

Influences of Media on Adolescents Behaviour and Development

Dr. Mohammad Shahid ,Dr. Syeda Farhana Sarfaraz & Nadia
Fazal Ahmed Khan

Abstract

Adolescence is a period between childhood and emerging adulthood. It is a period of tremendous change i.e. biological, psychological, and social. The process of globalization has allowed for a level of connectivity that was not possible only a few decades ago. One demographic that has especially been influenced by the growth of media is adolescents. The aim of the study is to examine the influences of media on the behavior and development of adolescents and explore the beneficial and harmful effects of media (print/electronic/social) on respondent's behavior and development. This is also to help identify how teachers, policymakers, and parents can promote the healthy use of the media in our society. In this study, the researchers selected the private and public schools of district central Karachi as the universe. The population of the study was students/adolescents in the age bracket (12-14). Systematic and random sampling techniques of probability sampling were used to collect data through structured interview schedules from 367 respondents in District central. The method of the

interview involved reading and explaining questions to the respondents and recording their answer on sheets. The finding of the study reveals that the respondents spent most of their time (85%) on social media, don't like outdoor activities, and want to follow the characters they watch. The data shows less parental control on media use, due to economic activity, and most respondents created their social media accounts having been influenced by their peers. It has seven sections including; meaning and definition of adolescence, theoretical perspective, and influence of media, objectives, methodology, findings, and recommendations

Keywords: Influence, Adolescence, Behavior, Development, And Media (Electronic/Print/Social)

Introduction

Every stage of human life is crucial for personality growth and development. Adolescence is one of these stages and is as important as any other phases of life. Just like all other phases, adolescence brings important changes in physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects of human personality.

Though researches have come to recognize that adolescence is not always a turbulent period (Steinberg, 2008). Adolescence as a period of “storm and stress” and this belief remains strong in popular culture and in the minds of parents. The biological changes of puberty include rapid changes in height and weight as well as in sexual maturation leading ultimately to adult body size and capabilities, including sexual reproduction (Tanner, 1978). Adolescence is also marked by tremendous cognitive advances, including the ability to think abstractly and to think and reason about a hypothetical situation (Piaget et al, 1999; Steinberg, 2008). We can say that adolescence is the period of transition between childhood and adulthood. The adolescence is going

through many changes in this process (physical, intellectual, personality and social developmental).

Physical Changes

- Growth spurt such as an early sign of maturation
- Primary sex characteristics like changes in the organs directly related to reproduction
- Secondary sex characteristics for example bodily signs of sexual maturity that do not directly involve reproductive organs

Intellectual changes

- A higher level of intellect than that of children.
- Adolescents can think in terms of what *might* be true, rather than just what they see is true.
- They can deal with abstractions, test hypotheses and see infinite possibilities
- Adolescents still, often display egocentric behaviors and attitudes

Social and Emotional Changes

- Adolescents are also developing socially and emotionally during this time.
- The most important task of adolescence is the search for identity. (WHO, 2011)

Media has a great influence on the development of an adolescent whether it's in print, electronic or in the form of social media. The internet has forever changed the landscape of relationships among individuals, with people from across the world being able to communicate with each other like never. The process of globalization that began in the 1990s has steadily grown into a huge network at an international scale and has made it possible to connect to everyone everywhere regardless of their age, race, religion, ethnicity or sex. From the last 2 decades, our own

country's generation of adolescents has heavily been influenced by the rapid growth of media.

After reviewing the research literature, following negative effects of media, have been identified are given below:

- Violent/ sexual content including aggressive or antisocial behavior, desensitization and fear, unsafe practices, and shock
- Advertising; making false claims, as well as encouraging buying and spending which promotes materialistic attitudes more broadly
- Inappropriate or unwanted contact with others – such as bullying
- Health hazards such as smoking, alcohol, and drug/substance abuse
- Eating behavior such as obesity and eating disorders
- Personality disorders such as low self-esteem, 'identity crises', isolation or alienation
- Effects on mental health such as disorders such as attention deficit/ hyperactivity/depression/anxiety
- Sleep disorder/behavioral complications
- Less time for family interaction/relationships with peers
- Less quality of educational achievement /reading
- Mistaken values, attitudes or beliefs – such as gender/ ethnic stereotyping/ extremism/ isolate cultures

Every country is working to promote their own culture with the help of their media, and we see the impact of Western and Indian

culture in our society when our children consume their content. Our children are proudly following a foreign culture that doesn't match up with ours which continues to create a negative impact on their life.

