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MEDIA USE AND FEAR OF VICTIMIZATION – THE MEDIATING ROLES OF GENERALIZED TRUST AND BELIEFS IN A JUST WORLD⁹⁸

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Abstract

With the spread of Internet use, the digital environment has become an important factor affecting personal well-being. Cultivation media effects represent the congruence between characteristics of the „media worlds“ and the worldviews of media consumers after prolonged media consumption. This research study aimed to determine whether Internet and television use are connected with the fear of victimization and the possible mediating mechanisms of this connection. The research sample consisted of 1.021 persons from an opt-in online sample of the general population of Croatia. Results of structural equation modelling analysis showed that the total amount of television use is connected with increased generalized trust in people and belief in a just world, consequently decreasing fear of victimization. On the contrary, the overall amount of Internet use is connected with decreased generalized trust and belief in a just world, and consequently increasing fear of victimization. The analysis of the consumption of crime news on television and the Internet revealed much less clear conclusions. Namely, the consumption of television crime news is related to increased belief in a just world, and consequently with decreased fear of victimization. However, the direct effect of watching crime news on television showed a reverse sign. Consequently, the total effect (encompassing factors other than just world beliefs) showed a positive sign, i.e. consumption of crime news on television increases fear of

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victimization. When it comes to the Internet, neither the direct nor indirect effects of consuming crime news can be confirmed.

Keywords: cultivation effects, fear of victimization, institutional trust, just-world beliefs, media use

Introduction

With the spread of Internet use, the digital environment has become an important part of the social environment affecting people's well-being. The so-called Differential Susceptibility to Media Effects Model (DSMM) proposed by Valkenburg and Peter (2013) represents a general model that states that there are different groups of variables (dispositional, developmental, and social) that act as moderators and mediators when it comes to the influence of media use on media effects. As moderators, the variables produce varying effects among different people and social groups, while as mediators these variables lead to selective exposure, i.e. to the different amounts of media use. The DSMM model also includes response states (cognitive, emotional, and excitative), as well as the idea that media effects are transactional, i.e. that they reciprocally influence all previous stages in the model. When it comes to response states, the so-called cultivation theory (Gerbner et al., 1986) states that there is a congruence between specific characteristics of „media worlds“ and worldviews of media consumers that happen after prolonged media consumption. Cultivation effects can be generally divided into the first order (estimates of probability of occurrence and prevalence) and the second order (judgments related to values, attitudes and beliefs) (Shrum, 2009). Even though the difference is not a clear-cut one, the first-order effects are a result of swift judgments coming from memory, while the second-order effects result from prolonged exposure to media contents which influence the general worldviews of the media consumers. Prolonged exposition to the negative contents can lead to the increased fear of victimization, that is, to the so-called Mean World Syndrome (Gerbner et al., 1980). In other words, a person exposed to information that implies that the world is a dangerous place full of untrustworthy people would probably have a heightened sense of possible victimization. However, Morgan and Shanahan (2010) rightfully argued that cultivation effects should be more pronounced concerning the general social reality perception, in comparison to the perception of personal

circumstances, attitudes, and emotions, which are probably more strongly rooted in personal experiences with no connections to the media. Additionally, the specific causal paths between media exposure and attitudes are not clear and cannot be easily proven. Van den Bulck (2004) distinguished between the cultivation hypothesis (watching television increases fear of crime), the mood management hypothesis (people who fear victimization watch television to cope with their problems, and the withdrawal hypothesis (people who are afraid of crime stay at home and consequently watch television more often). As Shrum (2009) noted, the confirmation of mediating mechanisms that rest on solid theoretical foundations can make less likely some threats, such as reverse causality and spurious relations, to the internal validity of the media effects findings, as well as address conflicting findings that can be often found in media effects research.

In addition to detecting possible mediating paths through which media content affects the feeling of victimization, it is also very important to distinguish between general and specific cultivation. Namely, the total consumption of media can have one, and the consumption of specific media content can have a completely different effect on the general image of the world, but also specific attitudes. In addition, it is very important to investigate the possible differences in the cultivation influence of “old” and “new” media, given that they differ significantly in terms of the (de)centralization of the content offered, i.e. in the stronger possibility of choosing one’s content on new media.

