

Research Paper :

Impact of media on adolescent’s personality in relation to family income

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ABSTRACT

The media have become a powerful force throughout the world and strongly influence how people influence themselves and others. This is particular true for adolescents. This is article discusses how the media affect personality development and why the media seems to have such strong effects on adolescents.

Key words : Media, Adolescents, Personality

Various means of communication like is radio, television, computer, fax, telephone, newspaper (the press), magazines and films play a vital role in spreading information, conducting propaganda, education and creating national identity. Media has to take into account the overall infrastructure which has a bearing on communication within the society as well as the traditional modes.

Today’s children and adolescents are entering and encountering a new media. Besides the traditional electronic media (Broadcast television, video and videogames) new media such as computer games, CD-ROM technology, interactive telecast, video on demand, the internet and virtual reality are all making their appearance on the media arena. Electronic media use outside the household was possible with the transistor radio, walkman and the portable computer etc. (Weibell and Anshelm, 1991).

However, as he grows older, he is influenced by the behaviour of his friends and classmates. As he gets into higher classes in school, he spends less time watching television and using computer because he is busier with home work and various social activities. In addition to this, there are cognitive development and experience in watching television literacy during middle childhood and adolescents (Greenfied, 1984; Salomon, 1979).

METHODOLOGY

The sample comprised of 120 adolescents 12-18 years, 60 boys and 60 girls from different schools of Kanpur city. Purposive –cum-random sampling method was used for the selection of sample. There are 6 zones

of Kanpur city. Out of the six zones one zone that is around the C.S.A.University was selected purposively. The list of all the schools of the northern area of 6th zones was obtained from office of primary education. Out of these, 38 schools, 4 schools were randomly selected for this study.

From the list of total number of students in each school, students were randomly selected in proportion to the total strength of that particular school. A self constructed questionnaire was used to collect the information from the adolescents. The questions were both in close ended and open ended form.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

On the whole of the adolescents (50.8%) were in Intermediate class followed by Middle (29.1%) and High School (18.3%) Maximum percentage (50%) of boys students was in Intermediate class, about 26.6% was in High School and the rest of the boys was in High School. Maximum percentage (51.6%) of girls belonged to Intermediate class (Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to education

Sr. No.	Education (Class)	Boys (N=60)		Girls (N=60)		Total (N=120)	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Middle School (6 th to 8 th)	13	21.6	22	36.5	35	29.1
2.	High School (9 th to 10 th)	16	26.6	6	10	22	18.3
3.	Intermediate (11 th to 12 th)	30	50	31	51.6	61	50.8

The income group of respondents was divided into four categories ranging from 0 to Rs. 25,000 as shown in Fig 1. Maximum percentage(61.6%) of respondents belonged to the third category that is Rs. 10,000 to 20,000 followed by second category, *i.e.* Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 10,000 income group. The rest of the students were in the first and fourth income group as shown as in the figure.

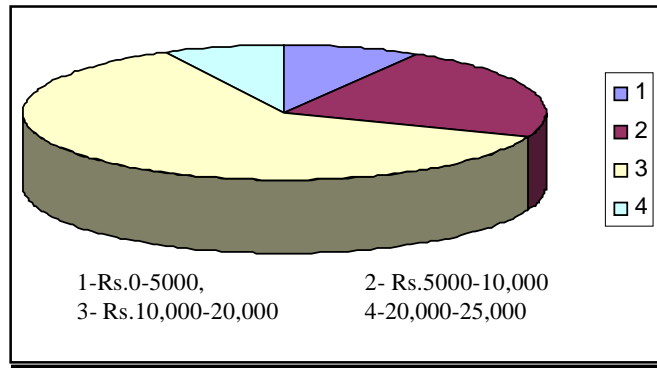


Fig 1 : Family income

As the Table 2 shows all of adolescents (100%) owned television sets and most of them (76.6%) had cable connection and the rest *i.e.* 23.3% were watching only Doordarshan Channel. Although only the higher income group students owned a computer (about 43.3%), all the students were availing computer services if not at home then at their schools or cafe.

