and other factors may impact the public's priorities and their influence on domestic policy .

2 .1. Public Opinion on Domestic Policy Issues in the United States

Public opinion plays significant role in shaping domestic policy in the United States. The shaping of policies is due to elected officials are influenced by both the political climate and the necessity to maintain public approval. Decision-makers consider the public's views when creating and implementing policies(Beyond ,2014).

A significant impact on the country's overall well-being has a major impact on US domestic policy. The responsibilities of the president involve setting the yearly national budget, proposing changes in taxes, and impacting international trade policy. Also, international trade policy has an impact on the allocation of funding for United States programs within the country(Chatham,2024).

The day to day lives of all residents are influenced by internal policies that deal with various issues. Essential subjects include social welfare, taxes, public safety, healthcare, education, energy, and resources found in nature (AuroraUniversity,2024).

2.1. 1. Overview Of Major Domestic Policy Issues In The United States

A significant impact on the nation's daily life and future development has a significant impact on individuals' lives. These issues encompass social security, welfare, and economic security; healthcare, immigration, and drug enforcement; gun control; and gun possession. Surveillance activities within the country for the purpose of combating terrorism. Additionally, the president plays a vital role in shaping US domestic policy, particularly in relation to laws and the financial system. The sum of money designated for domestic programs is mostly influenced by the president's decisions, such as setting up the yearly federal budget, managing finances, proposing changes to taxes, and shaping global trade decisions(Chatham,2024).

Since Chatham discussed the most significant political challenges facing the United States, (Paletz et al., 2011) outlined the history and present state of the Federal Government's Primary Domestic Policy.

2.1.1.1. Learning

Despite debates on the effects of federal education initiatives such as No Child Left Behind, the main objective of this program is to improve K-12 public schools. In 2015, there were no children remaining. The ESSA replaced the Behind grant, which resulted in increased freedom to create accountability systems and educational standards (Paletz et al., 2011).

2.1.1.2. Changes In The Healthcare System

According to Paletz et al. (2011) to enhance healthcare availability and cut costs, the (ACA) was put into effect. It was commonly referred to as Obama care and was a significant initiative to reform healthcare. The ACA has been a topic of debate, litigation, and attempts at modification. Replace it.

2.1.1.3. Policies Regarding Social Welfare

Some American policymakers believe that poverty partly arises due to the economic system's inability to offer sufficient well-paying jobs, alongside issues of racism and sexism. They back measures aimed at addressing the root causes of poverty. Looking at it this way, individuals are not largely at fault for requiring public support (Paletz et al., 2011).

2.2. Trends In Public Opinion On Key Domestic Policy Issues

Risse-Kappen (1991) added information about public opinion patterns on important domestic policy topics reveals a dynamic relationship between public opinion and policy formation.

2.2.1. Impact on Policy Formation

Public perceptions can influence policy development in various ways. As they rely on each other account in order to gain approval for their goals. Take this into consideration when creating policies. Lawmakers can gain a deeper understanding of the preferences of their constituents. Survey data and polling results are utilized to gauge public sentiment and opinions among individuals. specific legislative issues (Risse-Kappen, 1991).

2.2.2.Political Divides

Risse-Kappen (1991) said that the United States political influence can significantly affect public opinion on domestic policy issues. division and the political divide. Views on important matters vary among individuals. Policy matters often align with individuals' political party preferences. divisions can hinder bipartisan collaboration in addressing pressing domestic issues and concerns. create obstacles to achieving consensus on policy resolutions.

2.2.3.Involvement of The Public and Advocacy Efforts in the Community

Public opinion on domestic policy is influenced through promotion and public support. involvement. Community groups, advocacy groups, and grassroots movements have the potential to enhance. increase public understanding of critical topics and garner backing for specific policy changes. Activism and public pressure have the potential to influence lawmakers and drive changes in legislation. to changing the views of the general public (Risse-Kappen, 1991).