Previous studies have shown that the connection between media consumption and specific media contents and the feeling of victimization is far from conclusive and that it depends on the media types and contents. Based on a sample of Canadian and American students, Kohm et al. (2012) found that relying on local television as a source of information about crime is associated with a stronger fear of crime, even after controlling for demographic characteristics and previous experience of victimization, but only when it comes to American students. Reliance on the Internet and print media as a source of information about crime is associated with less fear of crime. On the other hand, the total amount of use of any type of media was not associated with fear of crime. Näsi et al. (2021), in a study involving the Finnish general population, found that individuals who more frequently followed news about violent crime showed a greater fear of street crime, and this relationship existed for both

traditional and social media and after controlling for prior victimization experiences and interest in crime news. By using causal modeling, Van den Bulck (2004) found the most support for the cultivation hypothesis concerning the connection between media usage and fear of victimization. Similarly, Bryant, Carveth, and Brown (1981) showed that people exposed to heavier viewing of crime films reported a higher probability of being a victim of future violence. Through qualitative research, Silva and Guedes (2023) determined that sensationalism, the location of the reported crime, the realism of the news, and the proximity to the event are of great relevance for the developing fear of crime. The importance of proximity to the location of a criminal event in the development of fear of victimization has been established in previous studies. For instance, Eschholz et al. (2003) found that violent crimes, despite occurring less frequently, generated greater fear of victimization compared to crimes happening nationwide. This heightened fear was attributed to proximity and the realistic portrayal of events. Individuals can use local crime news as a reference point for understanding their environment (Yanich, 2001). Local crime news is often associated with higher levels of fear of crime among the local population compared to news from other areas (Eschholz et al., 2003; Silva & Guedes, 2023). Compared to other news, local news creates the most potent perception of risk, encourages individuals to adopt various safety measures, and increases fear of crime (Silva & Guedes, 2023). Moreover, people are not passive consumers of news but actively seek content that interests them (Nasi et al., 2021).

Today, many individuals access news through online platforms (Gottfried and Shearer, 2016). In addition to the freedom to select content of interest, users comment on and discuss news stories (Gottfried and Shearer, 2016; Mitchell et al., 2016), as well as read others' comments, creating opportunities for interaction and exchange of perspectives. In this way, users create their own personalized network for news and information, shaping their attitudes and beliefs differently compared to traditional news sources (Hermida et al., 2012). Furthermore, news on social media is characterized by individual differences in the motivation to engage with certain types of content. For instance, individuals motivated to read crime news are more likely to actively seek, find, and consume such content, as well as to engage more frequently in commenting and discussions. Given that different people encounter different types of content in varying amounts,

it can be assumed that this will have distinct effects on the levels of fear of victimization among readers (Intravia et al., 2017). Intravia et al. (2017), based on various measures of social media consumption, found a significant contribution to the increase in fear of victimization. However, none of the specific measures were independently linked to fear of victimization.

The impact of online crime news on fostering fear of victimization differs from the well- documented influence of traditional media, such as television and newspapers. This difference is partly due to people's growing awareness of fake news online. For example, Intravia et al. (2017) found that individuals are aware of false information on the internet. Similarly, Hollis et al. (2017) showed that when people seek crime information, they place greater trust in traditional media and official crime statistics than in social media. These insights suggest that, while the internet does provide crime-related information, its unreliability and the potential for misinformation mean that such news may not necessarily increase fear of victimization among users.

Hawkins and Pingree (1981) identified that exposure to television programming is associated with several cognitive factors contributing to fear of crime. These factors include an individual's perception that certain criminal acts could directly impact their life, making those who perceive crime as a severe threat more likely to experience heightened fear. Secondly, the "victim perception" factor indicates that viewers who believe they could become victims are more likely to develop a fear of victimization. Lastly, a perceived lack of control over crime correlates with an increased susceptibility to fear. Building on this framework, recent studies have examined the role of media in shaping these cognitive dimensions of fear in the context of both traditional and digital media. Exposure to traditional media, such as news and crime series, as well as crime-related videos on social media, has been positively associated with the development of fear of victimization. Awais et al. (2021) further investigated this phenomenon, confirming that the relationship between media crime reporting and fear of victimization is indeed mediated by these cognitive factors—perception of threat, perception of victimization, and perceived control over crime—thus extending Hawkins and Pingree's foundational insights into the modern media landscape.