Objectives Of The Study:

The study has these specific objectives:

- To study the family and demographic profile of respondents.
- To find out the influences of print/electronic/social media in the development of respondents.
- To explore the beneficial and harmful effects of media (print/electronic/social) on respondent's behavior and development and to identify how we can promote the healthy use of the media in our society.

- To know how parents, understand this and respond to these issues at home.

Literature Review

At home, parenting style and home environment plays a key role in an adolescent's personality growth. Some researches of Developmental Psychology suggest that children who are closely attached to their parents are better equipped to cope with new experiences and relationships (Rita et al., 1996).

Studies have suggested that friends have a powerful influence on school adjustment, attitudes, and behaviors (Berndt and Keefe, 1999; Kindermann, McCollam, & Gibson, 1996) In order to get acceptance from a certain group, a person (whether a child or an adult) tries to adopt that group's characteristics. Anti-social activities of a peer-group can destroy the adolescent's personality and lead him/her to juvenile delinquency.

School also influences an adolescent's personality in various ways at the school, there is evidence that observed behavioral engagement is strongly related to academic success in much the same way as student-reported engagement (Gregory et al. 2011; Marks 2000). Teacher's encouraging behavior, undivided attention, competitive but friendly environment and mental and physical activities help an adolescent to grow up into physically, mentally and socially healthy adults.

The influence of the media on the psychosocial development of adolescents is deep-rooted. This is the reality. In terms of men and women ratio, many youth populations are exposed to media without guidance and education.

Media and transmission of culture are interrelated factors and is a strong carrier of cultural values and norms. That's why American media has an upper hand on the rest of the world therefore Muslim countries should protect the culture from foreign invasion. There must be an advisory committee of scholars, media experts, religious scholars, and teachers of media studies that need to come together to make laws to defend the negative effects of media. (Akbar, 2009)

It is impossible to escape the pervading influence of mass media. This kind of high media exposure has statistically proven to have a significant negative effect on the body image and dissatisfaction of young university students, in a developing country like Pakistan (Khan, et.al.2011)

He recommended that to formulate a code of ethics for mass media for it to refrain from causing damage to the reputation of a person or institution, media persons should abide by the principles of ethics, in performing their duties because of mass media is a double-edged sword of any society has both positive as well as negative effects depending on the content.

In Pakistan, the lack of ethics involved in the advertisement campaigns, which is directly in conflict with the Islamic Shariah, and the discomfort of customers or consumers who consume these advertisement campaigns that show nudity and sexist images to the

public and portray negative messages. Cultural norms and values of society play an important role in shaping the attitudes of its people. (Akhtar, et al. 2011)

Notably, most of the literature supports the relationship between violent media and aggressive behaviors among youth (Anderson et al., 2003). Even after taking into consideration various other risk factors to youth aggression, the research clearly shows that violent media consumption increases the relative risk of aggression (Krahe, et. al 2012).

Research Methodology

The current study is exploratory. In this study, researchers selected the private and public schools of district central Karachi as the universe. The population of the study was students/adolescents in the age bracket of (12-14). The researcher obtained the list of private and public schools of District Central, Karachi from the official website. Out of the total of 1024 schools, every 19th the school was selected as a sample through systematic sampling. Therefore, a total 53 schools were selected as a sample for the research.

The population of students/adolescents (age 12-14) in private and public schools during the period of January to December 2014 was 7900. The sample size was determined by using a table of random numbers, (Sarandakos: 2005), which turned out to be 367. Then these samples of 367 students/adolescents were selected through random sampling.