2.2.4.Elements of the Economy and Society

Risse-Kappen (1991) added social trends and demographic factors have the ability to sway public opinion on matters concerning domestic policy. adjustments, and financial circumstances. Social movements, differences between generations, shifts in culture. Changes in the economy, social issues, and recessions can impact public perception and evaluation of various policies. issues. Those in authority who wish to address the evolving needs and choices of the populace The public needs to have a comprehensive grasp of these broader socio-economic dynamics.

2.2.5. Research and Analysis of Information

To comprehend shifts in public opinion on issues regarding domestic policy, it is necessary to utilize data analysis. study and information analysis. Research methods like focus groups, polls, surveys, and. others provide valuable perspectives on the general population's attitudes, interests, and priorities. number of inhabitants. Policymakers have the ability to modify their policy reactions in order to more effectively address the needs and requirements. analyzing and interpreting data

to better understand the public's expectations. comprehension of how public opinions evolve over time (Risse-Kappen, 1991).

2.3 . Impact of American Public Opinion on America's Domestic Policy

United States domestic policies are significantly impacted by the opinions of the public. In spite of while the public's understanding of politics may not be perfect, politicians still consider public opinion. taking surveys into account to more accurately predict the impacts of their decisions. Ensure that they are not misleading the electorate. People desire to witness a future filled with prosperity. and regular polls of public opinion can act as an indicator of how well the president is doing in addition to a referendum (Erikson & Tedin, 2015).

According to Baumgartner and Leech (1998), when it comes to domestic policy, political parties play a crucial role in shaping public opinion. His possession of the letter surprised everyone at the meeting. Some of the actions involve informing the public about political issues and selecting candidates for nomination. support their perspectives, weighing the concerns of their supporters, and affecting the creation of laws by working together to create and implement legislation that advances their party's agenda. are corrupt should be held accountable for their actions. Members of the Senate and House of Representatives often work together to create legislation. pass laws that align with the beliefs of their specific political parties.

2.3.1. Influence on Elections and Political Campaigns

Influence from interest groups, media attention, political party stances, and public opinion Polls and studies also play a role in shaping American public opinion on matters of domestic Policy issues. The following element are:

2.3.1.1. Interest Group Influence

Interest groups have a significant impact on policy decisions due to their ability to change policy. domestic affairs. In total, policy historians credit 385 out of the 790 major policy enactments. for interest groups, lobbying is conducted by advocacy groups and enjoys widespread support from these groups one of the most commonly mentioned types of impact. While the customary methods typically employed to investigating interest group influence is unlikely to reveal the impact of interest groups The network is concentrated and exhibits some ideological division. Interest groups may exert influence. be everywhere(Grossmann, 2014).

2.3.1.2. Political Party Positions

Public and policy outcomes are closely linked through political parties. By adopting stances on a range of topics and promoting laws that suit their followers' inclinations and their own philosophy, they can manipulate public opinion (Hooghe & Kölln, 2020).

2.3.2. Holding Elected Officials Accountable in USA

Campaign Legal Center (2024) stated that they hold their elected officials responsible to both the laws they must abide by and the people they serve. This is why we elect them. Accountability can be achieved through various mechanisms, including:

Observing voting patterns, monitoring campaign pledges, and ensuring that public servants understand the ramifications of their decisions are just a few strategies for keeping them accountable. To accomplish this, you can use GovTrack.US and other websites to track each bill and the votes of representatives, as well as subscribe to email notifications from legislators and follow them on social media. It's also critical to understand how to get in touch with lawmakers and to do so when there are differences of opinion over legislation. Another strategy to demonstrate your attention span and build relationships with elected leaders and potential mentors is to attend community events, such as public forums, committee meetings, or speaker series hosted by representatives. Getting political officials to understand the effects of policies or flaws can also be accomplished by planning marches, rallies, or protests. Social media can be utilized to promote positive news when lawmakers' voting records or policy recommendations are favorable, as well as to draw attention to the effects of a policy or a representative's shortcomings. The people elect politicians, and it is our responsibility to remind them of their responsibility (Ignite National, 2024).

