Fall 12-6-2022

Psychology: Physiological effects of negative international news on

Ingrid Quezada
Belmont University

Husna Nabi
Belmont University

Willa Stauffer
Belmont University

Katie Young
Belmont University

Psychology: Physiological effects of negative international news on American female college students

News depicting conflict in foreign countries is often perceived differently by those living in America, and these differences may also have implications for gender-related news. Foreign and national news is often categorized as "ours" versus "theirs" when reporting on or perceiving news (Nossek, 2016). This suggests that if a person classifies news as "theirs" versus as "ours", there could be a discrepancy in the emotional response to the news received based on how an individual decides to subconsciously categorize it. A person may have an emotional response upon seeing negative news, resulting in a physiological state change (Soroka, et al, 2019). There are various physiological changes in response to emotional arousal, such as an increased heart rate. (Sassenrath, et al, 2021). Another physiological measure is skin conductance response, which is an indirect measurement of the autonomic nervous system (Hein, et al, 2010). Previous literature has revealed that physiological differences occurred between male and female participants when exposed to news related to gender discrimination (Quasney, 2009). This study thus focuses on news related to gender inequality and the ways it may elicit a change in physiological markers in female participants. Specifically, the study examines the changes in skin conduction and heart rate of American female college students when viewing news clips from various global regions. The participants watched four news clips reporting about women's rights issues from four different global regions (Europe, Latin America, West Africa, and the Middle East). The heart rate and skin conductance responses of the participants were taken with BIOPAC monitors (EDAs and pulse plethysmograph) while the participants watched the news clips. Two multifactorial ANOVA tests were utilized to analyze the relationship between the news clips and the ethnicity of each participant with the changes in skin conductance and heart rate.

Data collection is ongoing, and results will be presented at the conference.

Key words: skin conductance, heart rate, physiological markers, physiological state, gender inequality