The survey the method was used in the current study. The data was collected using a structured interview schedule. The method of the interview involved reading and explaining questions to the respondents and recording their answer on the sheets. After collecting the data, the researcher developed tally sheets and then used simple frequency distribution tables to obtain simple frequency and percentages.

Results And Discussion:

This section contains quantitative data and then narrowly focuses on quantitative data, as well as finding of the discussion.

TABLE NO. 1

Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Boys	179	48.7
Girls	188	51.2
Total	367	100%

The above table indicates that the highest percentage is 51.2% which are female respondents; while 48.7% of respondents are male.

TABLE No. 2

Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
11-12	105	28.6
12-13	125	34.0
13-14	137	37.3
Total	367	100%

The above table shows the age of the respondents. It indicates that the highest number of respondents is under the age of 13-14 years which constitutes for 37.3%. The second highest numbers of respondents are 12-13 years of age which constitutes for 34% and the lowest numbers of respondents are 11-12 years of age which

constitutes for 28.6%. This qualitative data also reflects the quantitative data where adolescents are a big portion of the general population and goes to show that most of the Pakistani population is comprised of young people.

TABLE NO. 3

Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by class

Class	Frequency	Percentage
6th	86	23.4
7th	70	19.0
8th	71	19.3
9th	140	38.1
Total	367	100%

The table above indicates that the highest number of respondents is in class 9th which constitutes for 38.1%. The second highest number of respondents is in class 6th which constitutes for 23.4% and the third highest number of respondents is in class 8th which constitutes for 19.3 %. The lowest number of respondents is in class 7th which constitutes for 19%.

TABLE NO. 4

Frequency and percentage distribution of respondent's family and their types

Nature of Family	Frequency	Percentage
Nuclear	159	43.3
Joint	140	38.1
Extended	68	18.1
Total	367	100%

The table above indicates that the highest number of respondents that is 43.3% lived in a nuclear family system. The second highest number of respondents is 38.1% that lived in a joint family system

and the lowest numbers of respondents' is 18.1% that live in an extended family system. The breakdown of the family system also shows the weak parental control in this crucial period of adolescents, because the living cost is very high in Karachi as compared to other cities. Both parents are usually busy in economic survival.

TABLE NO. 5

Frequency and percentage distribution of whether respondents use the internet

Use the internet	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	262	71.3
No	105	28.6
Total	367	100%

The above table indicates that highest numbers of respondents use the internet which constitutes for 71.3%, while the lowest numbers of respondents do not use the internet which constitutes for 28.6%.

TABLE NO. 6

Frequency and percentage distribution of why the respondents use the internet

For which purpose	Frequency	Percentage
For studies	96	33.2
For playing games	122	42.2
For advance knowledge	66	22.8
Any other	5	1.7
Total	289	100%

Note: Respondents had a variety of answers and the total was up to 289.

The above table indicates that the highest number of respondents use the internet for playing games which constitutes for 42.2%. The second highest number of respondents uses the internet for studying which constitutes for 33.2%. The third highest number of respondents uses the internet for advance knowledge which constitutes for 22.8%, while the lowest numbers of respondents use the internet for any other purpose which constitutes for 1.7%.

TABLE NO. 7

Frequency and percentage distribution of whether respondents use social media

Use social media	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	202	85.0
No	165	14.9
Total	367	100%

The above table indicates that highest number of respondents uses social media which constitutes 85%, while the lowest number of respondents does not use social media which constitutes for 14.9%.

TABLE NO. 8

Frequency and percentage distribution of respondent's use of social media, for which reason

For which reason	Frequency	Percentage
For spend time/time pass	93	41.3
General knowledge	74	32.8
Current affairs	52	23.1
Any other	6	2.6
Total	225	100%

Note: Respondents show multiple answers i.e. 225.

The above table indicates that the highest number of respondents use social media for time pass which constitutes 41.3%. The second highest numbers of respondents use social media for general knowledge which constitutes 32.8%. The third highest numbers of respondents use social media for current affairs which constitutes 23.1%, while the lowest numbers of respondents use social media for any other purpose which constitutes 2.6%.