2.3.3. Policy Outcomes Reflecting Public Sentiment

Public policy outcomes, according to the sources cited, are the outcomes or impacts that governmental policies have on society. These results are the modifications to the social, economic or environmental landscape brought about by the application of a policy. Government initiatives to address issues and raise the standard of living for the populace are referred to as public policy. The process of policy evaluation, which determines whether a policy has accomplished its intended aims and is used to evaluate policy outcomes. The act of carrying out a specific policy decision is known as policy implementation; it is similar to using the playbook's suggested strategy when playing a game (Fiveable, n.d.).

The following is an overview of the main conclusions drawn from the given search results:

2.3.3.1.Immigration Policy

They are not particularly concerned with immigration; it is something they see in the distance. When the topic does receive attention, opinions among Americans about how best to handle immigration's effects and its impact are mixed. Public opinion polls show both ambivalence and concern when it comes to the most challenging issues those involving undocumented migrants. The majority of Americans express worry about the phenomenon of illegal immigration, but not about the individuals. Even if most Americans don't like that, migrants are here; they should be allowed to stay (Suro,2009).

2.3.3.2.Health Care Policy

Support for specific policies is not commensurate with public dissatisfaction with the current health care system, and opinions on how to improve it are divided. This suggests that policy makers should concentrate on addressing the underlying causes of public dissatisfaction rather than just enacting new policies (Blendon et al., 2006).

2.3.3.3.Policy Concerning Climate Change

According to 77% of Americans, climate change poses a severe and immediate threat to the globe, highlighting the growing awareness of the need to address it. The public's opinion can be greatly influenced by how certain policies are framed, even while support for particular programs varies greatly(Ritchie,2024).

2.4. Case Studies of Specific Policies Shaped by American Public Opinion

An example of the case studies shaped by the American Public Opinion's specific policies is the following:

2.4.1. Civil Rights Movement and Desegregation

The American Civil Rights Movement was a broad-based demonstration against discrimination and apartheid in the American South that got underway in the middle of the 20th century. Rooted in the centuries-long struggle against racial oppression by Africans born into slavery and their descendants, the Movement has been defined by persistent and resolute efforts to broaden the definition and application of civil rights. The nonviolent protests that breaking the norm of ethnically segregated public utilities were a crucial factor in the movement's growth during the 1950s and 1960s. Though hard-core black activists have already started to view their struggle as a free movement that attempts to confront the political, cultural, and economic effects of historical racism, the passage of important civil rights legislation in 1964 and 1965 was nevertheless a big win for the Movement (Carson,2024).

During the 1950s and 1960s, there was a large-scale push in the United States for equal rights and the dismantling of racial segregation, which involved

tactics such as sit-ins and boycotts, encountering opposition but achieving progress through legal means. Brown. v. Board of Education, Rosa Park arrested, little Rock school integration crises, Birmingham campaign, The March An Washington, The Selma civil rights marches and The Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965 are an examples of moments on civil right movement in United State (United States Library of Congress , n.d.).

2.4.1. 1.Causes and Effects of the American Civil Rights Movement

In the following part, we discuss the causes and effects of the American Civil Rights Movement

2.4.1.1.1. Causes

According to Carson (2024) the civil rights movement in the United States was impacted by four hundred years of history characterized by slavery, racism, white supremacy, and discrimination. The battle for African American equality originated from the core principles of American democracy and the equality ideology outlined in the Declaration of Independence. The movement's emergence was caused by the collapse of Reconstruction and the removal of federal safeguards for ex-slaves, resulting in a rise in white supremacy and the introduction of Jim Crow laws. African Americans encountered challenges when it came to voting, including poll taxes and literacy tests, as well as financial constraints like sharecropping.

2.4.1.1.2. Effects

Carson (2024) added after making progress in civil rights during the 1960s, African Americans experienced enhancements in areas like voting rights and political representation. Affirmative action policies were implemented to offer minorities and women equal opportunities in education and the labor market. African Americans experienced notable progress in both education and income as a result of these programs and expanded educational options. Despite progress, disparities persisted as African Americans faced greater poverty than white Americans. Barack Obama's 2008 election marked a major milestone in the ongoing struggle for equality and civil rights.