Related to cognitive factors, Beliefs in a Just World (BJW) (Lerner, 1980) represent a cognitive bias since people tend to perceive the world as a safe place where everyone gets what they deserve. In its nature, it is almost the opposite of the Mean World Syndrome, which is positioned within the framework of cultivation theory. BJW has an adaptive value as it makes people feel less vulnerable by assuming that, since they have not done anything wrong, they do not deserve any negative consequences (Furman, 2003). To maintain such a view of the world, individuals are inclined to derogate crime victims, attributing part of the responsibility for the crimes (De Judicibus & McCabe, 2001). Hafer and Olson (1998) demonstrated that those who strongly believe in a just world perceive their own negative outcomes as less unjust. The foundation of this belief is the maintenance of a sense of control, which consequently reduces the fear of the world's unpredictability, including unpredictable and unjust crimes. BJW is a relatively stable characteristic of an individual, and research indicates clear individual differences. According to the Differential Susceptibility to Media Effects Model, it is dispositional factor that determine which media content we consume and how we react to it (thus, JWB also has a mediating role).

Over the past three decades, two aspects of Beliefs in a Just World have been distinguished: general (G- BJW) and personal (P- BJW) (Dalbert, 1999). General Beliefs in a Just World are conceptually like Lerner's earlier definitions, while Personal Beliefs in a Just World focus on assessing how just the world is for the individual. Appel (2008) highlights that BJW is cultivated by fictional programs that portray the world as a just place, often even more just than the real world. González-González & Igartua (2024) experimentally examined the effects of fictional portrayals of police effectiveness on perceived police efficiency, trust in democracy, political interests, and political optimism, with BJW (measured with one item, contextually in terms of general BJW) and narrative transportation serving as mediators. The data showed that watching the clip in which the police were effective increased BJW compared to when participants watched the ineffective police clip, supporting the cultivation BJW. While there are indications in fictional media content in support of the cultivation of BJW, research on the role of news-related media content is still lacking.

Generalized Trust in people is an individual characteristic where people believe in the benevolence of others (Welzel & Delhey, 2015). Delhey

& Newton (2003) examine different theoretical explanations for trust, dividing them into individual and societal theories. Individual theories, termed “personality theories” (e.g., Uslaner, 1999), suggest that trust (or lack thereof) develops through early experiences with close individuals. Another group of individual theories focuses on socio-economic deprivation, with socially deprived individuals being less likely to trust others. In contrast, societal theories emphasize the characteristics of the society in which the individual lives. Generally, when assessing generalized trust in people, there are differences in the scope of the group of people to whom the participant refers when answering such questions. Delhey et al. (2011) suggest that in wealthier countries, the group referred to by participants is broader. Although Social Identity Theory emphasizes the preference for in-group members over out-group members (Tajfel, 1970), some studies suggest a positive correlation between trust in in-group members and trust in out-group members (Bahry et al., 2005).

In this research, generalized trust will be treated as an individual characteristic, which, according to the Differential Susceptibility to Media Effects Model, will mediate the relationship between content consumption and individual reactions in terms of fear of victimization.

Research goals and hypotheses

Based on the presented theoretical framework and previous research, the research questions that are tested in this paper are as follows:

Research goals:

1. To determine whether there is a cultivation effect of television and the Internet when it comes to the fear of victimization.
2. To determine whether there is a general cultivation, a specific cultivation, or both.

Research hypotheses:

H1. There will be a general negative effect of television use on the feeling of victimization.

H1.1. Generalized trust will mediate the relationship between the amount of television use and the feeling of victimization.

H1.2. Belief in a Just World will mediate the relationship between the amount of television use and the feeling of victimization.

H2. There will be a general positive effect of Internet use on the feeling of victimization.

H2.1. Generalized trust will mediate the relationship between the amount of Internet use and the feeling of victimization.

H2.2. Belief in a Just World will mediate the relationship between the amount of Internet use and the feeling of victimization.

H3. There will be a specific negative effect of television use on the feeling of victimization.

H3.1. Generalized trust will mediate the relationship between the amount of television news about crime and the feeling of victimization.

H3.2. Belief in a Just World will mediate the relationship between the amount of television news about crime and the feeling of victimization.

H4. There will be a specific positive effect of Internet use on the feeling of victimization.

H4.1. Generalized trust will mediate the relationship between the amount of Internet news about crime and the feeling of victimization.

H4.2. Belief in a Just World will mediate the relationship between the amount of Internet news about crime and the feeling of victimization.

Methods and sample

Fear of victimization is measured with the scale employed in Hu et al. (2015), with the cognitive component referring to the participant's perception of the possibility of victimization. It was examined in such a way that the participants were asked to estimate the probability of becoming a victim of a specific criminal act: street robbery, fraud, physical assault/fight, theft, vulgarity on the street, and burglary. Responses were offered on an answering scale from one to five, with 1 indicating very likely and 5 indicating impossible.