TABLE NO. 9

Frequency and percentage distribution of whether respondent's read magazines or book stories

Read magazines and book stories	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	199	54.2
No	168	45.7
Total	367	100%

The above table indicates that the highest numbers of respondents read magazines and book stories which constitute 54.2%, while the lowest numbers of respondents do not read magazines and book stories which constitute 45.7%.

TABLE NO. 10

Frequency and percentage distribution of whether respondents try to be like the characters of these stories

Characters of the stories	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	119	59.7
No	80	40.2
Total	199	100%

The above table indicates that the highest numbers of respondents try to be like the characters of these stories which constitute 59.7%, while the lowest numbers of respondents do not try to be like the characters of these stories which constitute 40.2%.

TABLE NO. 11

Frequency and percentage distribution of whether respondents feel changes in themselves by reading these stories

Feel changes in their self	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	121	60.8
No	78	39.1
Total	199	100%

The above table indicates that the highest numbers of respondents feel changes in their self by reading these stories which constitute 60.8%, while the lowest numbers of respondents do not feel changes in their selves by reading these stories which constitute 39.1%.

TABLE NO. 12

Frequency and percentage distribution of whether respondents watch TV

Watch TV	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	287	88.2
No	80	11.7
Total	367	100%

The above table indicates that the highest numbers of respondent's watch TV which constitutes 88.2%, while the lowest numbers of respondent's do not watch TV which constitutes 11.7%

TABLE NO. 12.1

Frequency and percentage distribution of which types of programs respondents like the most

Programs	Frequency	Percentage
Dramas	96	33.4
Films	93	32.4
Sports	55	19.1
News	43	14.9
Total	287	100%

The above table indicates that the highest numbers of respondents like dramas which constitute 33.4%. The second highest numbers of respondents like films which constitute 32.4%. The third highest numbers of respondents like sports which constitute 19.1%, while the lowest numbers of respondents like news which constitute 14.9%.

TABLE NO. 12.2

Frequency and percentage distribution of what type of drama serial respondents watch

Drama serial	Frequency	Percentage
Funny	129	44.9
Serious	80	27.8
Other programs	78	27.1
Total	287	100%

The above table indicates that the highest numbers of respondents watch funny drama serial which constitutes 44.9%. The second

highest numbers of respondents watch serious drama serial which constitutes 27.8%, while the lowest numbers of respondents watch none of these which constitute 27.1%.

TABLE NO. 12.3

Frequency and percentage distribution of types of movies they like to watch

Movies	Frequency	Percentage
Fighting	60	15.9
Comedy	126	33.4
Suspense	59	15.6
Historical	48	12.7
Horrible	84	22.2
Total	377	100%

Note: Respondents shows multiple answers i.e. 377

The above table indicates that the highest numbers of respondents like comic movies which constitute 33.4%. The second highest numbers of respondents like horror movies which constitute 22.2%. The third highest numbers of respondents like fighting movies which constitute 15.9%. The fourth highest numbers of respondents like suspense movies which constitute 15.6%, while the lowest numbers of respondents like historical movies which constitute 12.7%.

Conclusion:

This study explained the use and extent of media use by adolescents, as well as their demographic characteristic too. Most of the tables show that 51% respondents are female; most of the respondents were under the age of 13-14 years which constitutes 37%. Where parents' education is concerned, the majority of the respondent's parents are graduate/intermediate. Monthly income of

the household income is above Rs.25000 and 58% parents both working.58% of the respondent's relations with their parents are good (less control) while 43% of the respondents' parents have lenient behavior with them. 45% of the respondents' parents do not allow them to get involved in any other activity during studies, while 89% of the respondents follow their parents' instructions. 72% do not like their parents' rules. 37% of the respondents' parents discuss daily activities with them and 33% of the respondents have a friendly relationship with their brothers while a majority of the respondents think parents do not apply unnecessary restrictions. Most of the parents don't know how to use social media. 56% of the respondents can make an important decision for their life, 29 and most of the respondents like to meet their relatives. 59% discuss their problems with their grandparents while 73% of the respondents are friends with their own age group. 54% feel good to spend time with their friends while 58% of the respondents' friends point out their bad habits. While 81% of the respondents use the internet and social media accounts, they want to watch alone whatever they want to watch.