Supreme Court rulings that supported Congress's efforts to prohibit racial discrimination in establishments like restaurants and defended Congress's ability to enact laws allowing blacks and whites to work together were important contributions to the desegregation process. The court went so far as to legalize interracial unions and decided that governments may no longer forbid them(Howard University School of Law ,2024).

The civil rights movement, which involved a wide range of people and organizations had an influence on other nations, spurring their own civil rights and social justice movements.

Menkart et al (2004) said that desegregation entailed the integration of public areas, including schools, transit, and businesses and governmental buildings. It was a primary objective of civil rights movement. Parents, students, and regular people who seen or felt the unfairness of segregation in America spearheaded this protracted fight. These people fought for the right to first-class citizenship in the face of brutality and humiliation. Additionally, he said variety of tactics were employed throughout the civil rights movement to voice demands, such as sit-ins, boycotts, protest marches, freedom rides, and lobbying legislators for legislative action. The movement encountered numerous obstacles and was the target of assassinations, beatings, bombs, and arrests. The civil rights movement, by the end of the 1960s, had gained legal protection of African Americans' rights and freedoms that would influence American life for decades to come, and it had also dramatically changed public policy and legislation.

2.4.2. Gun Control Legislation

Legal restrictions on the ownership or use of firearms are known as "gun control." While opponents advocate for self-defense and safer communities; supporters of stringent enforcement contend that it saves lives and lowers crime. While gun control laws differ from nation to nation, among developed nations, most have rigorous guidelines. Individual liberty, public safety and constitutional rights are all impacted by this problem(Duignan,2016).

Bruce and Wilcox (1998) stated that concerns regarding the right to carry and own weapons, as guaranteed by the Second Amendment to the US Constitution, and the duty of the federal government to protect citizens' rights and prevent crime and fatalities have dominated discussions regarding the availability of firearms and armed violence in the US. Gun control advocates claim that unfettered or indiscriminate gun rights make it impossible for the government to carry out its duty and raise safety issues. Proponents of the right to bear guns support shooting and hunting as well as self-defense, which includes protection from despotism.

Regulations governing firearms claim that making it harder to obtain and track down weapons will make communities safer; proponents of gun ownership contend that more law-abiding people owning firearms lowers crime rates and that criminals have always had easy access to firearms (Lott,2010).

Constitutional interpretations of judges reinforce gun control laws in the United States. The United States Constitution's second amendment declares that neither the right of individuals to keep and bear arms nor the necessity of a well-organized militia for a free state may be infringed. The Second and Fourteenth Amendments were ratified by the US in 1791 and 1868, respectively. Weapons policy has been influenced by landmark rulings from the Supreme Court, including McDonald v. the City of Chicago (2010) and District of Columbia v. Heller (2008). The Court maintained the notion of individual rights while dismissing the theory of

collective rights, which supported states' collective rights to maintain militias or individual liberties (Strasser, 2008).

Regarding arms control, US domestic policy is becoming more complicated and difficult in this continuing discussion. Numerous political and social actors in the nation continue to argue and disagree on this issue.

2.5. Challenges in Shaping American Public Opinion

Harris (2024) stated that public opinion counts when it comes to activism. Broadly held opinions have historically impacted Supreme Court rulings, legislative outcomes, and business practices. Subsequently, these anatomical alterations have a significant impact on how individuals behave, regarding things like meat intake. The second issue to consider is if and how advocates may affect public opinion change, assuming it is worthwhile to do so. The author examines data supporting attitude changes in a number of "moral circle expansion areas" in this meta-review of public opinion change studies, and discusses how this relates to the animal protection movement. Research on racial desegregation, same-sex marriage, and other topics is included, for instance. Mixed results are found in the meta-analysis. Some strategies are effective, others are ineffective, and some even backfire. Public opinion interventions almost always have minimal effects that pass quickly a few days or weeks at most.