Majority of the adolescents (73.3%) were using

Table 2 : Distribution of adolescents according to availability of television and computer

Sr. No.	Availability of Media	Yes (n=120)		No(n=120)	
		No.	%	No.	%
1.	Television	120	100	-	-
2.	Television with cable	92	76.6	28	23.3
3.	Computer	52	43.3	68	56.6
4.	Computer with internet	42	35	78	65
5.	Internet surfing	88	73.3	32	26.6

internet services either at home / school/ cafe.

The time spent on T.V. and computer by adolescents was compared with the time spent by them on other means of communication like radio, newspapers, magazines and internet.

Results show that all the adolescents were watching T.V. daily. Majority of the girls also used computers daily (75%). Only 25% adolescents were using computers occasionally for sending e-mails to their friends and relatives. Greater number of adolescents (46.6%) reported that they watched T.V. daily, which generally leads to gain in television literacy (Table 3). Similar results have been reported earlier by Greenfield, 1984 and Saloman, 1979.

The income difference in the impact of media on adolescents was studied by calculation of correlation coefficient between “the impact of TV and Computer respondents (adolescents)” and “income of respondents (adolescents)”.

The impact of TV and computer both were found to be positively and significantly correlated with income as shown through the value of correlation coefficient in the Table 4.

These results infer that as the income increases the impact of TV and computer both increases on adolescent’s personality. The probable reason behind this could be easy accessibility of media facilities with higher income group respondents. The adolescents who had computer at home could spend more time on them doing various activities. Hence, they were found to be more affected by computer. Where as, those adolescents who did not own a computer had to use computer services either school or at café playing the price for it. In this way, they could not devote to much time as the children with computer at home.

Similarly, the adolescents who had cable connection could view a greater variety of programmes and would be more affected by viewing such variety of programmes as compared to adolescents who had an access to

Table 3 : Time spent on television and computers by adolescents

Sr. No.	Media	Time spent							
		4 to 6 hours daily (N = 20)		2 to 3 hours daily (N = 120)		½ to 1 hour daily (N = 120)		Occasionally (N = 120)	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1.	Television	56	46.6	32	26.6	32	26.6	-	-
2.	Computers	27	21.5	27	22.5	36	30.0	30	25.0
3.	Radio	2	1.6	31	25.8	25	20.8	58	48.3
4.	Newspaper	4	2.2	3	2.5	106	88.3	7	15.8
5.	VCR	-	-	17	14.1	26	21.6	77	64.1
6.	Tape Recorder	2	1.6	19	15.8	56	46.6	43	35.8
7.	Magazines	1	0.8	7	5.8	64	53.3	48	40

Table 4 : Correlation of impact of media (TV, computer) on adolescent's personality with income of adolescents

Sr. No.	Media	Correlation with income(r)	't' value
1.	T.V.	0.6432*	9.120**
2.	Computer	0.5572*	7.291**

* and ** indicate significance of values at P = 0.05 and 0.01, respectively

Doordarshan channel only. Judith (2002) and Bogatz and Ball (1972) also reported that T.V. and computer are becoming a routine parts of students life but access to high quality programmes and software is tied to family income.

Conclusion :

During study it was found that adolescent used computers daily in school hours. The impact of T.V. and computer both was found to be positively and significantly correlated with income. There is no doubt that media programmes mould opinion, thinking, attributes, knowledge, feeling and behaviour. T.V. and radio are far more powerful as their reach and impact is greater than that of other media. It has invaded even the most remote communities of the society. They have become one of the most important tools in the so called mechanization process and incidentally have greater reach among men and women

Television and computer greatly affect mind and heart of girls. A large number of TV. channels and supplementary programmes such as entertainment, films, concert, drama, opera, sports and various website which

may be availed through television and computers have been found to show varied impact on adolescent's personality development.

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