Generalized trust implies a trusting relationship to known people and to people in general (to most people), on a scale ranging from 0 (I have no confidence at all) to 10 (I have complete confidence) (OECD, 2017).

The Beliefs in a Just Worlds was assessed using the Beliefs in a Just World scales (originally developed by Dalbert, Montada, and Schmidt, 1984; Dalbert, 1999; with a Croatian translation by Ćubela, 2002). The scales comprise two subscales: the General Beliefs in a Just Worlds subscale and the Personal Beliefs in a Just Worlds subscale, each containing six items. The General Beliefs in a Just Worlds subscale evaluates the belief that the world is generally fair, while the Personal Beliefs in a Just Worlds subscale focuses on participants' perceptions of fairness directed toward themselves. Responses were provided using a six-point Likert-type answering scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

The total amount of television and Internet use was measured in hours in an average day, while the amount of crime news consumption was measured on a scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (very often). Gender (male/female) and age (in years) were used as control variables.

Table 1. Structural equations models

Model	Predictors	Mediator	Criterion variable	Control variables
1	General use of television and internet	Generalized trust	Fear of victimization	Gender, age
2	General use of television and internet	Belief in just world	Fear of victimization	Gender, age
3	Specific use of television and the internet (crime news)	Generalized trust	Fear of victimization	Gender, age
4	Specific use of television and the internet (crime news)	Belief in just world	Fear of victimization	Gender, age

Overall, the proposed hypotheses were tested using four models (table 1). The models differed according to whether variables measuring general or specific cultivation were used as predictors, or whether generalized trust or

general belief in a just world was used as a predictor. Gender and age were used as control variables in all four models.

An online opt-in sample ($N = 1,021$) of the Croatian population (+18) was used in the research, and the data were collected by a public opinion polling company in January 2023. The quotas used in the sample ensured that gender distribution and regional distribution were equal to the population distributions. As expected, when using online opt-in panels, higher-educated persons were somewhat over-represented in comparison to the general population of Croatia, given that in the research sample about 30.3% of the people in the sample obtained a university education, while in the general population, this share amounted to 24.1% (Croatian Bureau of Statistics, 2023).

The ethical approval was obtained from the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek (No. 602-04/22-04/225; 2158-83-02-22-3; 28 December 2022).

Results

As noted before, in the first model, we tested whether generalized trust in people represented a mediator of the relationship between the total amount of television and internet use. The summary of the results is presented in Table 2.

When it comes to the general cultivation effect, there is no direct effect of television watching or amount of the Internet use on feelings of victimization. As for the indirect effect, generalized trust is a significant mediator in both cases, but in the opposite direction. Namely, television use is connected to higher generalized trust, and generalized trust is connected with lower feelings of victimization. On the other hand, Internet use is connected with lower generalized trust, thus increasing feelings of victimization. As for the control variables, female gender and younger age are associated with a stronger feeling of potential victimization.

The models with just-world belief as a mediator showed very similar results since the indirect effects of television use and Internet use through beliefs in a just world have the opposite direction in this case as well. Television

use increases belief in a just world, which decreases feelings of victimization, thus making the overall indirect effect negative (television watching decreases victimization feelings). On the contrary, Internet use decreases beliefs in a just world and consequently increases fears of victimization.

*Table 2. Summary of the results – models 1 and 2
(unstandardized coefficients)*

Relationships	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval	p-value	Conclusion
TV total -> Generalized Trust-> Fear of victimization	0.01	-0.004	-0.001 to -0.010	0.007	Full mediation
TV total -> Beliefs in a Just World-> Fear of victimization	0.01	-0.006	-0.001 to -0.015	0.036	Full mediation
Internet total -> Generalized Trust-> Fear of victimization	0.02	0.005	0.001 to 0.010	0.003	Full mediation
Internet total -> Beliefs in a Just World-> Fear of victimization	0.02	0.004	0.001 do 0.014	0.013	Full mediation

When it comes to the specific cultivation effects (models 3 and 4, table 3), there is a direct effect of television crime news on feelings of victimization (unstandardized 0.07, standardized 0.13, $p = 0.00$), wherein increased hours of crime news watching are connected with higher feelings of victimization. However, this influence is mediated through one of the proposed mediators – beliefs in a just world – but in the opposite direction. Therefore, in this case, we found a competitive mediation. In other words, watching the crime news on television leads to higher beliefs in a just world, and thus decreases victimization through this path, but it also increases fear of victimization through other paths, making the total effect positive. Regarding the Internet, neither direct effects (unstandardized 0.03, standardized 0.04, $p = 0.84$), nor indirect effects could be confirmed.