2.5.1. External Political Influences

Foreign Relations Council (2023) stated that the United States government is a complex web of opposing factions. But foreign policy is not solely shaped by the administration. In democracies such as the United States, policymaking is informed and influenced by multiple external sources. Think tanks, the media, the general public, and special interest groups are some examples of these outside influences.

2.5.1.1. Think Tanks

Foreign Relations Council (2023) added think tanks are organizations that use expert-led research and analysis to educate and influence policymaking. There are numerous sizes and forms for those groups. Certain concerns like immigration or economic policy are the focus of others. Others address a broad range of subjects related to both foreign and domestic affairs. Certain individuals are nonpartisan and do not have any institutional opinions, while others are partisan and support specific policy ideologies, such as libertarian or progressive viewpoints. A university, the government, a political party, or a special interest organization may be connected to some people, while others are completely independent. For the purpose of conducting research and disseminating their knowledge, think tanks offer institutional assistance to specialists and analysts (often journalists, academics, and individuals who have just

left or intend to enter the government). Various publications, policy-related conferences, official congressional briefings, and casual talks with legislators are common formats for this.

2.5.1.2.Journalism and Social Media

In any functioning democracy, journalism is essential. By drawing attention to abuses of power, a free and independent press can make leaders answerable. Along with helping citizens make educated decisions, it may also deliver reliable and timely information. In-depth policy discussions can benefit from the varied viewpoints that the media can contribute. Over the past few decades, investigations by journalists have frequently had a significant impact on policy. Once they exposed corruption at the highest echelons of the government, they toppled a presidency. A covert mass surveillance program was uncovered by other investigations, which led to the complete overhaul of data collection. After revealing how the global elite conceals their enormous wealth and evades paying taxes, journalism has also sparked attempts to overhaul the worldwide financial system (Foreign Relations Council,2023).

2.5.1.3.Public Opinion and Social Movements

According to Foreign Relations Council (2023), the President is expected to uphold American values both domestically and internationally, but popularity can play a significant role in the policymaking process. Since an unpopular President is unlikely to be reelected, public opinion can shape or influence the priority that policymakers give to various issues. The executive branch is responsible for advancing U.S. security and prosperity .Elections and surveys are just two of the various ways that the public is expressed. People can also organize boycotts, marches, and other social movements to express their thoughts on subjects like foreign wars and climate change. Politicians are undoubtedly influenced and occasionally restrained by public opinion. Unfortunately, because many Americans do not pay careful attention to these concerns, it rarely impacts U.S. foreign policy. Policymakers often face challenges in navigating public opinion, particularly given the rapid shifts in agreement over time. People are not always likely to accept government policies later on, even if they start off supporting them.

2.5.2.Economy Factors

Supyan (2022) said that in 2022, the US economy's GDP decreased by 1.4%, contrasting with a 6.9% increase in 2021. Despite this, most macroeconomic indicators were positive, with the working-age population's economic participation growing and the unemployment rate dropping to 3.6%. Business investments were fueled by higher corporate profits, and worker productivity saw a 2% increase in 2021. The situation in Ukraine had a major impact on the US economy, affecting oil

prices and gas supply to Europe. An economic downturn in Europe could lead to slower GDP growth and reduced exports from the US. In March 2022, inflation hit a 40-year high, with the Consumer Price Index rising by 8.5% compared to the previous year. Sanctions against Russia caused a gas supply issue, leading to higher prices for fuel and consumer goods. Following the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a notable increase in demand for durable goods from 2021 to 2022, and housing prices rose by 27% compared to pre-pandemic levels. Global events like the Ukrainian crisis had a negative impact on international trade, with higher US imports compared to 2019 and exports still below pre-pandemic levels.

2.5.3. Resistance From Powerful Interest Groups

Lobbying refers to the official efforts of interest organizations to influence political decisions. Groups typically lobby at various levels and branches of government, using different strategies. Inside lobbying involves building relationships within government, such as lobbying Congress to support or oppose bills. Interest groups also lobby the executive branch. Outside lobbying, known as grassroots lobbying, involves mobilizing the public to support issues and pressure decision-makers. Organizations engage in outside lobbying to demonstrate public support and encourage action. An example of grassroots advocacy is the recall campaign against California Governor Gavin Newsom (Rom et al.,2022).