In free time, most of the respondents use the internet for playing games while 55% of the respondents use social media. Most of the respondents use social media to kill time while 54% of the respondents read magazines and books. 60% try to be like the characters from these books while 61% feel changes in their self by reading these stories. Most of the respondents don't participate in co-curricular activities which constitute 73% while the lowest numbers of respondents take participation in co-curricular activities which constitutes 27%.

Parents may feel outsmarted or overwhelmed by their children's computer and Internet abilities, or they may not appreciate that the 'new medium' is an essential component of the new literacy, something in which their children need to be fluent. These feelings of inadequacy or confusion should not prevent them from discovering the Internet's benefits. The dangers inherent in this relatively uncontrolled 'wired' world are many and varied but

often hidden. These dangers must be unmasked, and a wise parent will learn how to protect their children by immersing themselves in the medium and taking advice from the many resources aimed at protecting children while allowing them to reap the rich benefits in a safe environment.

The advancement in technology has a significant potential for providing adolescents with access to educational information and can be compared with a huge home library. However, the lack of editorial standards limits, parental control, not defined policy of use of internet and social media. There are other concerns as well.

The amount of time spent watching television and sitting in front of computers can affect their postural/physical development. Excessive amounts of time at a computer can contribute to obesity, undeveloped social skills, anxiety, depression and a form of addictive behavior.

Although rare, some children with seizure disorders are more prone to attacks brought on by a flickering television or computer screen. Other concerns include pedophiles who use the Internet to lure young people into relationships. There is also the potential for adolescents to be exposed to pornographic material. Parents can use technology that blocks access to pornography on social media but must be aware that this technology does not replace their supervision or guidance.

There is a wealth of information on coping with the vast resources of the web, both good and bad. Above all, parents should be encouraged to appreciate that there is potential for better than bad if one has the knowledge to tell the difference. Now, adolescents claim social media as a defining part of their culture and an integral part of their daily lives. It's time to maintain policies towards the betterment of the society, and it should be inclusive and based on long term goals.

Recommendations:

Following are the recommendations of the study.

Parents

- Media is just another environment in which adolescents live and trying to engage adolescents in both their real and virtual environments. Attentive parenting is required in this regard; such as monitoring what kind of media they have access to and from where
- Parents should limit their social media use and spend quality time with their kids.
- Maintain watching TV, movies, and videos with adolescents, and use this as a way of discussing important family values.
- Establish and maintain a family time such as mealtime or bedtime routine should be media-free. These limits encourage healthy family time, healthier eating habits and healthier sleep.
- Establish reasonable but firm rules about cell phones, texting, Internet, and social media use.

Schools

- School based intervention plays an important role in terms of restricted use of media in schools. The benefits of social media in the education process don't have to stop at the teacher-student relationship.
- School administrations maintain refresher courses for teachers and educators.

- School facilities should be available in school premises such as playground and auditorium for extracurricular activities
- Different competition and student activities should be scheduled in the academic year.
- For the great benefit of child's development school of social work should be started in all Government & Private School. School social worker/counselors can support making child personality development and solve the problems faced by the child.

Policy Makers

- Thousands of apps are labeled and available online as educational content, without certification to these content or labels by the government. It is necessary to review age-appropriate apps, games and programs.
- Government should introduce an effective media policy for adolescents.
- Government should regulate the implementation of law and policies restricted the use of media for adolescents
- Raising awareness through media to educate masses/parents/teacher how to safe adolescents from harmful effect and encourage them to positive/ restricted use of od media
- Government should incorporate the suggestions and concerns of parents/teacher/religious scholars/social workers/psychologist policymakers to make a comprehensive policy in this regard.

- Teachers training/ refreshers courses should be funded by the government to maintain the standard of education.
- The government should support further research on the influence and effects of media on the mental and physical well-being of adolescents.

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