*Table 3. Summary of the results – models 3 and 4
(unstandardized coefficients)*

Relationships	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval (indirect)	p-value	Conclusion
TV -> Generalized Trust-> Fear of victimization	0.070**	0.001	-0.005 do 0.007	0.743	Direct effect, No mediation
TV -> Beliefs in a Just World-> Fear of victimization	0.070**	-0.008	-0.002 do -0.029	0.008	Partial mediation
Internet -> Generalized Trust-> Fear of victimization	0.031	0.000	-0.007 to 0.006	0.926	No direct effect, No mediation
Internet -> Beliefs in a Just World -> Fear of victimization	0.031	0.000	-0.007 do 0.009	0.995	No direct effect, No mediation

In Table 4, we can note that all the tested models showed acceptable fits with the data. Namely, we used three model fit indicators with the following cut-off values: CFI, TLI > 0.90 and RMSEA <0.06 (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

Table 4. Model fits

	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	90% CI lower	90% CI upper
Model 1	0.97	0.96	0.047	0.041	0.054
Model 2	0.97	0.96	0.045	0.040	0.050
Model 3	0.95	0.94	0.048	0.042	0.054
Model 4	0.96	0.94	0.049	0.043	0.055

Discussion

In this paper, based on the theoretical frameworks of the Differential Susceptibility to Media Effects Model (Valkenburg & Peter, 2013) and cultivation theory (Gerbner et al., 1986), we sought to examine whether cultivation effects from television and the internet exist on fear of crime/

victimization. Both general and specific cultivation effects were tested, as well as the potential mediating role of beliefs in a just world and generalized trust.

The data indicate that overall television and internet content consumption does not have a direct effect on fear of crime, but there are indirect cultivation effects through two individual cognitive characteristics of the participants—BJW and generalized trust. It's essential to consider the nature of the total media consumption variable used here, which was operationalized as the total number of hours of content consumed on television or the internet. Such a general measure provides no insight into the nature of the consumed content, i.e., how much of it implies that the world is a dangerous place. According to Gerbner et al. (1980), it is precisely this type of content that is critical for creating the Mean World Syndrome.

The data from this study showing that BJW and generalized trust mediate the relationship between media consumption and fear of crime can be meaningfully interpreted within the Differential Susceptibility to Media Effects Model (Valkenburg & Peter, 2013). Within the model, both BJW and generalized trust can be viewed as dispositional variables due to evidence of individual differences (Hafer & Olson, 1998; Uslaner, 1999; Delhey & Newton, 2003). According to DSMM assumptions, people with a stronger BJW are more likely to consume content that reinforces these beliefs, and a similar expectation can be made for individuals with higher generalized trust. However, both variables are fundamentally cognitive in nature and may also function as state-like responses to specific media content consumed. Appel (2008) and González-González & Igartua (2024), for instance, demonstrated that fictional content can influence BJW. In fact, the latter study found that fictional portrayals of police effectiveness could either increase or decrease BJW. In the DSMM, such primary cognitive reactions serve as mediators in the relationship between consumed media content and media effects. Our data support DSMM assumptions, indicating that individuals inclined toward BJW and generalized trust spent more time consuming television content, a more traditional medium that aligns with their initial dispositions, and these dispositions were strengthened through this consumed content (in the form of cognitive responses). Consequently, increased television viewing reduced participants' fear of victimization, through strengthening BJW and generalized trust. This aligns with Furman's (2003) claims about BJW's self-protective

function in enhancing one's sense of control over one's life (e.g., thinking that "the world is a fair place where good actions yield good outcomes, hence, I am less likely to fall victim to crime"). This also confirms the gate-keeping functions of the traditional media, such as television.

In contrast, we observed an opposite pattern with internet content consumption—higher internet consumption was associated with lower BJW and generalized trust, and consequently, with greater fear of crime. Despite today's flexibility in television content consumption, internet content can be far more tailored to our dispositions, with algorithms often offering content that aligns with these tendencies. For example, Molina and Sundar (2024) showed that distrust in people is associated with increased trust in AI. In this context, individual dispositional traits, supported by algorithms and content from others connected on social media, or by comments on shared content, can generate new (our own) internet content (Hermida et al., 2012). In turn, this content reinforces initial beliefs (e.g., Mean World Syndrome rather than BJW and generalized trust). Although not directly measured, our data suggest that participants dispositionally inclined toward BJW and generalized trust consumed more television content, while those with lower BJW and generalized trust were more inclined toward internet content.