2.6. Future Trends

Ways and methods predicting the American Public Opinion are changing across the time.

2.6.1. Anticipating the Evolution of American Public Opinion

Despite generally increasing acceptance, the public's perspective of human evolution in America has changed, with notable differences based on demographics, political affiliation education, and religion. Predicting how American public opinion is changing over time requiring taking into account a number of variables, such as historical developments, generational transitions, and the effect of political generations. Since generational turnover and cultural changes can cause changes in public mood and goals, Alexis de Tocqueville's statement that "each new generation is a new people" emphasizes the dynamic character of public opinion (William,1992).

2.6.2. Potential Implication for Future Domestic Policies

Hereafter some of the potential implications for the future domestic policies:

2.6.2.1. Climate Change Policies

Bueno (2021) said that since the 1950s, the United States has been enforcing regulations pertaining to climate change, such as the Clean Air Act, Air Pollution Control Act, and Air Quality Act. Regulations on climate change resulted from this, especially in the court case about EPA jurisdiction. President Ronald Reagan, who supported the Montreal Protocol, launched federal interest in climate change. The Noordwyk Conference on Global Climate Change under George H.W. Bush contributed to the US's reluctance to adopt emission reduction objectives because it said the targets were too strict and ignored the unique circumstances of each country.

2.6.2.2. Human Evolution Public Opinion

Though studies of "culture wars" and the formation of mass belief systems more broadly tend to overlook Americans' opinions about human evolution, the theory of evolution has long been controversial in American society (Berkman, 2010).

2.6.2.3. Immigration and Refugee Policies

In the United States, immigration and refugee policy are intricately linked and shaped by a variety of factors, including past occurrences, existing laws, international commitments, internal political dynamics, and organizational structures (McBride, 1999).

Conclusion

In summary, the American public's perceptions and opinions had a significant influence on domestic policy. Our understanding of public opinion had its roots in liberal democratic theories of the seventeenth century, and it had developed throughout time to play a major role in American democracy. Understanding the historical evolution of public opinion and its connection to political philosophy, social justice, and equality objectives had been made possible by study on public opinion. Important concerns like gun control, immigration, social security, surveillance, welfare and healthcare, and drug enforcement influenced domestic policy in the United States of America. The president's decisions had a big influence on domestic policy, especially when it came to the law and the economy. For a knowledge of the historical development and evolution of domestic policies, as well as their effects on citizens' daily lives, study was crucial. The political relevance of public opinion had been shaped historically by its emergence as a phenomena of middle-class culture, and it was expected to maintain its effect on domestic policy going forward. It was critical to take into account how public opinion influenced policy choices and results as the domestic political environment in the United States continued to change. Policymakers could more accurately predict public opinion's possible effects on upcoming domestic policies in the United States of America by knowing the historical background and evolution of public opinion.

General Conclusion

The primary objective of this study was to thoroughly examine the influence of public opinion on domestic policy within the United States. Public opinion, in this context, pertained to the collective sentiments, perspectives, and attitudes of the populace towards significant societal issues and policies. These viewpoints were shaped and influenced by various factors, including but not limited to the media, political socialization, interest groups, social movements, and civil society. The impact of public opinion on political decisions and governmental policies prompted politicians to engage in advertising and employ persuasive rhetoric in order to mold and respond to public sentiment. It was critical to recognize that the principle of popular sovereignty underlined the idea that the legitimacy and authority of the government was derived from the will of the people, who were regarded as the primary source of power and governance within a democratic society.

This core principle was crucial in the American democratic system, as public policies were formulated based on public opinions. Policymakers had two ways to interpret public opinion: the delegate model required officials to adhere to the people's wishes, whereas the trustee model permitted officials to prioritize public well-being, even if it contradicted public sentiment. The trustee model was viewed as exclusive because it required elected officials to act as leaders who could make informed decisions rather than being solely influenced by public opinion, stemming from liberal democratic theories in 17th century America. It was essential to analyze its historical evolution and ties to political philosophy, social justice, and aspirations for equality. Major issues consisted of gun control, immigration laws, social security, surveillance, welfare initiatives, healthcare, and drug policies.

The research findings underscored the pivotal role of American citizens' viewpoints in shaping domestic policy within the United States. It was evident that elected officials, the media, and the urgency of the issue were all critical components in this process. When formulating and executing policies, policymakers consistently took public sentiment into account, particularly for key issues that were subject to public scrutiny. Consequently, it was clear that public opinion had a substantial impact on US policymaking, but it was essential to recognize that the extent of this influence varied across different industries and levels of government. Therefore, it was imperative for policymakers to study the historical patterns of public opinion and understand its profound impact on individuals' daily lives in order to effectively anticipate how it would shape future government actions. This necessitated a comprehensive and meticulous evaluation of public opinion and its intricate nuances.

Finally, More research was necessary to comprehend the cause-and-effect processes that connected public opinion and policy results. Although connections had been established, the specific routes through which public opinion affected policy-making needed

to be determined. Experimental studies might have helped in identifying these mechanisms. It would also have been valuable to examine how the multifaceted nature of public opinion influenced policy outcomes in various ways. Researchers could have explored how the relationship between public opinion and policy differed across different areas, levels of government, and over time. Comparative analyses, both domestically and internationally, could have offered insights into how institutional and contextual factors impacted the connection between opinion and policy.

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ملخص

يستكشف هذا البحث كيفية تأثير الرأي العام الأمريكي على خيارات السياسة الداخلية من خلال تحليل الأمثلة التاريخية والحديثة لفهم كيفية تأثير الرأي العام على نتائج السياسة والعناصر المختلفة التي تؤثر على هذا الارتباط. هدف البحث هو التعرف على ودراسة كيفية تأثير الرأي العام ودمجه في صياغة السياسات المحلية. وهو يدرس كيفية استجابة المسؤولين المنتخبين والمؤسسات الحكومية للتغيرات في الرأي العام، وتقييم مدى تأثير المشاعر العامة على جداول أعمال السياسات وإجراءات صنع القرار. علاوة على ذلك، سيبحث البحث في كيفية تأثير وسائل الإعلام ومجموعات المصالح واستطلاعات الرأي العام على التصورات العامة ونتائج السياسات. تكمن أهمية هذا البحث في قدرته على فحص الاستفسارات الأساسية حول كيفية عمل الديمقراطية، واستجابة الحكومة، والتأثيرات على صنع السياسات. وتشير الدراسة إلى أن آراء السكان الأوسع ضرورية في التأثير على السياسات الداخلية، مما يدفع صناع السياسات إلى اتخاذ قرارات عامة التفضيلات في الاعتبار عند اتخاذ القرارات. تم جمع بيانات النتائج وتحليلها من خلال بحث نوعي يتضمن مراجعة الأدبيات وتحليل دراسات الحالة واستخلاص النتائج لتقديم التوصيات. تشير النتائج إلى أن آراء المواطنين الأمريكيين ضرورية في التأثير على السياسات الداخلية في الولايات المتحدة، حيث تلعب الشخصيات السياسية ووسائل الإعلام وأهمية القضية دورًا مهمًا. عادة ما يتم أخذ الرأي العام في الاعتبار من قبل المسؤولين المنتخبين وصانعي السياسات عند إنشاء السياسات وتنفيذها، وخاصة بالنسبة للقضايا المهمة التي ينتبه إليها الرأي العام. باختصار، يتأثر صنع السياسات في الولايات المتحدة بشكل كبير بالرأي العام. ومع ذلك، فإن التأثير يختلف بين مختلف القطاعات ومستويات الحكومة.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الرأي العام الأمريكي، المواطنون، السياسة الداخلية، استطلاعات الرأي، اتخاذ القرار السياسي