The data regarding consumption of specific crime-related content on TV and the internet indicate that internet crime news consumption is not associated with increased fear of crime, either directly or through mediators. In contrast, greater consumption of television crime news directly increased fear of crime but also, through enhancing BJW, simultaneously reduced that fear. This suggests that BJW can, to some extent, function as a cognitive state that mitigates the cultivation effects of specific television content. Regarding internet content, it's possible that dispositional, developmental, and social variables had a stronger influence on the choice of how crime news is consumed via previously mentioned algorithms, making the measure of crime news following on the internet insufficiently sensitive for detecting specific cultivation effects.

This study has some limitations, as the intensity of overall and specific media consumption on both television and the internet was measured without examining how individuals choose and what type of content they follow. As Silva and Guedes (2023) have shown, the manner of presentation

or the spatial proximity of crime is important for crime fear. Therefore, future research should investigate who chooses which types of media content, as well as the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral reactions of the consumers and the media (including cultivation) effects. Longitudinal tracking of the effects of these media on all DSMM components and individual functioning would also be highly beneficial.

Conclusion

In this study, it was shown that there are indirect effects of both overall television viewing time and internet usage on fear of crime, mediated by Beliefs in a Just World (BJW) and generalized trust. However, these two mediators function differently for television and the internet – while more television viewing increases both BJW and generalized trust, which in turn reduces fear of crime, more time spent on the internet decreases both BJW and generalized trust and increases fear of crime. In this context, BJW and generalized trust are considered as cognitive responses to media content. These variables can also be viewed as dispositional determinants that, to a greater extent for the internet, shape the content consumed and the consequences it has on these cognitive reactions, as well as on more distal media effects such as fear of crime. Longitudinal research designs are needed to differentiate between these two models and explanations.

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KORIŠTENJE MEDIJA I STRAH OD VIKTIMIZACIJE – POSREDNIČKE ULOGE GENERALIZIRANOG POVJERENJA I VJEROVANJA U PRAVEDAN SVIJET

Sažetak

Širenjem korištenja interneta, digitalno okruženje postalo je važan čimbenik koji utječe na osobnu dobrobit. Medijski kultivacijski učinci predstavljaju podudarnost između karakteristika „medijskih svjetova“ i svjetonazora medijskih konzumenata nakon dugotrajnog konzumiranja medija. Ovo istraživanje imalo je za cilj utvrditi jesu li korištenje interneta i televizije povezani sa strahom od viktimizacije te koji su mogući medijacijski mehanizmi te veze. Istraživački uzorak sastojao se od 1.021 osoba iz opt-in online uzorka opće populacije Hrvatske. Rezultati SEM analize pokazali su da je ukupna količina upotrebe televizije povezana s povećanim generaliziranim povjerenjem u ljude i vjerom u pravedan svijet, a posljedično i smanjenjem straha od viktimizacije. S druge strane, ukupna količina upotrebe interneta povezana je sa smanjenim generaliziranim povjerenjem i vjerom u pravedan svijet, a posljedično i sve većim strahom od viktimizacije. Analiza konzumacije vijesti o kriminalu na televiziji i internetu pokazala je mnogo manje jasne zaključke. Naime, konzumacija televizijskih kriminalističkih vijesti povezana je s povećanjem vjere u pravedan svijet, a posljedično i sa smanjenim strahom od viktimizacije. Međutim, izravni učinak gledanja kriminalističkih vijesti na televiziji imao je obrnut predznak. Posljedično, ukupni učinak pokazao je pozitivan predznak, odnosno konzumacija vijesti o kriminalu na televiziji povećava strah od viktimizacije. Kad je riječ o internetu, ne mogu se potvrditi niti izravni niti neizravni učinci konzumiranja vijesti o kriminalu. Sve u svemu, podaci sugeriraju da umjerenija ukupna upotreba interneta i manja izloženost određenim sadržajima na televiziji doprinose održivijem digitalnom okruženju.

Ključne riječi: kultivacija, povjerenje, strah od viktimizacije, uporaba medija, uvjerenja o pravednom svijetu